



11 March 2013, sunny periods 18°

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www.a-hill-of-your-own.com

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Painting on the hill 2013

Painting weeks on Monte do Casarão have been planned for 18 to 25 April and for 3 to 10 October.

Those who live nearby can also participate on a daily basis, on the day/s they prefer.

info@montedocasarao.com



www.montedocasarao.com/En/e_painting.html

1. THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENTLY

Each first newsletter of the year might look the same. I could use the same subjects over and over again: the carnival procession in Loulé (again full of troika and crisis), the holiday fair in the Dutch city of Utrecht (which we've attended for the third year running as Alentejo promoters), the swallows (back from Africa since 1 February and again living in the garage), the flowering and fragrant mimosa (ensures that all-out spring feeling), the chanterelles (once found, they are really special) and of course the New Year's lottery drawing the winners of the year before.

We wish all our guests a free week's stay at Monte do Casarão, but gradually, we start hoping that one particular family will win the lot-



tery, namely the Heuzer family. In December, André and Maureen visited us for the tenth time and, God willing, we'll see them back in June. Why does someone go to the same holiday destination for years on end? *'Here, we experience the complete holiday feeling: anything's possible, nothing is compulsory.'* and *'And always, after a lazy or busy day, there is that mountain of your own.'* They say much more, in our guestbook, but since it's in Dutch, I've given you a brief impression here.

2. A NOSTALGIA TRIP

Although they are way on top of our list, André en Maureen are not the only ones who frequent Monte do Casarão on their holidays. A deserved second place is reserved for a family who spent as many as eight holidays here, followed by two families with scores of six and five families who spent four holidays here. For families to come two or three times is the rule rather than the exception. And every time, it is a nostalgia trip.



The funny thing is that there is always a link somewhere, both between the guests themselves and between the guests and us. Either you went to the same school, or you have mu-

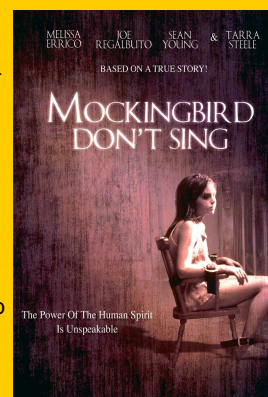
tual acquaintances, either the one was born in the street where the other now lives, or you played in the same orchestra. What we found really special was when it became apparent that someone had bought the house from the parents of one of the other guests. Who/What's next?

3. WOLF CHILD

In last November, Portugal has its own wolf child. In the hills near Serpa, in the northeast of the Alentejo, a woman was discovered by accident who has lived a parent-imposed solitary life there for 23 years. Until the age of 10, Ana de Fátima went to school like any normal child, but subsequently her parents, who thought she had some sort of aberration, kept her separate from the outside world.

Wolf children (as a rule, the term wild or isolated children is more appropriate) have always spoke to the imagination. The (fictitious) Romulus and Remus, Mowgli and Tarzan manage to cope well and are socialized miraculously, but the real cases (approximately 100 cases are known) are endlessly more distressing and moving. A source of inspiration for scientists, authors and filmmakers – that much is true. Truffaut made a film about Victor, the 'Wild Boy' of Aveyron; Werner Herzog made a film about Kaspar Hauser; Davenport about Californian girl Genie, who was kept locked up for 11 years, mostly tied to a chair. Recently, 3096

Tage was released, the film about Natascha Kampusch, the Austrian girl who was kidnapped at the age of 10 and was locked in a cellar for eight years. For the time being, Ana de Fátima who 'stopped in time at the age of 9', as the social workers put it, is being taken care of in an old people's home. There are high hopes that in time, she'll be able to live independently.



4. WINNERS 2012

Cees and Anneriet Riemsdag are the winners of our New Year's lottery. Relatives this time, which is nice, but certainly not a fixed result. Our neighbour



'We are a bit overwhelmed...'

Maria Baptista, who drew the lottery for us, will stake her life on that. You'll find more about the winners on our (Dutch-language) website.

Nel