



April 10th 2014, sunny 23°

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### \* New Year's Lottery 2014

Agneta Evenhuis and Dorus Vester won the New Year's lottery. And they cashed it in too. They'll be here in April.  
[www.montedocasarao.com/Nl/n\\_winners\\_2013.html](http://www.montedocasarao.com/Nl/n_winners_2013.html)

### \* Painting weeks 2014

In April, we'll organize our tenth painting week. So, it's an anniversary. Which we shall celebrate, and you can profit from it. If you book for one of our 2014 courses, you'll get a 10-percent discount.  
From 17 to 24 April and 2 to 9 October.

### \* Gran and gramp 2014

Wynand and I became grandparents again. On March 28 Cody was born, son of Bob and Digna. Their first child, our second grandchild. Such fun! So exciting! Such a miracle!



Cody Dylan Riemslog  
3490 grams, 53 cm.

## 1. SPRING IS IN THE AIR

The sun is shining. Radiant, warm, abundant. A little longer every day. January and February replenished the water supply, the fungi are gone: time for spring! The water in the pool is 19°C already. Warm enough for our guests. I'd rather wait another week.

The wild pear, the camomile and the white heather are in bloom, the frogs and the crickets are trying to outperform each other vocally and the birds are into nest construction.

For the sixth year in a row, the barn swallows have found us. Since last year, there are Red-rumped Swallows as well. Not in the garage, but outside, just above the kitchen door.

Last year's nest fell down.

As a precaution, we put up an extra shelf. By the looks of it, it doesn't bother them. Their conservation status may only be Least

Concern, but a little help cannot do any harm.



## 2. FISHERMAN'S TRAIL

A nice bit of sun, days are lengthening, the temperature is about 22°C: perfect walking weather. Ideal for exploring the Fisherman's Trail that runs from Porto Covo to Sagres, by way of Vila Nova de Milfontes, Zambujeira do Mar, Odeceixe and Aljezur. It's a beautiful trail along the Atlantic Ocean, which slowly but surely is being discovered by foreign travel journalists. Our guests regularly send us articles about the *Trilho dos Pescadores* they came across in their newspapers.

The fisherman's trail is very well documented. On Monte do Casarão, we have walking maps and guides of all trails available for general use.

On the Internet all kinds of information can be found too, as well as on YouTube and in various hiking supply shops. Really worth while is the film below:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=378VE1BxOrs&list=LLW1YRQ5uj9MO3x5jQ6ekbOA>

The Trilho dos Pescadores is part of the Rota Vicentina, the end of the Grande Randonnée that starts in Pieterburen, in the north of the Netherlands. A 3000-kilometre walk. For the whole-hoggers.

## 3. SMALL PRINT

The majority of our guests does not find us through a travel agency, but organizes the holiday and everything connected to it by themselves, including renting a car. Nowadays, that's not too complicated and there is plenty of choice. There are a wide variety of car rentals, the one even cheaper than the other, and if you continue searching, you may find a really good deal, emphasizing MAY. In order not to feel disgruntled when you get into your rental and start your holiday, it is important to read the small print carefully. You may think you struck a bargain, but obviously the rental companies aren't charitable organisations. They have to make ends meet. The policy excess is such a point of interest; then there's the choice regarding comprehensive insurance, theft insurance, the number of free kilometres included in the rental, the number of drivers, the option of crossing the Spanish border, the driver's age: all subjects that can result in widely divergent rates.

The fuel policies differ too. Some companies let you leave with a full tank (for which you pay more than you would if you filled it up yourself) after which you have to hand it in empty. The latest:



You drive off with a full tank and you hand it in again with a quarter-full tank. So, well, it just so you know in advance.

## 4. A22 or N125

And then there's the toll. Since 2012, a toll is taken on the A22, the highway between Faro and Albufeira. You cannot buy a ticket. The car's number plate is scanned. If there's a box in the rental car, the amount due is automatically debited to the rental company's account.

For that box you pay a deposit, on average €1,50 per day. When you hand in the car, you pay the outstanding toll. As a rule, you'll only drive the A22 on the way up and back, which amounts to less than €5.

You can choose not to pay a deposit. In that case, you will need to take the N125, the parallel road. It takes 15 minutes longer, but is really varied. There are lots of villages, little cafés and potteries. It is busier, especially during rush hour, and there are quite a few traffic lights. Also, delicious oranges from December to May.

If there's no box in the car (you'd best check), you can still opt for the A22 on the way up. In that case, you need to pay in the toll at the post office within ten days. We can pay the toll for the way back for you, or you can take the N125 after all.

Nel