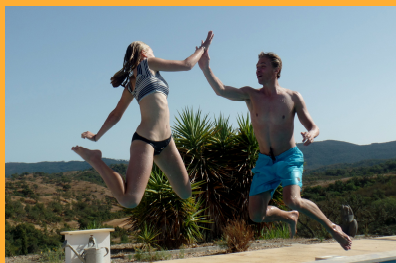


January 4th 2018, cloudy, 17°

FAREWELL TO 2017

The year 2017 is behind us. Time flies. It is a bromide, I know, but as the Portuguese say: *É verdade!*

Monte do Casarão has been in place for ten years and is proving to be a very pleasant holiday destination for more and more people. A holiday destination that does not easily grow stale, judging by the number of times people return. We find that really remarkable. 5, 6 times is no exception. Maureen and Andre break the record with 20 times, Geke and Frans (18 times) are impressive runners-up, and Lida and Gerard (10 times) are not doing too badly either.



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

info@montedocasaraao.com

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4h82mYBohfc

Painting weeks 2018

The April course is fully booked. For the October course, from **Thursday 4 to Thursday 11 October**, there are still some places available.

www.montedocasaraao.com/en/gastenboek/schildervakantie-in-portugal/



The painting weeks show a similar pattern: regularly returning participants, obviously pivoting around tutor Jenny Helder. She has conducted no fewer than 18 painting courses, with undiminishing enthusiasm. By the way, the 19th painting week (in April 2018) is full. The summer months are also being busily booked. That is when we'll also see many familiar faces once again. They are sure to bring back many fond memories!

UTILITIES

While in 2016, we tackled the water supply, 2017 was characterised by upgrading the power supply. Battery capacity had doubled, as has the number of solar panels; and we have a new diesel generator. After 12,000 burning hours, the old diesel was due a major overhaul and now, following revision, serves as an emergency generator. The grand finale of the power project was a sun boiler on the roof that also supplies



the washing machine with hot water. Ecologically, we are doing well: obviously, we need to in view of our Green Key Certificate, but the numbers tell us the same: last year, we used up to 2500 litres less diesel and 25 cubic less gas!

NEW: WATCH OUR VIDEOS

Last May, the regional Dutch broadcasting company Omroep Flevoland asked us if we would

participate in a TV programme on former inhabitants of Flevoland who run a touristic business abroad. They had planned a series of five episodes that would all be broadcast in the course of one single week. We have fond memories of Flevoland, keep in touch with many people living there (including our youngest son, who recently moved back to Almere) and we have nothing to hide, so why not?



Early in June, reporter Gerard van Ommen was a guest on Monte do Casarão for four days. For the sceptics among us: in order to avoid any appearance of partiality or bribery, Omroep Flevoland maintains a strict policy of paying all costs incurred in producing such a report.

We told and showed Gerard any number of things. This yielded hours of unique film footage. Recently, we included the ultimate result on our Dutch-language website, in the new section called media. There you will find under the heading called *Bekijk onze video's* (i.e., Watch our videos) the films produced by Omroep Flevoland. You can also find there a number of videos made by me (for our grandchildren) or by our guests. They are about Monte do Casarão, its surroundings and about us. So, if you have a fun video about us that you are happy to share on our website, please let us know. Success will be guaranteed!

HOW HOT IT WAS

The weather continues to be an intriguing subject, especially for holiday-goers. Still, there is little interesting to tell about our weather. The sun is simply always shining. Even now, early in January, the sun is regularly radiant and has so much power that you need to take care not to get burned. Since 2010, Wynand has monitored weather statistics, and they show that overall, it has become hotter in the course of those eight years. April, May, June, October and November are evidently warmer, by 2°C even.

Fortunately, we get rain as well, mostly at night. About 600 mms per year. That used to be sufficient. It filled the reservoirs, helped chanterelles grow and ensured that the pastures would be green again by the end of October. Last year, this changed. Do we need more water? Are we using more? Is more water condensing? Are we wasting too much? Answers are welcome. That leaves me to wish you a very happy and prosperous 2018.

| | gemidd. max. temp. in °C | |
|----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| | 2017 | gemiddeld |
| januari | 16,4 | 15,7 |
| februari | 17,1 | 16,0 |
| maart | 19,3 | 18,8 |
| april | 25,5 | 22,3 |
| mei | 27,6 | 25,7 |
| juni | 30,7 | 28,8 |
| juli | 31,6 | 31,4 |
| aug | 30,8 | 30,4 |
| sep | 28,7 | 28,3 |
| okt | 27,8 | 25,1 |
| nov | 21,8 | 19,3 |
| dec | 14,9 | 16,4 |
| overall | 24,6 | 23,2 |

We have another angel in the family!

On 24 November, Lies became grandmother to Mex, the son of Koen and Mischa.



Mex is a healthy and sturdy boy, which can be concluded from his length and weight: at 53 cms he weighed 4555 grams.