

August 28th 2021, sun 29°



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The painting week October 2021 is from

Tuesday 5 till tuesday 12 October.



Green Key

This year, we were again awarded the Green Key Award. Every consecutive year, you have to achieve specific environmental goals, which you formulated the year before.

We are as happy with it as always. Sadly, like last year, there was no festive presentation. The papers came in the mail. Better luck next year. Things will get back to normal at some point. At least we hope so.



WHICH COLOUR DO WE HAVE TODAY?

Red, yellow, orange, or green? Portugal you must have seen!
This is no statement of mine. It was a sentence in an e-mail from one of our regular Dutch guests, just before he started his journey to Monte do Casarão. He has come here for years, together with his wife and sons. And he always comes by car. One of his sons has autism. As soon as they enter the sand road, he starts giggling and bouncing. He knows what it's like here. A place to come home to. No surplus of sensory and other stimuli, daily swimming, trips to the beach. People he knows well and who actually speak his mother tongue. And his father knows this: chances that you are infected with the Corona virus here are nil. For sad though it is, the Corona virus still dominates our daily lives. Wherever you are, whatever you do. Whether you compete in the Olympics or in the Tour de France, whether you go on holiday or enjoy a staycation. The ever-changing news items don't make it any easier. Still, Portugal you must have seen. All you need to do is get here.

THE TO DO LIST

We have been pretty busy in these times of Corona. Currently, we are full, but between November and May, we had few guests. Unfortunately, the painting week in April had to be cancelled (as had last year's by the way). Therefore, we had plenty of time to work on our to do list.



The road to Casa Valorosa has been upgraded. It took two huge truck mixers and a hose to lay down two good strips of concrete. We knew how to make it to the top, but it was rather an ordeal for our guests. The bumpety-bum drive up in first gear did take some getting used to the road. Now things are a lot easier. A bit less thrilling, but still, we chose for the somewhat elderly and less adventurous among us. The library-cum-studio also metamorphosed. I have been given half the garage, which has been my long-cherished desire. It has become a lovely place where it is pleasant to hang out. We are going to add a stove, so that it is nice in winter, too. By the end of May, we have bottled the red

wine. We have (well, had) 78 bottles. Excellent wine. A bit too many tannins just now, but if you let it rest for some time, they will go. We already had white wine, 36 bottles, but most have been drunk by now. Between the various activities, Bas plotted a couple of beautiful walks, including altitude and GPS data that you can download on your phone. The walks take approximately 2,5 hours and are pretty demanding. For the *diehards*.

What else happened? I fell. On 30 March, hitting my right shoulder. Nothing was broken, we had that tested right away. Two months later, I arranged for an MRI scan after all. The top tendon has been torn. Four centimetres have gone, irreparably.

It's not all that dramatic. I hardly feel any pain, but I cannot lift my arm higher than 90 degrees. That means, I can no longer do certain things. Lifting my luggage into the overhead bins in a plane, for instance. And putting something into a case overhead. Bit impractical when the books in the library had to be put back, but oh well. A few adjustments go a long way.



NAMING

What is really funny about Portugal is that your doctor or medics in hospitals call you by your first name. There you are, waiting in the lobby or the waiting room, and suddenly you hear, Cornélia!

Elsewhere, too, it is customary to address people by their first name. Fernanda, who keeps house for us, always addresses me as Dona Nélia. Calling people by their first name does have a reason. The Portuguese are legally obliged to have two first names (more are allowed), but there is no limit to the number of surnames. You have your own surname (a married woman uses that name first), apart from the names of your father, mother, grandmother, grandfather, and husband. Six surnames are nothing unusual, but there can be more, if you use the names of your husband's family as well. Hence, the reason for the use of your first name. In a way, it does sound familiar.

Another bizarre thing: Wynand's sister-in-law gave him his birth announcement card. She had found it while she was clearing out. It turns out that his name isn't Wynand at all, but Winant. And his full name is not Wynandus but Winandus. It's as if you are suddenly someone else. The name in his passport is Wynandus. Wynandus Maria Albertus. We suspect his dad must have been a bit distracted. Oh well, it's all in the game, as the famous Dutch playwright Bredero already said.



Nel