

# España Por Favour

Wrapped in a fluffy robe after a long day in the office, with a glass of wine and new best friend, the remote control, we've all indulged in the escapism of Channel 4's *Vacation, Vacation, Vacation*.



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We've each fantasised about swapping our humdrum existence for a sun-drenched new life, and snapping the heels off our stilettos in exchange for an open-toed sandal. Then we lay out the power suit for tomorrow, set the alarm and turn in.

Not so, Annie Manson. Take your sombrero off to this girl. You see, she made it happen...

A former pupil of Aberdeen's St Margaret's, Annie grew up on the arable and cattle Kibblean Farm, Oldmeldrum.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Edinburgh, Annie's potential was identified by the Chemical Bank of America during the graduate 'milk round.'

It soon became clear that the account was closing on her interest in a banking career. After nearly three years in the City, Annie was introduced to Cordon Bleu chef, Clare Latimer of catering company, Clare's Kitchen. Annie's drive and enthusiasm intrigued Clare, who offered her a position.

Almost overnight, Annie was elevated from clearing tables to commandeering the kitchen as a self-taught chef. She went on to launch her own agency, Annie B's, catering for intimate dinner parties to elegant functions for thousands of guests.

Having entrusted her future to failing pension funds, and inspired by the C4 travel show, Annie set off for Costa de la Luz to find a pension solution that could double as a rental income property.

"I instantly fell in love with Casa Alegre - a townhouse in the final throes of restoration in the old Andalucian town of Vejer. With its courtyard pool and spectacular views over the Straits of Gibraltar to Morocco, it became more

of a wrench to leave with every weekend," said Annie, who moved there permanently in 2005.

She then awarded herself a gap year, immersing herself in the food and wines of Spain and visiting cookery schools in Tuscany and Sicily.

Annie boldly invested 20,000 Euros in transforming a disused sitting room in her rustic home into a teaching kitchen, and opened Annie B's Spanish Kitchen in summer 2009.

The school's tutors include the mothers of celebrated Spanish chefs - the undisputed masters of paella.

Her cookery school attracts foodies from around the globe, notably the US. There, students can acquire the art of cooking fast, fresh and fabulous food using ingredients from Spain's natural larder - all of which can be sourced at home.

#### Trend reader offer:

In conjunction with James Stuart from Morayshire, owner of neighbouring La Casa del Califa hotel in Vejer, Annie has put together a special 20% discount offer exclusive to Trend readers who'd like to explore Mediterranean cooking/dining.

The Trend cookery school/hotel accommodation offer will run for two dates only: Arrive Sunday 6th June, depart Friday 11th June 2010 or Arrive Sunday 19th September, depart Friday 24th September 2010.

Prices start at E750 per person, based on two sharing and E840 for a single room. Flights and transfers are not included. For full details of activities included in this flexible package, visit [www.trendmagazine.co.uk/media.php](http://www.trendmagazine.co.uk/media.php). Quote Trend at time of booking.