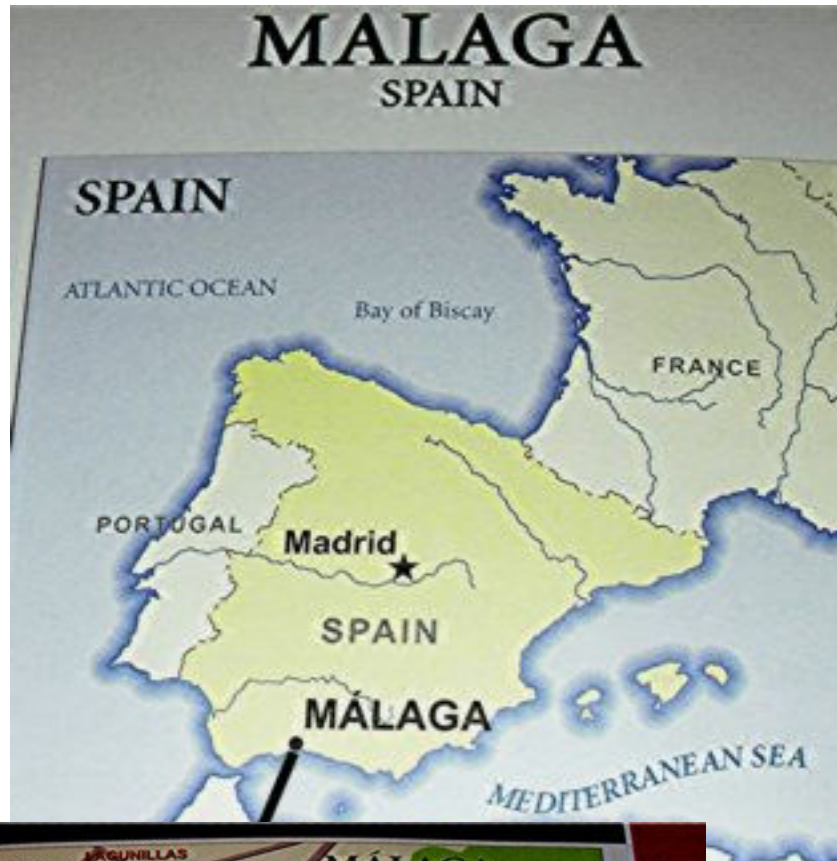
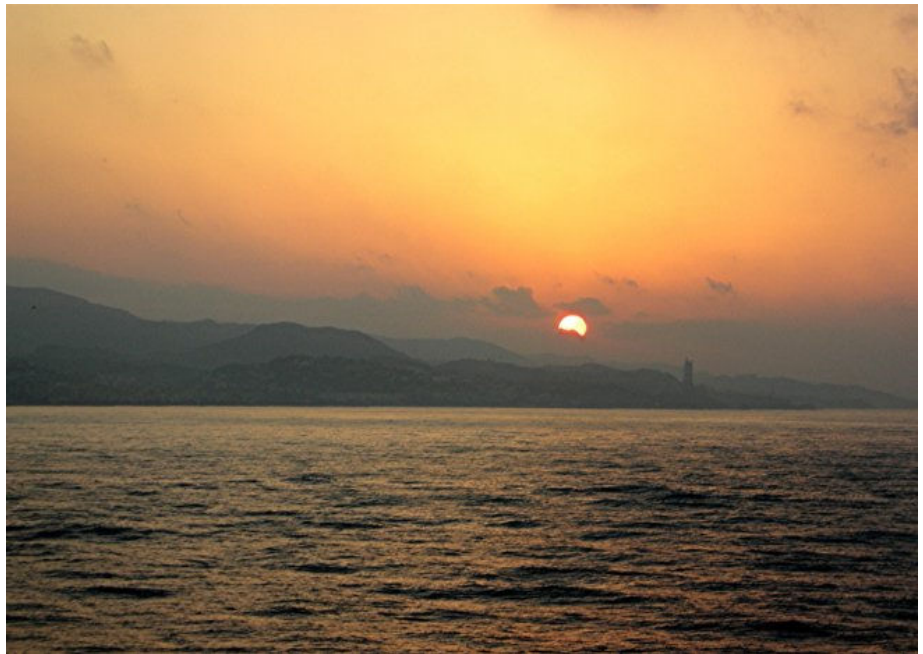


4/17/07 Day 92 – Malaga, Spain - Tuesday, 17 April, 2007: The Amsterdam arrived in the port of Malaga, Spain about 7am. The weather was cool and sunny. Here is where we were located on the map.



The sun was just coming up and we caught this view through the morning haze.



We had signed up for a four hour bus tour to the cities of Marbella and Puerto Banus. We headed for Marbella



about 8:30am in a southerly direction along the coast with our guide, Pedro. Along the way we saw a blend of old and new Arab/Spanish/European style construction of apartment and business buildings.



Marbella is a beautiful upscale city with high real estate and living costs. Pedro, who had a dry sense of humor, told us most of the people in Marbella were criminals who stole money by legitimate means (lawyers, doctors, politicians etc.). After about a 45 minute drive over a good freeway (right hand traffic) we arrived in downtown Marbella. Pedro led us through a brief walk through picturesque old streets and lanes and by several churches.



It was not quite 10am yet and the shops were not open so we pretty much had the sidewalks to our own little group of tourists.





Pedro took us to a beautiful plaza in the business district and turned us loose on our own for about 30 minutes. We browsed a few stores where we saw expensive clothes and jewelry for sale. For example, there was a pair of ladies sandals



priced at \$600 USD. We got the message quickly that Marbella was a destination for the rich and famous. The best part of this area was the plaza that had wide walkways paved with smooth colorful tile with lush tropical plants growing on all sides.



Part of the plaza was dedicated to artistic sculptures by the famous Spanish artist, Salvador Dali. We thought this one was supposed to be an elephant.

Bull fighting is popular in this region of Spain and some posters were out advertising an upcoming event. Barbara remembered to get her Oak Ridge Library card photographed in Marbella, Spain.



Marbella, Spain



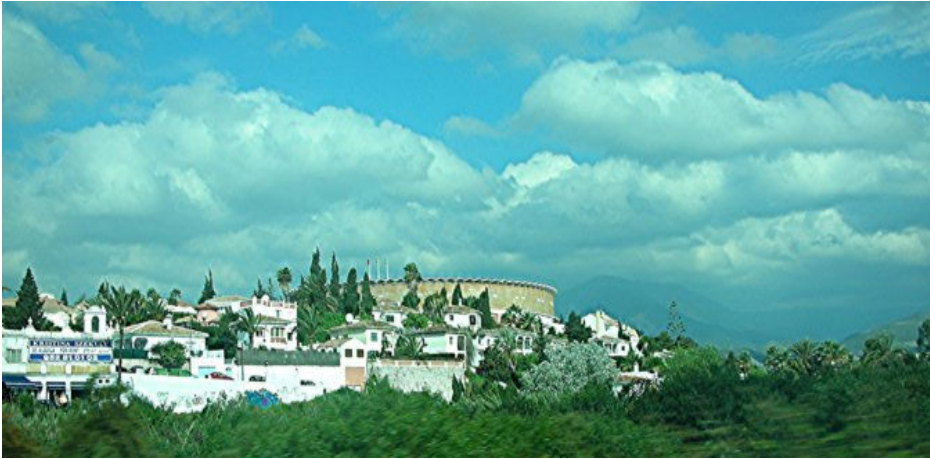
We finished up our visit to Marbella and headed over to Puerto Banus, about a 30 minute bus ride. The roads were getting a little more crowded by this time even though the

price of gasoline in this area is about \$5.75 USD per gallon.

The Arab and Muslim population in this part of Spain is large. One reason for this situation is the nearness of Africa and the heritage of invasions and commerce between Arab nations and Spain over the years. At one point our guide pointed out a Muslim Mosque with an Arab symbol in



the lawn. This classic Arab symbol is the sword constructed in white material as in the lawn shown above.



The guide informed us that Ernest Hemingway spent a lot of time in this region of Spain in the early 1900s. He wrote "For Whom the Bell Tolls",

while staying around here. Hemingway was a big fan of the bull fight. Bull fighting is still popular here and along the way to Puerto Banus we saw one of the large circular bull rings up on a hill, as shown above.

We arrived in the city of Puerto Banus and immediately went to the yacht harbor where Pedro said there were the "Floating Palaces" of the rich people in the area. Here is a view across some of the yachts and the adjacent luxury apartments and homes of Puerto Banus. This city did not seem as wealthy as Marbella but the people here were definitely in the upper income class. Puerto Banus and Marbella appeared to have more wealth than the typical American city.



This prominent Puerto Banus street sign installed in the center divider marks Avenida Julio Iglesias, the popular singer. This name took us back a few years to when we used to listen to his



singing. We didn't learn what connection he may have had to this city which named a street after him.

There was a nice park in Puerto Banus which we walked through and then it was time to return to Malaga. The bus took us back to the Amsterdam and we had lunch.



While walking around the deck of the Amsterdam we spied George and Dorothy Hennings swimming in the pool at the back of the ship. It was such a lovely day and perfect for swimming or just about anything. This swimming pool was filled with salt water and they said it had never been warmer so they

were having a good time. Here are George and Dorothy taking a dip with the beautiful city of Malaga in the background.

One reason we didn't take up the idea of swimming on this afternoon was that we wanted to do a little touring of the city of Malaga on our own. There was one of the "hop-on hop-off" type tour bus lines in Malaga that we planned to take. They ran several big red double decker buses with the top deck completely open. There were about 15 points of interest and enough buses so that if you got off at one of the stops, the next bus would be by to pick you up within about 15 minutes. They provided a verbal description of the sights of interest by way of personal ear pieces that plugged into a fitting at each seat. You could dial the language you wanted to hear by selecting the appropriate channel. It cost 15 Euro (about \$20 USD) per person and the ticket was good for getting on and off the bus for 24 hours after purchase. The day was sunny and cool and perfect for an open bus ride to see the historic and beautiful views around Malaga. Here are some pictures we took while taking this tour. The yellow bar at the bottom of some pictures is the railing of the upper level on the bus.

Horse drawn carriages were available for a romantic ride through Malaga.



There were plenty of palm lined streets and well kept parks. The city reminded us of Barcelona, Spain in many respects.

Pablo Picasso, the famous artist, was born in the Malaga building shown on the right. The building has now been converted into an institute for the study and promotion of the Picasso style of painting.

Across the street from the Picasso Institute was a large open square with vendors selling handicrafts and souvenirs.



This Spanish Galleon ship moored in the harbor of Malaga is actually a discotheque in the evening hours.

We finished up our tour of Malaga and returned to the Amsterdam.

During the day Captain van Zaane had announced the decision to cancel our visit to Casablanca, Morocco because of the risk of additional terrorist activity like that reported yesterday. Instead of going to Casablanca the ship was now going to the port of Gibraltar for a one day visit. The ship got underway for Gibraltar about 5:30pm.

This was a casual evening in the main dining room and we had special menus and funny chef's hats to wear while being served a special meal created by Holland America Line's

Master Chef Rudi Sodamin. The dining room was decorated with bright colors and the stewards paraded around the room carrying various kitchen utensils. Finally, with great fan fare they brought in colorful vegetables and mixed up a huge salad to bring the festivities to a noisy ending.



Here is the special menu that was created for the meal.

The stewards delivered each napkin with a flourish.

After all this excitement a wonderful meal was served. Later we retired for the night looking forward to our new destination of Gibraltar, an independent British colony. Tomorrow should be interesting.



