



# Marks & Gail's Spanish Trip

✉ Mark Stubbs

*Picture... driving on your favourite road, top down the sun's shining & not a cloud in the sky.*

*Better still, there is no traffic at all to spoil your enjoyment. Someone has removed all the hedges so you can enjoy the spectacular scenery & smoothed over the potholes with perfect tarmac. Welcome to Northern Spain....*

*More or less every year for the past 20 odd years I've ridden to Spain on my Motorbike, this year Gail & I decided to take the TR. The drive down to Portsmouth is the*

*worst part of the trip but we tough it out knowing what we have to look forward to. We set sail with Brittany Ferries, it's a 24 hour crossing but it's overnight so while we sleep we're getting closer to Santander. As we disembark we notice groups of Astons, TVR's, Jaguars & the like all fired up with anticipation that they're going to be able to really enjoy driving their cars for a change. Within 20 miles from the Port we remember why we came & the empty mountain roads open out before us. Set the Satnav to avoid major roads & another 150 miles later we're in Leon. We fill up ready for the next leg; fuel is about the same price as at home. I treat the TR to some super unleaded, it prefers that & is returning 28 mpg so happy days. We've pre-booked our hotels for two nights in each of our*

*stops. As long as it looks nice, is close to the centre with secure parking that pretty much ticks all the boxes. Two nights means a full day once you're there to relax & get to know the place. Maybe visit a Cathedral, Castle, Museum or whatever else the place has to offer. Eating out alfresco is the norm & inexpensive Tapas bars serve up breakfast much nicer than the hotels. Leaving Leon & sticking to the sweeping A-roads we set off for Burgos & our next stop. 160 miles later & we arrive at our Hotel, a very nice establishment with an underground car park & a short walk to the many bars & restaurants. Burgos is a beautiful City, one day really isn't enough & we plan to come back on a future road trip. In Spain there aren't really many classic cars & very few convertibles, the only other classics we spot are Brits doing the same as us. That just adds to the charm as everywhere you go there are thumbs up & admiring glances. I take every opportunity to hit the loud pedal so the locals can enjoy the TR's 6 cylinders. "It might not be big or clever, but it's wickedly good fun."*

*We meet a MGB on a world tour, the car is stickered up with all the countries they've visited. For the final two nights we head for Laredo on the Northern coast for a bit of a lazy time on the beach. Burgos to Laredo is another 140 miles & that leaves us about 50 miles to get back to Santander at the end of our six nights tour. 500+ miles in Spain with about 450 in the UK & it's not far off 1000 miles. I took the usual spares but they stayed in the boot, the TR dripped a bit of oil but didn't drink any and the drive a day / relax a day format worked perfectly for us & the car.*

*Would we go again? ... You bet!*

*Would I recommend it? .... absolutely!*

