

ACE TRAVEL

THIS MONTH, WE'D RATHER
BE PLAYING TENNIS IN...

Villamartin Spain with Affordable Holidays in the Sun

Why... For a tennis holiday your bank manager will approve of. Affordable Tennis Holidays in the Sun organises bargain stays on the Costa Blanca with accommodation costing on average around £100 per person, per week even in peak season, and court hire from just €4 per hour.

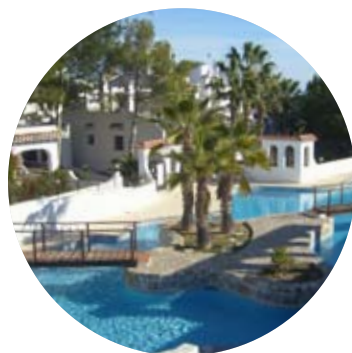
And while most tennis holidays provide access to a single tennis venue, here you can play at no less than four local clubs, so you get four times the on-court activities and courts.

Who... Largely British, club players (beginners and intermediates are catered for as well). Mix-ins and social tennis sessions allow for mingling with Spanish players and expats.

Playing... Tennis sessions are sold on a 'pay and play' basis, so you can hit the courts as much or as little as you like, and needn't cough up for an expensive package.

The four clubs have 17 courts between them and all are within a 15 minute drive of the

accommodation. There are plenty of social and drill sessions to choose from, costing €3 per hour upwards. There is also partner matching plus group and individual coaching.



Refuelling... Of Villamartin's many restaurants and bars, favourites include Casa Manolo (family-friendly with Spanish cuisine) and Meson del Lago (lakeside, alfresco dining beside a castle).

Pampering... Therapist Adrienne Hallam offers sports injury treatment, aromatherapy and Indian head massages in guest accommodation or at her nearby clinic.

Off-court attractions... There's a lovely sandy blue flag beach just five to ten minutes' drive from Villamartin and three golf courses within five minutes. Within an hour, there's the historic city of Murcia, the hill town of Altea and one of Europe's largest theme parks, Terra Mitica.

Rest & recuperation... Choose from a selection of two- and three-bedroom privately owned rental properties, from budget apartments to spacious villas. All have access to communal pools.

Getting there... Villamartin is 20 minutes from Murcia and 45 minutes from Alicante. Both airports are served by several low cost airlines from the UK, and have taxi ranks and car hire offices – we recommend hiring a car.

Paying... The average weekly price for accommodation only in July or August is £105pp, based on four people sharing a two-bed property. www.affordable-tennis-holidays-in-the-sun.com, 00 34 966 774263

MY
LIFE IN
QUOTESGIGI
FERNANDEZONE OF THE GREATEST
DOUBLES PLAYERS OF
ALL TIME SUMMED UP IN
A NUTSHELL

'I'm not the smartest person in my class, but I am the most competitive... somehow I turn everything into a competition.'

Why she was destined for sport

'I will take the fifth on that.'

How not to answer a question

'Thousands of fans are screaming. We're up a set and a break and then the King and Queen of Spain show up. We lose six games in a row. But we won it.'

On winning her first Olympic gold at the 1992 Barcelona games, defeating Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Martinez with doubles partner Mary Joe Fernandez



'I was going to go one way or another and she raised my game and took it to the next level... If not for her, I don't know where I'd be.'

How Julie Anthony, a pro-turned-psychologist, harnessed her skills

'I have no regrets. I wanted to win a gold medal and I did. I have never been controlled by what people say about me.'

She received criticism for representing the US rather than Puerto Rico

'I don't miss having to work so hard that I feel like sucking wind.'

Why it's nice to be retired

'I'm running around like a chicken with my head cut off.'

On combining kids, business ventures and an MBA