

Embrace your inner sloth with a stay at the Amàre Marbella Beach Hotel: It's the ultimate relaxing getaway... with service at the touch of a button

- On arrival you are instantly ensconced in a cocoon of calm as you're offered fruit-infused water
- Delicious Mediterranean fusion cuisine is served throughout in various sea-themed restaurants
- Waiters can even be called with a button both in the restaurants and by the pool for the ultra lazy getaway
- An extensive spa offering many treatments and a gym are just two of the added extras in the luxury spot

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Until now I had always considered 'adult only' hotels to have something of the risqué about them.

I had imagined them filled with enamoured couples feeding each other strawberries, dancing on the beach at sunset, massages à deux and champagne in bed.

You can of course do all these things at Amàre Marbella Beach hotel in the south of Spain it turns out - and you don't necessarily need to have that special someone to share it with... although it might help.



The hotel, which only opened in February of this year, attracts groups of friends as well as solo travellers and couples looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and enter a cocoon of elegance and calm



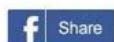


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And you don't have to travel far to achieve it, with Malaga airport just a two-and-a-half-hour flight from London and the hotel a 45-minute taxi transfer – it's the ultimate tranquil weekend getaway.

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The fruit-infused water on arrival and the large, airy open space of the lobby looking out onto the beachfront instantly relaxes me. And that's before I've even got to my room.

The minute I slot my key card in classical music starts to fill the contemporary room - of course it does, I think to myself as I take in the sheer expanse of white, the sea-view balcony and the little bowls of sweets waiting for me – the perfect pick me up after a flight – and yep, strawberries.

But it's when I climb into the shower that the 'adult' element comes fully creeping back to me though: the cubicle is made entirely of glass and juts out into the bedroom with just a thin curtain to pull across one side.

While I sadly have no other half to share what could well be a Hollywood-worthy scene, I content myself with brazenly pulling aside the curtain and enjoying the view of the blue sky and sea across the bed as I lather in the shampoo. It's a far cry from the peeling ceiling and mouldy bath in my rented house in London.





Each restaurant at the hotel encompasses a relaxed and unpretentious atmosphere with the menus ensuring quality food and variety



The Amàre lounge- a modern space with a chill-out area and bar - opens up onto the pool where sunbeds of all shapes and sizes greet you





It's easy to forget your troubles with a view like this be it with friends or a partner - just remember your sunscreen!



During the day, the Amàre Pool is the perfect place to relax and unwind. The spacious sunbeds come with a 'call button' that is conveniently linked to a watch worn by the staff, ensuring that every whim is catered for

Refreshed, I head down to the restaurant in the Amàre lounge for lunch – a modern space with a chill-out area and bar which opens up onto the pool.

The menu offers so many tempting options that it is nigh impossible to choose but eventually I plump for a starter of guacamole, hummus and pitta bread twinned with sparkling sangria. Is it terribly naive of me to admit I had previously thought sangria could only be red and still?

The guacamole is some of the best I'd had in a long time, but nothing could prepare me for the rack of mouth-watering BBQ ribs which just fall off the bone – thankfully avoiding any inelegant bone gnawing and messy sauce smearing. A glass of crisp, local white wine rounds off the perfect first Marbellan meal.

And should you need anything else, no awkward gesticulating at a waiter is needed, you quite simply push a button on the table and a server will magically appear – ideal if you're trying to enjoy a romantic moment and don't want to ruin it by yelling across the room in Spanish-accented English in the hopes that the barmen will understand better (or is it only my mother who does that?).

After all that indulgence I haul myself to the beachfront. The vast sun loungers are laid out so snugly in twos I can't help think that, like the showers, they really would be better shared. Not to mention they are incredibly

comfortable (not like those nasty plastic ones you're forced to shell out €20 for to some beady-eyed, monosyllabic man in budgie smugglers on other European beaches).



The exclusive Amàre beach area offers comfortable sunbeds, massages on the beach and as the sun sets, guests can enjoy the chilled out sounds of the resident DJ, who plays a set every afternoon



Guests will also experience special events, such as the 'Amàre evenings', with performances and acrobatics, vibrant 'Cuban



The Amare Beach restaurant is one of the best places to eat in Marbella. This beach side restaurant offers tasty tapas, the freshest seafood, as well as wood-fired pizzas and gourmet burgers

It is bizarre but entirely welcome not to be surrounded by wailing children. Instead one simply lies and listens to the waves crashing gently onto the beach and the cries of the fishermen out on the promenade (which would explain the abundance of fresh sea-food on all the menus).

For those feeling adventurous of an afternoon, the hotel also offers rather fetching bikes, complete with wooden, faux-rustic bicycle boxes. Sadly, being the same height as the average UK 12-year-old boy I am unable to use them without my feet dangling off the ground. It is the only point of the holiday when I wish the hotel offered kids versions too.

Before dinner I make my way up to the Belvue Rooftop Bar – the only one of its kind in Marbella, offering unrivalled, panoramic views of the Mediterranean. I was told it's the perfect sunset-watching location (no doubt perfect for smug couples looking for that selfie moment) but I am much more intrigued by the mist settling atmospherically upon the mountains behind the hotel.

Dinner is served buffet-style in the Mare Nostrum restaurant, which offers Mediterranean fusion cuisine throughout the day. Inviting fire pits are dotted around the room, which is designed in cool white and blue hues and looks out on to the sea.

Everything about the urban, sophisticated interior of the hotel – with steel and glass making up the three-dimensional shapes and curves used throughout the building - reflects the Mediterranean landscape.

Again here I am spoilt for choice with food. Helpful chefs are on hand to whip up the options du jour, be it fresh pasta with a range of sauces, or succulent langoustines, cooked to perfection before your eyes. Mini salads and cold sides are also on offer. The hotel in general appears to like tiny things, I observe, as dessert too is an enchanting collection of tiny cakes as well as an abundance of fresh fruit.

Eventually, exhausted from travelling, the decadent meals and the too-easy-to-drink wine, my bed beckons. I am delighted to find it has been already turned down, with gentle mood lighting glowing. Resisting the temptation to pillage the excellently stocked mini bar I ready myself for sleep.

While the enormous white bed is very comfortable, it is somewhat irksome to be able to hear quite so much

and opening drawers, but what if it had been a couple, enthused by the Flamenco Evening downstairs (just one of the musical performances laid on by the hotel) settling in for a night of passion? Thank goodness I'd had the forethought to bring ear-plugs.



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The Mare Nostrum Restaurant serves a fantastic breakfast buffet in the morning and Mediterranean fusion cuisine throughout the day, using only the freshest local ingredients



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During the evening, entertainment is on offer to suit every guest, such as themed parties, live music and a mojito or two





The evenings are perfect for enjoying signature sundowners with incredible panoramic views of the Mediterranean Sea, from the only rooftop bar in Marbella, Bel Vue



Opposite the sea are impressive mountains - atmospheric when the mist settles upon them





The rooftop bar is worth the trek to the top of the building for its delicious selection of cocktails

Those who do enjoy some late-night fun will be glad to know that breakfast continues until 11am and is definitely worth going to. Name a breakfast food and it is probably on offer - from classic fry-up fare to local cheeses and honey as well as jugs of glorious fresh orange juice, all of which can be enjoyed on the outside terrace.

For tourists looking to get out and about the traditional charm of Marbella old town is a mere five minutes walk away while the glittering glam of party town Puerto Banus is just a short taxi ride from the hotel.

But for those who just want to make the most of Amàre (the word itself mingling the Spanish terms for love and the sea) there's plenty more to do, be it swinging in the poolside cushioned chairs and ordering cocktails, relaxing in the VIP 'The One' lounge for those lucky enough to have upgraded (it's worth it for the help-yourself booze), or heading down to the gym and spa.

Needless to say I myself instantly eschew the gym - I have come abroad to find peace not sweat and exercise (at least not alone...) so I head down to explore the pool and jacuzzi as well as the sauna and the steam room before heading to a candlelit Aromas of Andalusia Massage.

I have to say its name is somewhat misleading as I can't smell any of the lavender, olives and citric fruits it purported to be using and despite asking the masseuse to use more force, it remains a somewhat bland experience throughout - perfectly pleasant, but perhaps not worth its hefty €80 plus price tag.

But when the time comes to leave I was loathe to leave my bubble of harmony and return to the toil and strife of the real world. You mean I can't summon people at the touch of a button?

Amàre has certainly got my blessing. But perhaps next time I'll go with a dashing young man and put that glass shower to its proper use.

