



The Olive Grove has wrap-around mountain views



The rustic-chic outdoor lounge



Jade and husband Stephen take in the stunning view



Overhanging trees make the terrace a pretty spot to dine al fresco

Best for...

Living the good life, Spanish-style

Editor Jade Beer visits The Olive Grove near Malaga, Spain

where the owners are as passionate about tapas and Rioja as they are about design

THERE IS NOTHING BETTER THAN ARRIVING ON YOUR HONEYMOON

to be greeted by a selection of aphrodisiac nibbles and a glass of perfectly chilled local bubbles. It sets the tone (upscale, well-thought-through and luxurious) for the extravagance that lies ahead. The Olive Grove is the love child of owners Alan and Marc, who couldn't be more passionate about food and design – and, at this property, they have combined the best of both.

You'll arrive by car (probably from Malaga airport, 45 minutes away) and wind your way around the mountain roads (sometimes with white knuckles) until you

reach the unmistakably Andalucian property built with authentic stone and woodwork, and surrounded by almond, olive and fig trees and plenty of Moscatel vines. It's the perfect visual aperitif for what lies ahead.

Inside, the sprawling house is crammed full of beautiful local design touches, from the Spanish antiques to the hand-stitched tapestry headboards and the bodega stocked with local wines which you simply open when you fancy. Don't worry if you know nothing about wine: they have been hand-selected by in-house chef David, so they're all good – take his word for it (and mine: I tried quite a few!)

David is available as much or as little as you like. He will appear on request to knock up a truly authentic paella, or you can hire him 24/7 and not lift a saucepan yourself once. Combine that with the fully hosted option (think wonderful add-ons such as food shopping, daily maid service, the pool prepped each morning and airport meet-and-greet all taken care of for you) and you've got yourself a seriously relaxing honeymoon.

Five-star service with the peace and privacy that a mountainous location provides is at the heart of what this gastro-villa has to offer. The owners are

local, so they have an endless supply of personal recommendations, should you want to get out and about – everything from tours of olive mills and wineries to hiking up mountains, an outing to Malaga's famous food markets and even a day trip skiing in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Feeling lazy? Then book some spa treatments poolside, or relax on one of the secluded outdoor terraces and watch your own private Flamenco display, set against a backdrop of the African mountains across the Mediterranean. There's no need to feel guilty about the over-indulgence. An indigenous tree is planted for each couple that visits – so it ticks the eco box too!

● A stay at **The Olive Grove, Malaga** (theolivegrove.uniquehomestays.com) starts at £1,914 for a three-night weekend stay in low season, or £4,785 for a seven-night stay. EasyJet (easyjet.com) flies from the UK to Malaga from £49 per person return.