

## **PRESS PACK**

### **Travel Writer Invitation**

Reporters are invited to come as “regular” participants to get the most out of the experience. Attending for one or two days does not give the best representation of the program and its results, so we would highly recommend that you come for the week to really get involved with all the people and get a feel for the philosophy at one of the villages. A list of our dates can be found on our website [www.puebloingles.com](http://www.puebloingles.com)

Regular participants are asked to choose up to five possible dates and we then match their profile with a group that they will best fit into. Travel writers will immediately be put into the program of their first choice (assuming enough notice is given), bypassing any waiting lists. We are particularly looking for exposure in major English-speaking countries such as the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. However, communication targeted at other native English speakers from countries such as South Africa, the Netherlands, India, the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong is also desirable. Our target age range is 25-45 year-old participants but other ages are also considered.

### **Please Follow These Guidelines**

- Always refer to the program and our company as Pueblo Ingles. Our old name “Englishtown” has been discontinued for some time and for legal reasons we can no longer use it. Nor should Vaughan Village be quoted as one of our names.
- For contact information, we prefer that our telephone number and address are not listed as applications cannot be made by phone or letter. Instead, direct the audience to our website at [www.puebloingles.com](http://www.puebloingles.com) where they will find all the information they need.
- Please note that we run TEEN PROGRAMS in the month of July while running adult programs simultaneously at other venues. This means that families can travel to Spain together.

## **HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

### **Pueblo Ingles – The Birth of an Idea**

The project, launched in 2000, was created as a complimentary tool to traditional English teaching methods. Many Students reported that their hundreds of hours of traditional class did not prepare them for putting their language skills into practice at business meetings and conference calls. The frustration and anxiety that they felt, while trying to express themselves, had to be addressed. As a result two business partners, one in the English language industry and the other a financial expert, launched Pueblo Ingles. After discovering the restored village of Valdelavilla, they knew it was the perfect place to promote the enrichment of the English language. This charming village would offer true English immersion in the heart of Spain.

### **Venue Inauguration Timeline**

July 2001 – Pilot program in Valdelavilla, Soria.

January 2003 – Introduced new venue in Barco de Ávila.

Nov 2004 – New venue opened in La Alberca, Salamanca.

July 2004 – The creation of the Teen program (hosted at La Alberca).

July 2005 – Launched new venue in Tuscany, Italy.

March 2006 – Launched new venue in Cazorla.

July 2006 – Italian venue changed to rural Umbrian resort.

December 2006 – Adding to the portfolio, Mas Salvi in the village of Pals, Costa Brava.

### **General Manager - Juan Carlos Medina**

Juan Carlos is a 47-year old financial expert and entrepreneur from Soria. In July 2001, Juan Carlos went to Valdelavilla to guide the brave group of Spaniards and Anglos (term we use for native English speakers) through what is now the best-known English immersion course of its type in Spain. Before expanding the team, this challenging beginning meant single-handedly leading the program in Valdelavilla whilst generating business to secure its future success. Now based at the head office in Madrid, his travels are over but he still keeps in contact with the people he met on those first programs in Valdelavilla.

## **THE PROGRAM**

### **Pueblo Ingles Formula and Goals**

The challenge of those that try to master a second language is always the same: **putting the knowledge they acquire in class into practice in an authentic environment.**

Most Spanish students who study English have very limited **contact with native speakers and normally only hold basic conversations** on general topics. The sheer concentration, up to 15 hours a day, of English at Pueblo Ingles cannot be matched by a trip to a native English speaking country. This fact coupled with the plethora of accents represented at every 8-day program makes Pueblo Ingles an oasis of English in the heart of Spain. A diverse group of 20 English speakers from all over the world and 20 students get together for an intense immersion program that aims to:

- Expose them to hours on end of real English, spoken by native speakers whose English is not watered down nor stilted by hundreds of hours teaching the language.
- Prove to them that they are capable of expressing themselves in intelligible English, even though they may make three hundred mistakes an hour.
- Hone their listening skills by exposing their ear to a non-stop symphony of English.
- Prove to them that being effective with the English language does not require perfect mastery of grammar nor a broad spectrum of vocabulary.
- Force them to stop translating mentally from Spanish to English when they speak. At Pueblo Ingles they will not have time to translate, whereby the immersion method will, in only 8 days, break a bad habit they have had for years.
- Remove the mystique from the English language and make the Spanish participants realise that it is within their reach and is a means of communication which they are quite capable of using.

### **The Immersion Method – More than 12 hours of Conversation a Day**

The students hear and speak English with an intensity that cannot be found in any other part of the world. The daily interactions include breakfast, lunch and dinner, 'one-to-one conversations', conference calls, role plays, presentations and theatre. Needless to say, the student is subjected to a non-stop barrage of the language worth several months of traditional English classes.

Not even in your own language do you talk such a number of hours in a day. Whilst the students are immersed in this linguistic adventure, they also share a unique cultural exchange which further enriches their experience. Most importantly, they gain the ability to interact with confidence in an English-speaking environment, whether in a business presentation or simply chatting on the phone.

## On-site Activities

- One-to-one conversations (one-hour conversation rotations with each participant)
- Telephone conversations (talking on the telephone is much more difficult in a foreign language)
- Business conference calls
- Debates and negotiations
- Group activities (creating adverts, team building games etc)
- Theatre and improvisation skills
- Workshop on presentation skills

## Results

The students learn vocabulary and expressions they wouldn't normally learn in a classroom environment. After breaking psychological barriers and overcoming moments of insecurity they find themselves progressing with a confidence that normally takes months to reach. Pueblo Ingles provides this confidence which is the key to successfully speaking and even thinking in English. Without a doubt, this is not only an academic endeavour, but also a personally enriching experience.

## Specialised Programs

### Teen programs

In the summer of 2004 Pueblo Ingles launched two TEEN Pueblo Ingles programs – the exact same philosophy but geared towards 14 to 18 year olds. Teenaged Anglo volunteers from all around the world populated our village for this special edition that enjoyed the same success as the adult programs. Due to increasing demand, we have increased the number of programs each year. In the summer of 2007 we will be hosting 4 programs filled with teens from the U.K, the U.S., Australia and elsewhere. The teen programs run simultaneously with the adult programs, making it possible for families to travel together yet enjoy time apart in different villages.

### English for Doctors

Each year, we offer Doctors-only programs. Well-known pharmaceutical companies, sponsor physicians to take part in this unique career development program. Apart from the regular program content, particular emphasis is placed on improving the doctors' vocabulary in their field and we specifically look for Anglos in this profession.

## Background on the Participants

### Who are the Anglos?

It's impossible to determine a typical Anglo profile. We receive applications from a varied range of ages, backgrounds and interests. They must be native English speakers with a professional and/or academic background. Armed with stories of travels and experiences from day-to-day life, they must also possess the patience and give the support required to help the Spaniards feel at ease while they are out of their depth. Their personality is the most valuable asset at the village. Intellectually stimulating characters with the ability to have fun and at times be frivolous are most desirable.

### Country of Origin

USA	53%	
Canada	14%	
Ireland	4%	
U.K	14%	
Australia	3.5%	
New Zealand	1%	
Other	10.5%	These are approximate 2007 figures

## Who are the students?

About 80% of our clients come from Spanish and multinational companies. The remainder are young students who use Pueblo Ingles as a first step into the “English World” before going abroad. Most of the Spanish participants have already had at least 300 hours of English instruction with professional teachers in the years or months leading up to their attendance at Pueblo Ingles. There is one main requirement: a minimum level of English (at least a level 4 must be achieved in our Pueblo Ingles scale of 1-8). The average level is a 5 (intermediate) and the average age is 45.

More than 600 companies have chosen Pueblo Ingles over sending their employees abroad. Here are a few of our top clients:

The Guardia Civil	Arthur Andersen	Caja Madrid	Morgan Stanley
Microsoft	HP	Carrefour	Eriksson
Accenture	Mapfre	Unilever	Volkswagen
Deloitte & Touch	Ernst & Young	Nestle	Indra
Vodafone	Accenture	Lilly Laboratories	Allianz
Mercadona	Mercedes Benz	Danone	Diageo
Cosmopolitan	Pfizer	Hachette	

## The Venues

### Valdelavilla, Soria. Opened July 4, 2001

Valdelavilla is a small town in the highlands of Soria that dates back to the 18th century. It was reconstructed as a rural tourist complex after its abandon in the 60's. Due to its special climate, architectural and landscaping characteristics and its abundant flora and fauna it is considered as one of the best-preserved natural sites in Spain.

Its stone-walled houses, cobblestone streets and quaint atmosphere make it an easy favourite for volunteers who want that “authentic Spanish experience”. The village is nestled in a valley and even in its heyday, its population probably never surpassed 30 families. Its 12 charming stone houses with wooden beams and old country charm flank the cobbled streets where our international mix of people strolls daily.

Open from April to October.



### La Alberca, Salamanca. Opened November 2004

This venue is situated in the south-west corner of the Castile and Leon region. It is one of the most important villages in the area – well known for its traditions and customs that date back to the 15th Century. It was also the first village in Spain to be declared a *National Heritage Site* in 1940. It is located only 70 km from Salamanca with a population of a little less than 1,200 and attracts tourists from all over Spain. Surrounded by four mountain ranges from the east the Sierra de Bejar, from the west the La Peña de Francia and from

the north both the Sierra de Francia and the Sierra de Kilama, La Alberca's landscape is something to be seen. This medieval village still preserves its architecture, especially in its town centre where expert blacksmiths and traditional professions can still be found. Participants are lodged in a four-star rural complex, in 2-room houses that have a self-contained kitchen and living area.

Open from April to November and hosts the Teen programs in the summer.

#### **Italy – Villaggio Inglese. Opened August 2005**

The pilot program was launched in Tuscany in 2005 but is now situated in Umbria, in a medieval village which has been restored using period materials to maintain its authenticity. It is located in the heart of the lush green HighValley of the Tevere offering "city slickers" a slice of the real country life. Being largely remote, with the nearest village of Citta di Castello 10kms away, the fresh air and countryside surroundings make a refreshing change to a busy everyday life. The spectacular views of the hills are clouded in mist in the autumn mornings and by lunch all is revealed for those fabulous photographic moments. Whether it be in the chapel, under the pergola or in front of the fountain the quirky little nooks and crannies of Borgo de Celli mean that each session of the program can be enjoyed in a different setting. The hotel staff is a delight and makes you feel very welcome from the moment you arrive.



#### **Cazorla, Jaen. Opened March 2006**

Surrounded by the Cazorla and the Segura Mountains, the village of Cazorla lies in the heart of the olive oil producing region of Jaen in Andalucia. The Sierra de Cazorla is one of Spain's largest protected natural areas and has very extensive forested areas. The venue, a rural hotel complex located at the foot of the Yedra Castle, is overlooked by the mountains and boasts marvelous panoramic views and lush gardens. La Villa Turistica de Cazorla is made up of 32 white-washed villas with beautiful terraces in a peaceful environment.

#### **Pals, Girona, Costa Brava. Opened July 2007**

This renovated 17th century manor house, by the name of Mas Salvi, is the most exclusive venue to date. Surrounded by its own private woods and lush gardens, and situated close to three golf courses, this resort is as beautiful as it is functional. Boasting a host of facilities and offering exquisite traditional cuisine with a modern twist, this Catalonian jewel will be witness to the most English conversation ever heard between its walls!



## Quotes from the Mass Media

*"Here's the formula: Take 15 to 20 Spaniards who speak English (but don't necessarily "understand" English speakers), 15 to 20 native English speakers (who, preferably don't know any Spanish) and put them together for 8 days. Make them eat together, talk business together, room together, talk families together, play games together, talk politics together, walk together, talk values together, party together, talk dirty together, laugh together, and talk and talk and talk together. From 9 in the morning until 10 or 11 or midnight or . . .*

*Oh, and EVERY SINGLE WORD OF ALL THAT TALK HAS TO BE IN ENGLISH."*

**Chicago Tribune**

*"In Spain, Pueblo Ingles recruits English speakers to provide Spaniards with eight-day total immersion English courses. If you like talking to people on a variety of different subjects and are patient and helpful, the company will pick up the tab for your hotel room and all your meals for eight days.*

**CNN**

*"If you are naturally garrulous and in need of something different ... the online testimonials from previous participants suggest that you might just have the holiday of your life."*

**Irish Times**

*"Yes, it is possible to get things for free, even in Europe at the peak of summer high season. This freebie is a remarkable one: two weeks room and board in a remote Spanish village in July. We know you're waiting, so here it comes--of course, nothing comes completely free. The catch is that you have to speak English (easy), and must talk for almost every waking hour with Spanish businesspeople who've paid to be a part of an English immersion project (also easy, but may possibly drive you crazy). You don't need to speak Spanish because you are not going to be teaching--just talking."*

**Frommers**

## Quotes from the participants

*"I think the whole program was wonderfully organised, professionally run, and because of this, enables the week to become much more than just an extended English lesson. For me, and I know for many others that I talked to last week, our week in valdevilla was a lesson in people and cultures... two things which I personally hold very dear. For this I say thank you to you all."*

**Mark Lawrence, Participant, August 2006**

*"The biggest single lesson from my participation in Pueblo Ingles is that no matter where people are from, they have far more in common than they do in contrast."*

**Shane Stokes, Ireland. Participant, August & November 2004**

*"...it was a wonderful experience and I could see the vast improvement in language skills among all the Spanish people by the end of the week."*

**Sallie Henry, Frisco, Texas. Participant, September 2004**

*"My experience at Valdelavilla last week was wonderful. Words cannot really express the times I had, the people I met, the things I learned and the breathtaking moments I experienced"*

**Julie Basch, Westmont, IL, July 2004**

*"I saw a powerful immersion program that was very demanding and remarkably successful. People that could barely get by in English conversation at the most rudimentary level when we first met were able to discuss abstract and theoretical issues, present their personalities as they couldn't hope to do on day one, and have a good time doing it. Their command of the language grew, their confidence grew, and our overall sense of community grew."*

**David Mandelblatt, Oregon, August 2003**