

LIFE'S A BEACH

TO BEAT THE SLUMP IN THE IRISH SPRING WEATHER, U READER **JULIANNE KELLY** HEADED OFF ON A BARGAINOUS ACTIVITY HOLIDAY IN THE SUN WITH HER FELLA...

With no sign of it getting any warmer heading into spring, myself and my boyfriend decided there was only one way out of the gloom and that was a holiday in the sun! And with Easter and St Patrick's day falling so close it meant we could go away without using up all our holidays!

Rather than take a trip to the south of Spain and just sit on the beach we decided to look further afield and because my boyfriend wanted to try surfing, we thought we'd try and go on a surf and sun holiday (good for both of us!).

We asked a few people and looked around on the web and

settled on an Irish company called surfholidays.com. They had a few different options for self-catering places and we decided to go to the one close to Lisbon as neither of us had been there before. We stayed in their Eco-Lodges which were really different and funky.

The town was called Ericeira (pronounce Hairy Sarah!) and was less than an hour from Lisbon. I'd recommend anyone to go there, it's a gorgeous fishing village with a cool chilled out surf vibe running through it. It's not built up and there are no Irish bars or sports pubs - just really nice restaurants and bars. We tried different restaurants each night, and became best friends with Pedro and Sofia,

the owners of one called Tik Tak - delicious steaks! And we went to what we were told is the oldest nightclub in Portugal - set right on the cliffs with the waves pounding against them below - spectacular!

So next to the surfing! Part of the package was six days of surf lessons. I was a bit apprehensive at first because I'd never tried it before but our instructor took us through everything on the beach before we went into the water. His name was Alvaro and he was a carbon copy of Jose Mourinho; he was really nice but we couldn't help copying his accent - although he did laugh at us a lot as we attempted to surf so I guess we were even. He was also very accommodating as our promise of

meeting him at 11am on the beach everyday didn't always work out!!!

By the end of it I was loving it - standing up on the boards all the time. My boyfriend was taken out into the bigger waves on the last few days and loved it too.

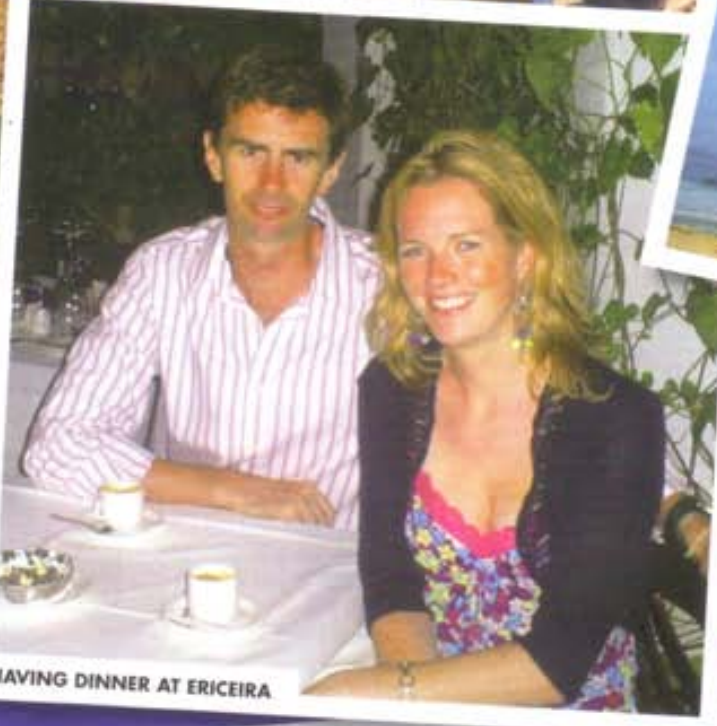
The weather averaged about 22-25 degrees, so nice not having to put on shoes and just wander around in shorts and a t-shirt. Alvaro told us in the summer it stays between 27-30 degrees.

All in all we spent about €650 each including flights, accommodation, lessons and spending money which is pretty amazing I think!

We are now going to plan our next one... **U**



JOE GETTING READY AND THEN SURFING THE WAVES!



HAVING DINNER AT ERICEIRA

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

We want to hear more of our readers fab travel reviews, and as a thank you, we are pleased to be able to offer a copy of the *Lonely Planet BlueList 2008* for those whose stories are published. The *BlueList* is the definitive travel guide for the year to come and is full of quirky content on the hottest places to travel to for 2008.

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Include about 450 words & six high quality pics please!
The U crew



THE PRAIA D'AZUL, IN ERICEIRA, PORTUGAL



ME, STANDING IN FRONT OF THE WAVE MACHINE