

A large graphic celebrating a 25th anniversary. It features the number '25' in a bold, black, sans-serif font inside a white circle. A red ribbon banner with the word 'anniversary' in white, lowercase, sans-serif font is draped across the bottom of the circle. The background of the entire image is a photograph of a modern shopping plaza with a covered walkway, metal railings, and various plants.

25
anniversary

CENTRO plaza



Shopping & Business



CENTRO PLAZA



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CENTRO PLAZA'S Anniversary.

In 1990, Nueva Andalucía's first shopping centre, CENTRO PLAZA, opened its doors to members of the public. It was one of the first establishments in Marbella to combine leisure and business by placing a variety of shops and offices in the same precinct; with a greater professional profile, and more offices, than others of the same kind. After 25 years of successful operation, CENTRO PLAZA is now the fourth oldest shopping centre of its kind in the province of Malaga.

A pioneer not only in the Costa del Sol, but also in Spain, this complex has managed to maintain its own style. It chose, and still conserves, a modern, elegant way of offering products, services and entertainment to its customers, and is unique in the pleasant, multicultural coexistence it has created for them, which mirrors the style of the city itself.

After 25 years of business that form an essential part of Marbella's history, CENTRO PLAZA is now, in 2015, a successful commercial community made up of both owners and tenants functioning in harmony. The multi-business was initially conceived by promoter administrators URBERMAR and other associated companies, who envisaged the need for a new shopping centre in the growing and stylish residential area of Nueva Andalucía. Their constructors created a classical building that stands out amongst other architectural styles of its time and, unlike most shopping centers of that era, boasts a sense of individuality with its inclusion of wide open spaces and stunning views of the sea and mountains.

The various businesses at CENTRO PLAZA, some of whom have been at the complex for 25 years, have maintained a successful form of economic management that has allowed them to continue operating in an excellent manner. As they blow out the candles on their 25th anniversary, the companies and professionals who unite under the name of CENTRO PLAZA, have only one wish. They want to hold on to the status they have earned up until this day, in the minds of both businessmen and consumers:

"The model centre for BUSINESS AND LEISURE CENTRE in Nueva Andalucia, Marbella and Costa del Sol"

THE MODEL CENTRE FOR
BUSINESS AND LEISURE IN
NUEVA ANDALUCIA,
MARBELLA AND THE
COSTA DEL SOL



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1. Introduction: Every reason to celebrate: 25 years of activity!

Centro Plaza, the model shopping centre in Nueva Andalucía, Marbella, is celebrating 25 years of functioning as a healthy business. It is an anniversary that connotes a sense of wisdom for the centre and bestows a great symbolic weight in its history.

On one hand, the 25th anniversary of Centro Plaza is about the progression of time itself, having held its opening in 1990. The fact that the precinct has managed to stay in the competitive business world, particularly in the demanding sector of shopping centres, is commendable in itself. On the other hand, the initiative to create a timetable of events spread out throughout 2015, as well as the decision to organize an "official institutional festive event" to mark this anniversary, indicates a different element: the community of owners' desire to stop for a moment and broadcast their feelings of pride and gratitude.

25 YEARS ON:
PRIDE & GRATITUDE





CENTRO PLAZA



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2. Centro Plaza's Career: Past, present and future.

The idea of businesses working together in a shared commercial space, for better sales and customer service, goes a long way back in history. However, shopping centres, as we know them today, originate from the U.S.A. in the mid-20th century and later spread out to other countries. Their development in Spain began a bit later, but once they started in the 80s of the last century, they took off with a blast. Now at their peak in 2015, according to figures from the AEEC, there are currently 545 establishments of this type. These commercial spaces take up **15,438,733 m2 of gross leasable area**, bring together more than **33,000 businesses** and employ approximately **327,000 people**.

The economic indicators also reflect the importance of shopping malls in Spain: **they represent a fourth of the GDP** generated by Spain's commercial sector. Therefore, it is currently an essential economic sector, one which has now reached maturity and anticipates a very positive future in the next biennium.

In this interesting evolutionary context we **LOCATE CENTRO PLAZA**. The establishment made its appearance on the timeline of Spanish shopping centres in 1990. Soon after its opening, it became **the pioneer of the new leisure and consumption model which businesses in Spain and around the world started to use**. Such multi-companies should not only be viewed from an economic perspective, as they also extend their purposes to offer products and services that bring about a sense of culture (they are considered postmodern spaces with their own social ecosystems). After sustaining 25 years of activity, CENTRO PLAZA's position amongst both national and local shopping centres has gained historical importance and is now a **living example** of that original model, with its own unique characteristics.

In its early days, the newly-opened space contained a total of **16,000 m2** (spread out over four floors), with **70 shops and 24 offices** available for rent to business from various sectors, including high-end real estate services, professional offices (such as lawyers and architects) and renovation businesses with an international focus. It also contained 300 parking spaces (the joint capacity of the exterior and underground parking).

PIONEER AND LIVING
EXAMPLE OF THE
SHOPPING CENTRE IN
SPAIN'S ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL CULTURE



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2. Centro Plaza's Career: Past, present and future.

CENTRO PLAZA has not needed to resize but it has made some changes to its layout in order to continue functioning correctly. Shortly after its opening, several outdoor places were established (such as kiosks) to boost the commercial dynamism of the complex, raising the number of possible tenants to 124. They increased the number of parking spaces by building an outdoor parking area, which also had several pathways which improved the shopping centre's pedestrian access as well.

In terms of its **supply of different sectors**, this center was adapting to the demands of its clientele (commercial and consumer) and to the needs of society in general. The most evident change was **the inclusion of services related to new technologies** (broadband internet, Wi-Fi, selling the latest generation of computers and telephones, online marketing via its own website and various social media profiles, etc.).

In 2015, CENTRO PLAZA's **commercial structure still accommodates some of the original products and services from the beginning, but has also branched out in a well-planned, sensible way.** It now has 20 different sectors which makes CENTRO PLAZA a **commercial multi-space** that is unrivalled in Nueva Andalucía. The administrators at the complex emphasized this, *"From filling up your car at the supermarket to toning up at a highly-equipped gym; from buying new technology to seeking advice for home designs or architecture; from carrying out banking and real-estate operations or administrative management to updating your wardrobe with the latest clothes and accessories; from enjoying food from around the world, at any time, in a cosmopolitan atmosphere, to giving yourself a makeover ... all this and much more is possible at today's CENTRO PLAZA (...)"*

A COMMERCIAL
MULTI-SPACE FULL OF
QUALITY PRODUCTS, SERVICES
AND LEISURE
OFFLINE/ONLINE



CENTRO PLAZA



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2. Centro Plaza's Career: Past, present and future.

Although there have been many changes in the companies located at the centre throughout its lifetime, there have also been **many examples of tenant loyalty from a variety of businesses and professionals** that must be highlighted. The managers of the centre announce: "(...) *we have companies that have been with CENTRO PLAZA from the very beginning and it is that confidence, the growing together, that we recognize as worth celebrating. **We believe that our "commercial silver wedding" has been achieved alongside the development of the city of Marbella and the residential area of Nueva Andalucía, but above all, because we have had loyal tenants at our side.** There are many companies that started here in the nineties and have made their business journey alongside us up until this day. We hope that the companies and professionals that have been with us all this time, as well as other similar businesses, will continue to support us for at least another 25 years.*"

1990



1998



2009



2015





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3. Pioneers of Marbella's "Seal of Quality": Alfonso Fernández and his partner Alberto Vidiella...and company.

The **"International Marbella"** that we know today was born in the 1950s, thanks to a number of visionaries who were able to see what a paradise this city was. In the early period of this transformation, personalities like Sir. Ricardo Soriano Scholtz, Marqués de Ivanrey, or his nephew, Alfonso de Hohenlohe, amongst others, started the area's touristic development with the launch of the first top-quality hotel complex. In the following decades, other distinguished people started betting on this settlement, as well as investors (Bismark, Rothschild, Goldsmith, Salamanca, Mora and Aragón Thyssen-Bornemisza...) A multitude of celebrities also became frequent visitors or residents of the area (Audrey Hepburn, Edgar Neville, María Callas, Sean Connery, Julio Iglesias, Lola Flores...).

ALFONSO FERNÁNDEZ, one of Centro Plaza's real-estate leaders (like **ALBERTO VIDIELLA**) was also one of these pioneers. He was one of the people who helped turn Costa del Sol into a first-category touristic and residential symbol on a global scale, but remains somewhat anonymous. He helped create the high-standard real-estate and construction in the zone and add to its architectural and business wealth, but above all, he contributed to Marbella's prestige, helping to coin his current 'seal of quality'. He always tries to stay out of the spotlight as he was never the type of person who enjoys media attention. When discussing the Centro Plaza several years ago, the promotor announced, "It wasn't an unplanned idea that happened by chance, but one that came from experience, and from finding out what Nueva Andalucía really needed. (...) I laid out the plan for the centre with the top floor dedicated to offices and the rest to shops and services". He conceived the establishment to be the main shopping centre in the **'Milla de Oro'** (a term describing the few kilometres which separate Marbella's urban core from the Puerto Banus area, considered to be a high-end urban zone, where the Nueva Andalucía district is found).

THE LIST OF PEOPLE THAT
CONTRIBUTED TO THE
"INTERNATIONAL
MARBELLA" AND ITS SEAL
OF QUALITY INCLUDES THE
PIONEERS OF CENTRO
PLAZA



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3. Pioneers of Marbella's "Seal of Quality": Alfonso Fernández and his partner Alberto Vidiella...and company.

However, there is another key person in the history of Marbella, and indeed Centro Plaza, who has never been recognised as he was always under his uncle's shadow: **JAVIER BANÚS**. Descending from a long line of builders, this architect proposed the modernisation of the 'popular style' that his uncle José gave to Marbella's port, which now carries the family name and was catapulted into fame when the *Jet Set* phenomenon began. Javier was in charge of shaping the main ideas for the shopping centre. He created a design that has survived the times, despite all trends, partly because of its basic concept which was very different from that of the usual mall. In his own words, Javier wanted to create *"a square projected above the sea"*, that would combine the Mediterranean's nature with the architecture of that period, *"focusing the structure towards an infinite, radiant exterior (...)"*, giving life to this **global space**, so well-balanced that it's goes beyond the standards buildings for businesses and professionals.

JAVIER BANÚS WANTED TO
CREATE "A SQUARE
PROJECTED ABOVE THE SEA"

This initial project, identical to that of 2015 except for a few changes, **was sponsored by Jaime de Mora y Aragon**, whose pleasant, universal and aristocratic character, made him the perfect incarnation of Marbella's spirit in the 90s. **The developers, the architect and the sponsor were not the only ones who contributed towards the launch of CENTRO PLAZA and therefore the creation of Marbella's seal of quality from the Nueva Andalucía area. There are many names who deserve a mention for their work**, especially the professionals such as lawyers: Lars Wikström and Donald Crawford from Land Law; Juan del Rio Nieto from Teknon; Enrique Valero from Viajes Gapa; Leif Öfverholm from Invent; Gregorio Cortes from Natwest March; Javier Orizaola from Andalucía Development...and even Marbella's former mayoress Ángeles Muñoz, who went to the building for medical consultations for several years, before dedicating herself fully to politics.



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3. Pioneers of Marbella's "Seal of Quality": Alfonso Fernández and his partner Alberto Vidiella...and company.

Amongst all of these, there was one professional, **Jim Broberg**, who made a statement when the centre first opened which captured the real meaning behind what they then considered CENTRO PLAZA's future, and has now become its present. Broberg was the CEO of WASA property developers in the 1990s (one of the first companies to support this project, and one that is still there today). He said from the beginning, *"(...) from here on, we could build the California that all of Europe is hoping for"*. After 25 years of positive growth, even surviving the huge economic crisis, it seems as though this idea of Californian-style paradise has become a reality. The prestigious American publication Wall Street Journal confirmed this affirmation in a report in March 2015, as it stated, *"The luxurious Spanish coastal city Marbella is started to look more like southern California than southern Europe"*. This idea of Marbella as the European California, which was already forming in the minds of those pioneers, definitely contributed to the development of CENTRO PLAZA.





CENTRO PLAZA



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4. Local and International: Cosmopolitan, like Nueva Andalucía and Marbella.

There is a phrase that stands out as a **statement of intention** in one of the initial catalogues by URBEMAR (promoter and manager of the project): **“The idea of CENTRO PLAZA was to provide Nueva Andalucía with a range of services, both commercial and business, which were obviously lacking, not just for the residents, but also for the influx of visitors arriving at the Golf Valley every day (...).”**

From this paragraph, it is easy to deduce what this project, now approaching its 25th anniversary, was, is and will always be about. By analyzing the **THREE MAIN CONCEPTS** that this phrase evokes, the key elements behind CENTRO PLAZA’s long existence and success become clear.

Firstly, the ambition to **“provide Nueva Andalucía with a range of services, both commercial and business, which were obviously lacking”**, is supported by the study carried out by the property developers before moving on to the next phase of the project. In demographic terms, the directors believed that in the 1990s, there was an estimated population of 10,000 families in the area and a large amount of vehicular traffic at the main roundabout which accesses the district (2,000 vehicles per day). Today’s statistics support the decision that was made back then, as in 2014, the population had already increased to 16,000, according to the INE. Within this context, in a growing neighborhood with such high traffic movement, there were no major shopping facilities prior to CENTRO PLAZA.

Secondly, the absence of such a place did not only effect the residents, **“but also the influx of visitors”**, as the phrase indicates. Marbella’s population normally triples during the holiday period, so when they expressed the desire to provide services for the people, that included a large number of long and short-term tourists, many of whom were foreigners. Now, and also back then, the majority of these tourists came from Northern Europe, but there were some from Britain, Germany and other European countries as well. Although to a lesser extent, some tourists also came from Japan, America, Arab countries, Russia and other emerging economies.

URBEMAR WERE ABLE TO
SEE THE POTENTIAL
MARKET IN THE AREA,
GUIDED BY DATA REGARDING
RESIDENTS, NATIONALITIES,
VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, PROPERTY
DEVELOPMENT AND GOLF
ACTIVITY, AMONGST OTHERS



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4. Local and International: Cosmopolitan, like Nueva Andalucia and Marbella.

In those days, there was a whole **MICRO-UNIVERSE POPULATION**, with the same tolerant coexistence between local and international residents that Marbella has always been proud of, with the same cosmopolitan atmosphere full of leisure and relaxation, with the same geographical and climatic advantages of the Costa del Sol ... but with the inconvenience of having to go and stock up on any goods or services at the neighboring area Puerto Banus or the town centres of Marbella and San Pedro de Alcantara.

Finally, the third decisive concept lies in the area's nickname: "**The Golf Valley**". There were already three prestigious courses in this privileged area when CENTRO PLAZA was being developed: *Las Brisas, Aloha and Los Naranjos*. Golf is the type of sport that attracts **members of a very high socioeconomic profile**, something that has influenced many of the properties developed in Nueva Andalucia, which is now considered one of the most elegant in Marbella.

NUEVA ANDALUCIA WAS A
COSMOPOLITAN,
HIGH-STANDING
MICRO-UNIVERSAL
POPULATION, THAT
WAS IN NEED OF A REAL
COMMERCIAL SPACE





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4. Local and International: Cosmopolitan, like Nueva Andalucia and Marbella.

Therefore, there was a potential market to cover a range of populations (permanent residents, long-term residents or tourists), with the unique aspect of having such a mix of nationalities, there was a target for people with high-purchasing power (through the golf environment and high-standing property transfers, both selling and renting); there was a great deal of vehicular traffic going to and from Puerto Banus, and towards other city centres around the Costa del Sol. One thing was certain: Nueva Andalucia was in need of a real commercial space. To meet this need, CENTRO PLAZA was born.





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5. The Shopping Centre's Symbols: The Market & The Viewpoint.

When the directors decided on CENTRO PLAZA's physical location, they defined the place as a STRATEGIC ENCLAVE. The plot on which they chose to build this joint business turned out to be a complete success because, after 25 years, they are still able to enjoy its original geographical and scenic advantages.

Among the notable features back then, which remain beneficial today, are the following facts: the complex is situated 300 metres away from the main motorway that connects the whole of the Costa del Sol, from which there are two entrances; it has a very convenient two way tunnel nearby, for both vehicles and pedestrians, which leads directly to Puerto Banus; it is only 6 kilometers from the centre of Marbella and two of San Pedro de Alcántara's neighboring districts; the launch of Centro Plaza would create a gateway to twenty urbanisations, a figure that has already risen in 2015; and it was also a prime location due to the high amount of golfing activity in the area... However, the highlight of this position in Nueva Andalucía is what the developers defined then as its "**magical surroundings**".

CENTRO PLAZA **was then and continues to be a natural balcony** on Marbella's Maritime bay, looking out on to spectacular views of the valley. From it, Marbella's mountains can be seen in the horizon, (including the most popular one, La Concha). In fact, it was deliberately built on raised land at the bottom of the mountain, creating an ideal elevation to contemplate the area's landscapes. Indeed, the open design of this project, full of spacious paths and terraces, have succeeded in making the most of and respecting the natural beauty of its surroundings, which gives the shopping centre a special role as Nueva Andalucía's **PUBLIC VIEWPOINT**.

FROM ITS ELEVATED
POSITION, CENTRO
PLAZA IS A NATURAL
BALCONY ALL-YEAR ROUND
AND WELCOMES THE
POPULAR FLEA-MARKET EVERY
SATURDAY IN NUEVA
ANDALUCIA



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5. The Shopping Centre's Symbols: The Market & The Viewpoint.

All these positive aspects regarding location are reinforced by one single gem that has taken place in Nueva Andalucia for over 30 years, even before CENTRO PLAZA existed. On the outskirts of Puerto Banus's bull ring, further on from the Manolete avenue, the Saturday **TOWN MARKET** takes place. This bustling outdoor market, organised by the City Council's Commerce and Markets, is packed with colorful stalls with clothing, shoes, souvenirs, spices, fresh fruit and vegetables ... but what distinguishes it from other markets in the city is **the special area dedicated to antiques**. From 8.00 to 15.00, the market gives the place a relaxed business vibe. This activity was welcomed by CENTRO PLAZA, which adopted the same casual style since the beginning. Every Saturday the shopping centre becomes part of the flea-market, supporting it with parking, cafes, restaurants, and its wide, refreshing avenues...adding to this weekly event in Nueva Andalucia and, therefore, adding to the life and traditions in Marbella.

One of Centro Plaza's immediate plans for the future, is to be more involved with Marbella's public life and integrate itself into the international community even more.





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