

# My Suburb: Taste of Spain in Seaview Downs

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HOLA! Aloysius Leeson and Kristy Manuel's Casa de Flamenco brings a taste of Spain to the south. Picture: Sam Wundke H0385631

KRISTY Manuel and Aloysius Leeson have brought a little taste of Spain to Seaview Downs.

The couple runs Casa de Flamenco out of the Seaview Downs Scout Hall, where you can go to learn how to speak Spanish or dance the flamenco, or learn how to play the guitar.

"What we offer isn't offered anywhere in the south and we always wanted a southern presence," Ms Manuel says.

"We love it where we are - we have a beautiful view, so it's lovely for people to see that when they arrive."

Ms Manuel, who is expecting a baby at the end of June, said she started flamenco at 21 as a way exploring her Spanish background.

A few months later she left for Spain.

While in Madrid, she strengthened her love affair with all things Spanish.

"I wanted to go overseas but I wanted more of a cultural experience," Ms Manuel says.

"So I went to Madrid to live where I studied flamenco dancing, learnt Spanish and worked at a school teaching English."

After returning to Australia, she met her husband, an accomplished flamenco guitarist.

They set up Casa de Flamenco in 2008.

Ms Manuel says it is the contradiction of flamenco dancing that draws her to it.

"It's very powerful, but very elegant," she says.

"I like that duality of the upper body being very expressive and feminine, but very strong footwork.

"It is the sound that impresses people, but it is the upper body that's expressive."