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CULTURE

Local success at annual Spanish film awards

Malaga actor Antonio de la Torre was named best actor at the 2019 Goyas **P31**



Speakers and organisers at the Brexit event in Malaga on Thursday. :: SALVADOR SALAS

PM under fire for concession to Catalan separatists

The government has agreed to a neutral third-party sitting in on any future talks on Catalonia's status

Pedro Sánchez's decision to employ a "rapporteur" in Catalonia talks has angered many in his own Socialist party, and right-of-centre groups have arranged a march for Sunday, calling for a general election to "keep the unity of Spain". **P18**

SPORT

Three in and two out on a busy deadline day for Malaga

Iván Alejo, Werner and Brezancic join as Juanpi and Héctor head out **P49**

BREXIT. VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES

Spain and UK need a positive approach to Brexit, say experts

As the UK struggles to achieve an orderly exit from the EU, SUR brings together views from both countries

The British ambassador to Spain, Simon Manley, and the undersecretary for Industry, Trade and Tourism for the Spanish government, Fernando Valdés, were among top-level speakers brought together on the Costa by SUR on Thursday to analyse the con-

sequences of the UK's exit from the EU. Speakers agreed that whether the UK leaves with or without a deal, there's a need to ensure that the least possible damage is caused to British citizens, businesses and interests in Spain and vice versa. **P2&3**



The Casino Admiral Trophy brings top-level tennis back to Marbella for a second consecutive year next month **P47**

Antonio Banderas to open his Malaga theatre this autumn with starring role in a new production of A Chorus Line **P14**

Ten thousand litres flood out in half an hour leaving El Trapiche counting the cost of a burst water main **P10**

The Venezuelan crisis, suffered 7,000 km away. Migrants who now live in Malaga share their experiences **P20&21**

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Ignacio Morillo, Javier Fernández, María del Mar Martín Rojo (Malaga city hall), Paul Clark and Javier del Pro of Unicaja with José Vicente Astorga and Pedro Luis Gómez of SUR. :: s.s.

Experts from UK and Spain call for positive approach to Brexit at top-level forum in Malaga



IVÁN
GELIBTER

RACHEL
HAYNES

The British Ambassador was among the speakers at the event part-organised by SUR newspaper

MALAGA. As the Brexit date approaches, experts from different fields in both the UK and Spain got together in Malaga on Thursday to analyse a scenario that is still uncertain and changing.

On the same day as Theresa May held further meetings in Brussels in an attempt to find a way out of the current impasse, SUR, the Unicaja Foundation and Malaga city hall organised a morning of discussion and debate: Brexit. Views and Perspectives.

While a variety of different attitudes towards Brexit were expressed, all the speakers agreed on one thing: if the UK's exit from the EU is inevitable, it has to be done in a way



Guests at the event hosted by the Unicaja Foundation. :: s. SALAS

that causes least damage to both the UK and Spain.

A "positive approach" is what is needed to face up to the "challenge" posed by Brexit, said the British ambassador to Spain, Simon Manley, who stressed that the relationship between the two countries was too strong to be damaged by the exit from the EU.

Tourism, commerce and residents' rights were among the issues discussed by the experts who laid out their views of the different possibilities that could occur, depending on the type of Brexit the UK ends

up with.

Thursday's developments in Brussels indicate that there is still a chance for the UK to leave the EU with a deal, a situation that would come as a relief to residents and business owners alike.

The possibility of Theresa May asking for an extension to the deadline, giving the country more time to negotiate, was thought likely by some of the speakers, especially two Spanish residents in the UK, solicitor Ignacio Morillas-Paredes, and hospitality entrepreneur, Javier Fernández Hidalgo.

Meanwhile Simon Manley and the senior Finance and Economic officer at the British Embassy in Madrid, Paul Clark, were confident that an orderly Brexit would be achieved.

The possibility of a "hard" or no-deal Brexit was also considered by all the speakers.

Fernando Valdés, the undersecretary for Industry, Trade and Tourism at the Spanish government, outlined, as did Simon Manley, the "political declaration" drawn up between the two countries.

This, said Manley, shows that both Spain and the UK want to build a new strong relationship which will involve free trade, the free flow of tourists, secure air links collaboration between security forces and the maintenance of the rights of citizens from each country living in the other.

Valdés explained that the political declaration laid down the guidelines for the future relationship between the two countries. Meanwhile, he said, the Spanish government is drawing up a contingency plan to put into action in the case of a no-deal Brexit.

"It is fundamental that we maintain citizens' rights and commercial relations and guarantee financial services," summed up the undersecretary.

A decree, he explained, due to be passed by the cabinet later this month, would guarantee these

rights for British citizens and businesses in Spain, providing the guarantee is reciprocated by the British government to the benefit of Spaniards in the UK.

Valdés shared Manley's positive tone, stating that he was confident the effects would be reduced to a minimum.

New opportunities

What Valdés and Manley did not agree on, however, was the Spanish government's opinion that Brexit was not a good thing for anyone, not for British citizens or for the rest of the EU. The ambassador preferred to talk of the new scenario being a new opportunity for strong relations.

Eduardo Barrachina, the president of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in the UK, was also positive about the general Brexit scenario, although, like the other speakers he admitted that the Irish border and the backstop situation was the major stumbling block.

He said that if the EU did agree to renegotiate the withdrawal agreement, which so far is not the case, any new deal would have to be on the table by 23 February for its to go through parliament in time.

While he agreed that the extension of Article 50 was a possibility, in the event of a no-deal he said that the first few months would be complicated. Nevertheless he pointed

No move on Irish backstop as May confronts EU

As experts were on the Costa discussing the local impact of Brexit, the main show continued in Brussels on Thursday. Theresa May was meeting with the European Commission to try to find a way to get the Irish border backstop removed from the Withdrawal Agreement in order to win enough support for a Brexit deal from British MPs. In frosty conditions, May failed to win any concessions from commission president, Jean-Claude

Juncker or president of the European Council, Donald Tusk.

May vowed to keep fighting to deliver a Brexit deal on time as the clock ticks towards a current exit date of 29 March. While the EU said on Thursday that the Withdrawal Agreement was untouchable, it did stress the importance of continuing to keep dialogue open and that talks could also start on the speed of a future, post-Brexit relationship with the EU. The UK PM is now said to be targetting a summit of the leaders of EU countries in Egypt later in February to try to renegotiate the terms of the exit deal and the Irish backstop.



The BBC's Tim Willcox and Lord Daniel Brennan. :: SALVADOR SALAS

out that the British government had made provision so that some 19,000 acts in EU legislation would be automatically incorporated into British legislation on the UK's exit, therefore regulations will be similar.

"Businesses can be reassured," he said, although he warned that a new commercial agreement could not be achieved before 29 March.

"Customs tariffs of 0% are planned at first, although that does not please everyone," he said.

Best for business

He also said that the UK and Spain had "done their homework" with regard to citizens' and workers' rights, explaining how the UK had made it simple for EU citizens to ap-

ply for resident status, using an app.

He added that the UK was still the "best country in the world for doing business" and that so far the members of the Spanish chamber of commerce had not announced their departure from Britain.

Despite new deals, the relationship will never be the same again, pointed out Barrachina.

"We can hope for closer relations, but we'll never share a space like the European Union. Deal or no deal, Brexit does no finish in March. There will be years of strategies; this is a process that will go on for a time," he concluded.

Barrachina mentioned the idea of a second referendum or general elections, but both he said required

a legislative process of several months. In any case, he said, May had won the recent vote of no confidence, so elections "don't seem to be a solution".

Lord Daniel Brennan, another of the guest speakers invited by SUR, explained that it was important to understand what had happened in the UK. The Labour peer compared Brexit to a medical condition with different symptoms. He ran through the reasons why the British voted in favour of Brexit in the referendum. He pointed out how divided the country is now, with Scotland and Northern Ireland being in favour of

staying in the EU and England and Wales voting to leave. He also highlighted the difference between the votes in London and other major cities (remain) and smaller towns and rural areas (leave), as well as the difference between generations.

No plan

"The Brexiteers didn't have a coherent plan," he said, but the Remainers did not campaign enough, which helps explain the result of the referendum.

He was critical of the government's handling of Brexit, but admitted that all three of UK's Brexit

negotiators had found themselves in a situation "above their heads".

Speaking perfect Spanish Lord Brennan, who is celebrating 50 years married to his Spanish wife, had praise for Malaga. "It is a city where everyone smiles," he said, "because it's a city that functions well."

The final speaker of the morning was BBC World News presenter Timothy Willcox, who stressed how vital it is for the UK to reach an agreement with the EU before it leaves.

He described the division in the country as "traumatic" and the possibility of a no-deal exit was a "nightmare". There would be costs on all sides, he said, citing commerce and agriculture, although he admitted that some countries, like Ireland, would suffer more than others.

The next few weeks will clear up some of the question marks hanging over the issue of Brexit.

What Thursday's event proved, however, was that the UK and Spain are determined not to let Brexit damage the relationship between the two countries.

"We have to look to the future thinking about the relationship we want for our children and grandchildren," concluded Simon Manley. "We can only overcome challenges by facing them together."

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The ambassador during his speech, with Derek Langley, Dean Tyler Shelton and Mario Jiménez. :: A. B.

Standing room only at Manilva Brexit meeting



ASH BOLTON

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Heated questions during the fourth Manilva Brexit Seminar as a panel addressed the concerns of British residents in Spain

MANILVA. Hundreds of people packed into a Brexit seminar organised by Manilva town hall on Wednesday afternoon. Britain's ambassador to Spain, Simon Manley, was there to discuss issues affecting Britons, including pensions, driving licences, residency and health care.

Some 350 Britons crammed into the meeting room in Sabinillas to

hear a number of experts talk about Brexit before questions were taken from the crowd.

There were some lively questions from the floor, as some attendees expressed frustration that there weren't, as yet, clearer indications as to what the exact procedures for UK residents will be after Brexit.

As for how British citizens should best prepare for Brexit, Simon Manley stressed that the most important thing to do before Friday, 29 March, was to get a green resident-registration card.

Simon Manley said: "Having that green piece of paper that you get from the police, if you haven't got it yet, or you know someone who lives here who hasn't got it yet, please apply now. There is nothing more important that you can do to prepare for our departure from the European Union than getting that green piece of paper and ensuring that you have proof of your legal

residency here in Spain. Because that, deal or no deal, is the access point for the rights and services that you should enjoy.

"It's worrying what's happening, but we are working with the Spanish government, as well as our own government, to ensure that

we can try and give as much clarity as we can and as much certainty as you can have moving forward.

"Because I think we all know our determination as a government is that all of you who have chosen to come and live here in Spain and other parts of the European Union can continue to live in the EU, just as those three million Europeans who have chosen to live in the UK can continue to live, work and study in the UK if that's what they chose to do."

One contentious issue that cropped up was how Britons living abroad for more than 15 years could not vote in the referendum to leave the EU in June 2016.

Manley explained that the bill to allow UK citizens living abroad to retain their right to vote indefinitely would have its final reading in parliament on 15 March.

Some people in the crowd also touched on issues with Gibraltar and how there might be problems travelling across the frontier post Brexit.

Gibraltar was a concern

Simon Manley added: "As you might imagine, we are in daily contact with the Gibraltar government about these issues and I think the British, Gibraltar and Spanish governments know the importance of border fluidity."

He explained it was important not just for Britons, but for the 9,000 Spaniards who cross the border every day to work, and the Gibraltarians who spend their money in the Campo de Gibraltar.

He added: "It is in our shared interests that that border remains a fluid border and we can work together to promote the security and the prosperity of the entire zone around Gibraltar. It's something that we are in daily discussion with the Gibraltar government and the Spanish government about. And yes, we have our differences, those are clear, but we all have a desire and interest to share security and prosperity in the whole area."

Also speaking at the meeting were; the mayor of Manilva, Mario Jiménez; the mayor of Casares, Pepe Carrasco; Carlos Jordan from San Roque council; Dean Tyler Shelton from Manilva town council; Derek Langley from the British Chamber of Commerce in Spain; Alex Radford from My Lawyer Spain; Myra Azzopardi of Citizens Advice Spain; Joni Burnett of the Colegio de Administradores de Fincas de Málaga; Álvaro Valera Martínez from Caixa Bank; and Charmaine Arboin, British Consul for Andalucía and the Canary Islands.

After everyone had finished speaking, questions were taken from the crowd. Receiving a cheer from the public was Raymon Moonilall, 55, who has a business in Gibraltar. He said: "First of all I'd like to thank the representatives from the local town halls as they seem to care more about us than the English government at the moment."

Second referendum?

"Effectively most of us were thrown under the big red bus with the lie by the government and by the fraud referendum. I disagree totally with you; there should be a second referendum because it was fraud. It was based on lies.

"I would like Mr Manley to take back a message to the British government which is that many people here paid their taxes and social insurance in the UK for forty odd years, like my parents, and were denied that vote. And if there is a second referendum [...] I would ask you to take the message back that we want a right to have a say."



Around 350 people attended the meeting on Wednesday. :: A. B.

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"We want our British residents to have their own voice"

José Ortiz García Mayor of Torremolinos



TONY BRYANT
✉ tonysureng@gmail.com

The Socialist mayor reveals his vision for Torremolinos and the part the British community will play in the future of the town

TORREMOLINOS. Torremolinos has undergone an extensive transformation over the last 12 months and the new-look boulevard and central plaza are now complete and will be officially inaugurated on Thursday 14 February. The town hall has pulled out all the stops to secure Torremolinos as a leading tourist destination, while also recognising the significant role that the British community has played in the history of the town.

Mayor of Torremolinos, José Ortiz, who claims a "true revolution awaits", told SUR in English about his vision for the town and the part the British community will play in its future.

-Are you from Torremolinos?

-I was born in Madrid but my roots are in Torremolinos. My mother's family is from here and my grandfather's house, which I visited as a child, was situated near the Pimentel tower.

-In your opinion, why is Torremolinos different to other coastal towns?

-Torremolinos was the pioneer of



José Ortiz is looking forward to the future of Torremolinos. :: T. BRYANT

tourism in the 1960s. Then, with the boom of the Costa del Sol, Torremolinos was the first municipality to initiate the expansion of international tourism. It became a city of art and modernity, which facilitated the international projection. If there was a modern town, it was Torremolinos. It was an island of freedom. And thanks to all of those values, we have succeeded in having a relevance that makes us a top tourist destination in Andalucía.

-So you believe that Torremolinos can become a leading tourist destination?

-We are already a leading tourist destination. We ended 2018 with more than five million overnight stays. These are the best figures for a decade, surpassing one million tourists. Torremolinos has an attractive heritage that sets it apart from other resorts. We have already achieved the first blue flag and the Q of quality for our beaches, although we can offer much more than just sun and the beach.

-Torremolinos has changed very much since you became mayor; what is your vision for the future of the town?

KEY POINTS

Tourism

"Torremolinos was the first municipality to initiate the expansion of international tourism"

Foreign residents

"We want to involve them more, so they can help to decide the future of Torremolinos by having their own voice"

The future

"It is the beginning of the revolution for our town. We will work for the quality of life of the residents in order to make our town a pleasant place to live and visit"

-We will continue with the renovation of Torremolinos. In four years, we have been able to appreciate how the cultural revitalisation of the town has changed the image and the ambience of the town centre. We wanted to recover certain areas for pedestrians, such as the Plaza Costa del Sol, a square that combines modernity with elements of heritage and history. It is the beginning of the revolution for our town. Above all, we will work for the quality of life of the residents in order to make our town a pleasant place to live and visit.

-There is a large expatriate popula-

tion living in Torremolinos, especially the British: are they important for the future of the town?

-Yes, of course. The British community is the largest and they make up 12 per cent of the residents of European origin. Obviously the situation with Brexit is worrying, but we want to assure them that we are here to provide help and information. We hope there is a sensible solution and we will do our best to ensure that they can continue living in Torremolinos without any problems.

-How good is your English?

-I have a limited standard of English, although this is a pending issue that I would like to improve.

-Does the town hall encourage foreign residents to integrate into society?

-Yes. We have campaigned so that all foreign residents can register to vote in local elections. We want to involve them more, not only in the cultural events like the Foreign Residents Day, but so they can also help to decide the future of Torremolinos by having their own voice.

-Why have you decided to present the British community with the Torremolinos Medal of Honour?

-We proposed it because the British have been visiting our town for the last 50 years. They represent 20 per cent of European tourism and we have enjoyed a long association with those who have chosen Torremolinos as their home. This is a strong commitment to our town and they have helped with our economy, not only through tourism, but also because many British people have opened businesses in the town.

-There are many British residents who fear their statutory rights will change if the UK leaves the EU. Can you offer some words of reassurance to those residents?

-We are in direct contact with the government and with other municipalities who, like us, have many British residents. We are confident that an agreement will be reached that will allow them to continue living in the town without change, and we hope that the British will continue to choose our town as their preferred holiday destination.

British ambassador accepts Medal of Honour from Torremolinos town hall

:: T. BRYANT

TORREMOLINOS. Torremolinos town hall has presented the town's Medalla de Honor to the British community. The town's highest distinction was accepted by Simon Manley, the British Ambassador to Spain, during a special presentation held

in Torremolinos on Wednesday.

The medal of honour was presented to the British community for its social, economic and cultural contribution to Torremolinos. The mayor emphasised the fundamental role of the British, especially Margaret Horn Taylor, whom he said

was "a pioneer of tourism in Torremolinos during the 1930s"

The ambassador expressed his gratitude by saying, "It is an honour to collect the award on behalf of the British community, because it recognises their long love affair with this magnificent town."



Manley (second left) accepts the award. :: T. BRYANT

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"I never thought a child could fit in that hole; I'll never forgive myself"

The owner of the land in Totalán where Julen suffered a fatal fall down a borehole had been warning that "someone could break their foot" but never imagined anything like this could happen

:: J. CANO / F. TORRES

MALAGA. "I'll never forgive myself," said David Serrano, owner of the land in Totalán where two-year-old Julen suffered a fatal fall down a borehole on 13 January, at a press conference on Tuesday.

"I warned them [his partner and the parents of the young boy who were going to enjoy a paella in the countryside] of the danger there was, thinking that someone could break their foot. I never thought that a child could fit down there. I will never forgive myself for not seeing that danger," said Serrano, visibly upset, before breaking down.

He insisted that he had covered up the hole with two grey concrete blocks, as reported by SUR, after the man who dug the more than 100-metre well allegedly left it "as it was".



David Serrano (in green) speaking to the media on Tuesday. :: S. SALAS

"I bought this plot of land four months ago so I could grow mangos and avocados and bring some horses here. That's why I needed to know if there was water," he added, accompanied by his lawyer, Antonio Flores Vila of Lawbird Legal Services.

Flores explained that his client

was not the subject of any investigation and that any responsibility for what happened to Julen should, in his view, be borne by the company that dug the well.

He said: "David [the owner] has already said that he was convinced that the man who dug the hole, Antonio, had all of the licences required.

Nine illegal boreholes located and sealed in Alhaurín de la Torre

The tragic case of young Julen has brought the issue of illegal boreholes to the public's attention and has led to a number of allegedly illegal wells being reported to the local authorities.

In Alhaurín de la Torre alone, nine prospecting wells have been sealed up in the last two weeks "to guarantee the safety of our citizens", according to the town's mayor, Joaquín Villanova.

The town hall has also insisted that the latest action wouldn't impinge on its drive to ensure that those who undertake these works take responsibility for it.

"It is not unreasonable to expect that prospecting companies, who know better than anyone else how to process this paperwork, would include licences as part of their service," he added, showing various offers from similar companies, all of which included the processing of paperwork.

Julen's father delivers message of "eternal thanks" to everyone for their support

:: J. C. / Á. F. / F. T.

MALAGA. Ever since his son Julen's body was recovered from the borehole in Totalán on 26 January, José Roselló has been inconsolable. Only going back to the family home to sleep "because of the memories", he and his wife Vicky have been staying with friends who have been trying to help them to think about literally anything else. However, "whenever I close my eyes, I only ever see one thing - the well," he says.

Despite the heartbreak, Roselló contacted SUR to give a short interview in which he wanted to express the couple's "eternal thanks" to everyone involved in the rescue operation, especially the Guardia Civil, firefighters, miners, engineers, those who gave up their free time to be there, as well as those who sent messages of support from far and wide.

"Although no one can take away our pain, I will be eternally grateful for the help and support that everyone has given us," he concluded.



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"I'm worried about how Brexit may affect me here in Spain. Is there anyone I can speak to about it?"

SOFT, HARD OR NO DEAL?

In general, a hard, soft or no deal Brexit refers to the closeness of the UK's relationship with the EU following withdrawal from the **Single Market**.

SOFT BREXIT

Here the UK **could stay** in the Single Market and / or the Customs Union. This would ensure a continuing close relationship with the EU.

HARD BREXIT

In the case of a hard Brexit, the UK may have to **give up access** to the Single Market and the Customs Union.

NO DEAL

If a new set of rules and regulations for a hard Brexit cannot be agreed, then the UK could leave the EU with a no deal. In this scenario, the UK may have to defer to the



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DID YOU KNOW?

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:: SALVADOR SALAS

MALAGA PAYS TRIBUTE TO RESCUERS

Dozens of people who took part in the rescue operation of young Julen received a warm welcome from firefighters, the local and national police and the general public as they climbed the steps to enter Malaga city hall on Wednesday. They were invited after the council had unanimously agreed to honour them with a special distinguished mention from the city for their role in the aftermath of last month's tragic events in nearby Totalán.

Wild boar cause damage to Marbella parks despite efforts to keep them out

A 15,000-euro fence in Xarblanca has failed to keep out the animals which dig up lawns and gardens in search of food after dark

:: MÓNICA PÉREZ

MARBELLA. Wild boar continue to cause “significant” damage to public parks such as Xarblanca and Bello Horizonte, the Marbella councillor for Parks and Gardens, Javier García, has said.

Local residents regularly complain about the holes and loss of vegetation that the animals cause as they increasingly venture into residential areas to forage for food, explained the councillor.

“The problem is not new,” he added, “But it has got worse over the last year.”

The problem also affects parts of the municipality of Mijas and areas on the east side of the province of Malaga.

In an attempt to solve the problem, the local authority spent 15,000 euros on a 550-metre-long perimeter fence in the park in Xarblanca. “We thought that it would slow down their access to the park, but these animals dig under the fences,” admitted García.

In the case of Bello Horizonte, which is jointly owned by the town hall and the Junta de Andalucía, for the time being the local authority is to replace the lost vegetation and “get rid of the holes”, said the councillor. Meanwhile the council is searching for solutions to “repel” the animals as much as possible.

In an attempt to reduce the growing population of wild boar, the Junta de Andalucía relaxed hunting restrictions for the species in July last year.



Recent damage caused by wild boar. Inset, a file photo taken in Xarblanca. :: SUR



Finca La Caridad. :: J-LANZA

Juan Antonio Roca released as luxury former homes are handed over for council use

:: HÉCTOR BARBOTTA

MARBELLA. A Malaga court has ordered the title deeds of two estates and a heliport that once belonged to Juan Antonio Roca, mastermind of Marbella’s huge town-planning corruption scandal, to be transferred to the town hall.

The move was announced just a few days before Roca was granted a conditional release from prison, where he has been serving a 20-year sentence due to end in 2023. The court said that as three quarters of the sentence were up and he had shown good behaviour, Roca could go free.

Roca’s former luxury homes, Finca La Caridad, which covers eight hectares, and Finca Siete Corchones (12 hectares) and the heliport were seized during the Malaya investigation. The town hall hopes to use La Caridad, which is valued at more than five million euros, for municipal sports facilities.

Roca, who has several corruption-related convictions, was jailed in 2006. Prior to his release, he was working for the Caritas charity on prisoner rehabilitation under an open prison regime.

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Town hall to contract private security for public spaces in San Pedro Alcántara

More than a million euros is to be spent on the service which will be contracted out for a maximum of four years

:: NIEVES CASTRO

MARBELLA. Marbella town hall is to put private security guards in 28 public spaces in San Pedro Alcántara. These include parks and gardens as well as the seafront promenade, squares and archaeological sites.

The contract, worth 1.4 million euros, will be awarded to a private firm for a maximum of four years. The conditions include providing security 365 days a year, with at least six unarmed guards to cover



The boulevard is one area to benefit from private security. :: J-L

the six zones identified by the council. These include around 17 public parks and playgrounds, Plaza Anda-

lucía, the seafront promenade, the San Pedro boulevard and the Paleo-Christian basilica.

HERE AND THERE

Free bus passes to come into force in April

MARBELLA

:: **H. BARBOTTA.** The new mobility cards, which will give local residents the right to free bus travel in Marbella, will be valid from 1 April, said town hall spokesperson, Félix Romero.

Romero announced on Monday that residents could start to apply for the passes from this week and they would be issued from 15 March. Romero explained that the cards could not be used before April as the new bylaw still has to get its final approval and the process of awarding the public transport contract has been delayed.

Marbella council decided its free-bus-travel policy last year partly in a bid to get more people to register on the ‘padrón’ municipal census and so increase funding from central government.

Seafront repairs ready “in time for Easter”

MARBELLA

:: **N. CASTRO.** The council in Marbella has been giving more details of its ongoing plan to spruce up the 15-kilometres of seafront promenade in the resort.

A budget of 565,000 euros has been set aside for the work, which is already under way, and 23 council staff are working on the project. Councillor for Works, Javier García, inspected progress on the repairs this week.

García said that there will be resurfacing, repairs to street furniture and lighting and painting of railings. Some railings will be replaced and new flower and shrub planters put in place at certain points.

The work is expected to be ready in two months’ time in time for the influx of visitors over Easter.

Residents assess damage after burst water pipe spills 10,000 litres of water in 30 minutes

Around 50 homes, 12 cars and the village church were worst affected and one elderly resident had to be evacuated when levels reached 1.5 metres

:: EUGENIO CABEZAS

EL TRAPICHE. Residents of the small village of El Trapiche, which belongs to Vélez-Málaga, have been assessing the damage caused to their properties and cars, as well as the local church, after a burst mains pipe connected to La Viñuela reservoir spilled around 10,000 cubic litres of water in 30 minutes on Monday night.

Church affected

Fifty homes, 12 cars and the village's San Isidro church were worst affected when water levels rose to 1.5 metres on a 400-metre stretch of the main road to the north of the village, near to the water treatment plant. El Trapiche is situated around 11 kilometres south of La Viñuela reservoir.

Systems automatically cut off water supply from the reservoir, although as the pipe is 10 kilome-



El Trapiche's San Isidro church was among the worst affected buildings. :: EUGENIO CABEZAS

tres long, 1.2 metres in diameter and has a 2,000 litre per minute volume of flow, the water in the pipe at the time of the breakage spilled out, causing the "unavoidable" flood.

El Trapiche resident, Ángeles

Rosas, told SUR on Tuesday that she and her family "spent all night cleaning and removing water from the house". She added that the family had to "seek refuge upstairs" as the water levels started to rise.

Ninety-year-old Carmela Sar-

miento was the only person who needed to be evacuated during the incident as a recent hip operation had left her unable to reach the safety of the first floor of her home. Sarmiento was taken to the Axarquía hospital but was later dis-

charged.

Parish priest, Eduardo Romero told SUR that while "the water luckily didn't reach church archives or images", it did cause significant damage to other items, including pews and objects belonging to the village's Holy Week brotherhood.

The burst pipe also created a large pothole in an area which is home to a fleet of lorries, causing a refrigerated trailer to fall into the hole.

Street cleaning company, Althenia, spent much of Tuesday clearing the road of water, mud and other residue, while fire and local police officers were also called to assist during the incident.

No water shortages

The damaged pipe is the responsibility of the Andalusian water agency, which belongs to the Junta de Andalucía regional government. Technicians are looking into what caused the pipe to burst and are repairing the damage.

The agency confirmed that none of the towns and villages served by La Viñuela reservoir experienced problems with their water supply and that water was redirected from the El Atabal desalination plant in Malaga city.

The incident is being treated as an accident and it is believed that residents will be able to make insurance claims via the civil responsibility insurance of the Mancomunidad de Municipios Costa del Sol Oriental-Axarquía, the umbrella organisation which represents the town halls of the Axarquía.

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Video surveillance cameras installed at Bezmiliana fort

The 18th-century Casa Fuerte and the Cueva del Tesoro have both been targeted by vandals; the cave is also set to receive protection

:: VICTORIA BUSTAMANTE

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. Five video surveillance cameras have been in operation around Rincón de la Victoria's Casa Fuerte Bezmiliana since Tuesday. The aim of the 24-hour cameras, which are connected directly to the town's local police station, is to stop the ongoing vandalism to the 18th-century fort.

Culture councillor, Antonio José Martín, said on Tuesday that the cameras are in strategic positions around the building and "cover all angles to stop the proliferation of graffiti".

The fort was built in 1766 under the instruction of King Charles III to defend the town against mainly British and Dutch pirates.

In modern times it has been used as an exhibition centre and has recently undergone restoration.

Mayor of Rincón de la Victoria, Francisco Salado, said that there are further plans to introduce cameras to the area around the town's Cueva del Tesoro, which has also been targeted by vandals.



Part of Rincón de la Victoria's Casa Fuerte Bezmiliana. :: SUR

HERE AND THERE

New chief of National Police for Vélez-Málaga

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

:: **E. C.** Juan Carlos Aparacio Nieto, 56, was officially made new chief of National Police for Vélez-Málaga during an official event at the town's Centro del Exilio on Tuesday. María Gámez, the central government representative in Malaga, attended the ceremony, where she announced that the new police station, located in the Cuesta del Visillo area of Torre del Mar would "open in a few weeks". Nieto also highlighted the work of National Police officers to reduce crime in rural areas.

Street to be named after archaeologist

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

:: **A. P.** Vélez-Málaga town hall unanimously voted to name a street in Torre del Mar after German archaeologist, Hermanfrid Schubart, last week. Schubart carried out excavations in the area during the 1960s, bringing to light the presence of Phoenicians on the Iberian peninsula. Schubart was director of the German Institute of Archaeology in Madrid from 1981 until 1994. He and his wife visited Torre del Mar last year to attend an archaeology exhibition at the old sugar cane factory.

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The drugs cache found in La Línea. :: SUR



One of those detained. :: SUR

Guardia Civil bring down mafia clan operating on the Costa del Sol

An offshoot of the Camorra mafia group, believed to be responsible for two kidnappings in Manilva, has been disbanded

:: SUR

MALAGA. The so-called 'Operación Marverick II', orchestrated by the organised crime unit of the Guardia Civil (UCO), has led to the arrest of 14 people - 13 of whom are in prison - part of the Banda della Marranella offshoot of the Camorra mafia group operating in the Costa del Sol.

The group, which specialised in kidnappings and stealing drugs from other traffickers, seized large quantities of hashish on the Costa del Sol, before sending them on to Italy to be resold.

A key part of the investigation was the detection of a mobile home in France which had set off from Malaga heading for Italy with 325 kilograms of hashish on board.

Investigations found that the group would regularly contract a man and a woman (usually a prostitute) to drive the vehicle, loaded with between 400 and 500 kilos on each trip, posing as a couple of holidaymakers.

The drugs were normally acquired with the cooperation of British, Moroccan and Romanian nationals operating on the Costa del Sol and in the Campo de Gibraltar who helped

to steal and intercept drugs from other trafficking groups.

However, the group is also believed to be responsible for two kidnappings in Manilva - one which resulted in a shootout.

As part of the operation, the Guardia Civil also located an underground cache on a property in La Línea, where between 10 and 12 tonnes of hashish were hidden.

Danish Hells Angels fugitive detained in Marbella

:: EFE

MARBELLA. A 34-year-old Danish man, part of Hells Angels in his home country, has been arrested in Marbella after an arrest warrant was issued over various crimes, including attempted manslaughter, illegal possession of a firearm and the theft of a vehicle.

National Police officers located him in a residential estate in Nueva

Andalucía and arrested him for his role in a brawl alongside other members of the group in which several people received gunshot wounds, with one losing a leg as a result. Previous to the incident, the man had stolen a vehicle with his accomplices and fled the scene having set it on fire. In 2012, he was sentenced to 11 years in prison but fled in December while on day release.

HERE AND THERE



The turf and the stands are already in place. :: SUR

Estepona's new athletics stadium enters final straight

ESTEPONA

:: C. MÁRQUEZ. Work on the new athletics stadium in Estepona is 90 per cent complete, the local coun-

cil has said. Turf has been laid out, seats have been put on the stands and the car park beneath has been fitted out. The car park will take around 1,000 cars and there will be a landscaped park around the new complex for cultural and sporting use. The stadium is being built to athletics competition-level

Cudeca needs volunteers for Los Boliches shop

FUENGIROLA

:: SUR. Cudeca Hospice is appealing for English-speaking volunteers to help in its new charity shop opening soon in Los Boliches.

Helpers will be required to dedicate three or four hours a week and tasks include receiving donations, serving customers and providing information about Cudeca.

Anyone interested is invited to email voluntariado@cudeca.org or call 952564910 or 671048304.

Painter dies after fourth-floor fall in Calahonda

MIJAS

:: SUR. A man who fell from the fourth floor of the building he was painting on Calle Águila Real in Calahonda on Monday has died from his injuries.

He was taken to the Costa del Sol hospital in Marbella in a critical condition and died on Tuesday.

Both the Centre for Prevention of Workplace Risk and the Workplace Inspection bodies have been informed.

Lift to be installed in Parque La Batería

TORREMOLINOS

:: T. BRYANT. Torremolinos town hall has announced plans for a lift to be installed in the Parque La Batería to facilitate access to Avenida Carlota Alessandri and the beaches of La Carihuela.

The glass-fronted lift, which is expected to cost approximately 270,000 euros, will offer panoramic views of the coast on its 15-

metre descent.

The park attracts around 300,000 visitors each year and the town's mayor, José Ortiz, expressed the importance of the lift, saying, "This elevator is vital for easy access to the beach and the main hotels."

The area is undergoing major refurbishment in a bid to revitalise local business. The lift will be located next to the underground car park in Avenida Carlota Alessandri, the main road that connects La Carihuela with Torremolinos.

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Antonio Banderas to open his Malaga theatre this autumn by starring in A Chorus Line

FRANCISCO GRIÑÁN

MALAGA. Hollywood actor, Antonio Banderas, has kept his promise with his home city to open a theatre in Malaga.

This week Banderas announced that his new venture, Teatro de Soho CaixaBank, in the capital of the Costa del Sol, will raise its curtain for the first time this autumn with a three-month production of Broadway-hit A Chorus Line.

The Teatro de Soho, which will be in the renovated Teatro Alameda, is the major investment in the performing arts that Banderas had said he would give Malaga, where he was born and lives much of the time. As well as codirecting the A Chorus Line production, Banderas will take one of the starring roles.

Speaking to SUR on Wednesday, the actor said that the show "is a good choice as it is about the setting up of a theatre". The words will be in Spanish and the songs in English.



Antonio Banderas on Wednesday. :: ÓSCAR CHAMORRO

After Malaga it will travel to Madrid and Barcelona and then to America. "The idea is to take it to Florida, Texas and California, where it has never been performed in

[Spanish] even though the biggest concentration of Spanish speakers in America is in those states," said the actor.

The original plan was to stage an

epic production of Zorba the Greek but it would have committed Banderas to a year in Malaga, London and Broadway, which his diary didn't permit.

Banderas was keen to stress that he is not looking for personal financial gain. "I am paying for the renovation work in the theatre and when I'm working there it will be for free, or if the law says so, I'll earn minimum wage," he explained.

Banderas has created a theatre foundation for the project and has put up 225,000 euros a year to pay for the rent of the building.

"This is my commitment to Malaga. I am very ambitious about this project but not in a financial way."

The main sponsor for the theatre building, which will have a main auditorium and a smaller stage, is CaixaBank, and additional sponsors are being sought.

HERE AND THERE

Manilva's population will reach 28,000 by 2023, says report

MANILVA

:: C. MÁRQUEZ. The municipal housing report recently approved by Manilva council estimates that the town's population will increase to 27,945 by 2023. The Plan de la Vivienda, which aims to predict the housing needs in the area over the next five years, based its conclusions on the recent increases in the local population. In 2016 Manilva had 14,750 inhabitants; water consumption and refuse collection figures put the population last year at 18,520. Since 2001 the population has tripled. Nearly 40% are foreign residents; the biggest group by nationality being the British, followed by Moroccans.



A Gulf Air Dreamliner. :: SUR

Malaga gets summer link to Bahrain

MALAGA

:: P. MARTÍNEZ. Connections from the Costa del Sol to the Middle East are set to get even better this summer. Gulf Air, which flies from its hub in Bahrain, has announced that it will operate into Malaga from 14 June to 15 September. The new route is in addition to the summer connection with Doha via Qatar Airways to the Costa del Sol Airport. The airline has said it has seen potential in the area.

FIRST SNOW FALLS ON MALAGA'S PEAKS

The natural park east of Malaga, the Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara y Alhama, saw its first snow of the year last Saturday morning when the white peaks of La Maroma, El Lucero and Navachica were visible from the Costa del Sol. The highest peaks in the Sierra de las Nieves, between the coast and Ronda, were also covered in snow on Saturday morning (right). Granada's Sierra Nevada ski station was closed last Friday and Saturday due to strong winds, although more than 100 kilometres of ski slopes are now available.



:: AA. MM.

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Work on a new AVE station near central Antequera to start soon

The stop will serve the soon-to-open Granada-Antequera high-speed line, which will connect with the existing Malaga-Madrid AVE route

:: ANTONIO. J. GUERRERO

ANTEQUERA. The government has announced contracts worth over 16 million euros for a new train station near the centre of Antequera. The station will serve a high-speed AVE train line connecting Granada with the existing Malaga-Madrid line that will start operating later this year.

This long-awaited connection, which will reduce travel time from Granada to both the capital and to Malaga city, passes through the inland town. A previous constructor got into financial trouble and the contract was cancelled.



Artists' impression of the new AVE station. :: SUR

The new station, which will have underground platforms, will combine the existing, slower speed line in Antequera and some 300 metres of that line will need to be realigned.

Until the station is completed, the new Granada high-speed serv-

ice will stop at the existing Antequera-Santa Ana station, on the Malaga AVE line, some 18 kilometres from the town centre. Once the station is finished, Antequera will be the only place outside Madrid with two high-speed rail stops.

British researcher seeks volunteers to take part in a study into care in the home

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

COSTA DEL SOL. A researcher at the University of Birmingham who is well known for her successful work on the Costa del Sol is carrying out a study of older British citizens' experiences of care at home.

Dr Kelly Hall will be on the coast later this month and is asking for people to volunteer for a short interview, whether they are receiving care or giving care.

Dr Hall said, "We want to learn more about people's experiences of care while living at home, whether it is in the Spanish social security system, private care or care through volunteers or family members. The work helps us understand what it is like for UK retirees in Spain who receive care and helps us influence politicians and other decision makers, so therefore people volunteering for an interview would be making an



Dr Hall will be on the coast. :: SUR

important contribution for the future." She went on to stress that the information is totally confidential and the interview can be at any convenient location at or near a volunteer's home.

Get in touch with Kelly: By email to k.j.hall@bham.ac.uk or calling 677 688 427 before 8pm



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Unicaja to pay increased dividend as its Liberbank merger draws near

The Malaga-based group earned 153 million euros last year, an increase of over 10% on 2017

:: JOSÉ VICENTE ASTORGA

MALAGA. Unicaja Banco has announced that it will share out 63 million euros with shareholders, the most since it went public in 2017. The amount is equivalent to half its 2018 profits, which were up 10.2 per cent year-on-year.

The Malaga-based company, which is Spain's seventh biggest banking group, announced its results for last year on Monday and highlighted the strength of its balance sheet and solvency levels.

The dividend per share will be 3.8 euro-cents, up from 2.1 euro-cents in 2017.

This may have been the last time Unicaja Banco, under head Manuel



File photo of the Unicaja president, Manuel Azuaga. :: SUR

Azuaga, presents its results in its current form. The company is in talks to absorb Liberbank, the eleventh largest bank in Spain. Liberbank has its main operations in northern Spain and Extremadura,

so there is a good synergy with Unicaja's mostly Andalusian operation. The new group combining the two companies would be the sixth biggest in Spain and the head office would be in Malaga.

BA's owner studies way to keep Euro ownership after Brexit

:: SUR

MADRID. IAG, which owns British Airways and Spanish-carrier Iberia, is getting ready to give its shareholders in the European Union priority over others in order to defend its position that it is a Spanish-based company. Sources close to the three-way negotiation between the EU, the company and the Spanish government, told newspaper ABC that publicly-listed IAG is "ready to readjust shares so the weight of the EU-based investors is larger".

The move will allow IAG, which has many thousands of small shareholders, to show that its airlines are

not British and so guarantee that they can keep flying within the EU in the event of a hard Brexit.

EU rules require more than 50 per cent of shareholder capital to be in the hands of investors inside the EU in order to be able to fly between member countries.

Currently most IAG shareholders are outside the EU, with many in Britain, and the group is considering its powers to suspend voting rights on some of these, according to its company statutes, although shareholders can appeal.

IAG also owns Aer Lingus and Vueling.

Malaga heads list for new company creation in Andalucía in 2017

:: JOSÉ VICENTE ASTORGA

MALAGA. Malaga has once again topped the list of provinces in Andalucía for the creation of new companies. Based on 2017 data, there were 3.5 per cent more companies in the province compared to the regional average of 2.5 per cent. There were 73.5 companies for every thousand people in Malaga province, three points above the national average. Only 60.1 per cent of the registered companies made a profit however, the lowest in all Andalucía.

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COLLATERAL DAMAGE



Once again, the stubbornness of the Catalan independence movement is on full display. This week, two of the region's separatist groups - the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC) and the Catalan European Democratic Party (PDeCAT) - announced that they will veto Pedro Sánchez's 2019 budget unless he makes some concessionary moves in favour of the pro-independence cause. Uncoincidentally, their latest ultimatum comes ahead of two key dates: February 12th, which is the last day on which their objections to the budget can be retracted; and February 13th, when the trials of prominent pro-independence Catalan politicians begin.

It's long been obvious that the Catalan independence movement doesn't care how its chaotically-pursued dream impacts on the rest of Spain. That indifference is on display again, manifested in the ERC and PDeCAT's intention to derail Sánchez's already-delayed spending plan: because the minority Socialist administration depends on those parties' votes to pass legislation, a joint veto would leave the country without a budget that should have been passed months ago. Ironically, Catalan separatists may also deprive themselves of a spending plan that addresses a long-held grievance of theirs - namely, that Catalonia contributes more money to Madrid's coffers than it gets back in public investment.

In a move that his Conservative predecessor Mariano Rajoy would never have made, Sánchez proposes to increase Catalonia's share of total regional spending to 16.8% in 2019, up from 13.1% last

year. In throwing their latest tantrum, then, secessionists risk losing something for which they've been campaigning for years.

But the separatists are after more than just extra cash. The ERC - whose leader, Oriol Junqueras, is one of the politicians to go on trial next week - has requested that Sánchez makes "gestures" regarding either the jailed secessionists, or the possibility of a Madrid-sanctioned referendum on self-determination. If neither are forthcoming, say both the ERC and PDeCAT, then Spain can forget about its 2019 budget. Sánchez received the same threat last November from Catalan president Quim Torra. It didn't work: the government, Torra was informed, "does not accept ultimatums".

In negotiations with secessionists, Sánchez has always been clear about his immovable "red line": that no course of action in violation of the Spanish Constitution will be tolerated by Madrid. Despite this, though, his government has made steps towards reconciliation with Catalan separatists, and has even sought less severe legal action against those who are about to go on trial: the Solicitor General's office, which is controlled by the Ministry of Justice, upholds only the charge of sedition, rather rebellion.

Facing pressure from within his own party, as well as the main parties on the Spanish right - all of which are opposed to Catalan secession - Sánchez cannot realistically go further than this. It looks as if the 2019 budget will end up as collateral damage, the casualty of a remarkably stubborn Catalan independence movement.

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Facing pressure - Sánchez on Thursday at his official residence. :: EFE

PM's decision to use an intermediary in Catalonia talks attracts opposition

The government has agreed that the parties will sit down with a neutral "rapporteur" in a bid to stop separatists blocking its 2019 budget

:: SUR

MADRID. There was wide-ranging criticism this week on all sides of the political spectrum after the decision by Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez to agree to a third party sitting in on any future cross-party talks over the political future of Catalonia.

Even within Sánchez's own party, the Socialist PSOE, there was disagreement over the move, and right-of-centre political parties announced a protest march in a bid to "throw out" the prime minister.

The move to use an intermediary, described in Spanish as a "relator", rapporteur or notetaker, is

viewed by opponents as validating part of the Catalan secessionists' argument that they are equal to central government and also implying that Madrid isn't able to sort out internal political problems on its own.

It is being widely seen as well as a concession to separatist parties who have demanded a powerful international mediator for talks on Catalonia's future. The PSOE needs the support of their MPs in the national Congreso to approve Spain's 2019 budget in a vote due next week.

The government sought to play down its move this week as it was pointed out that former prime minister, Mariano Rajoy, has also used intermediaries in Catalonia in the past. Supporters of Pedro Sánchez said his strategy was meant to be less confrontational than his predecessor's. But critics, even in the PSOE, claimed that the policy could force a no-confidence vote and usher

in a hard-line right-wing government, which could increase pro-independence support in Catalonia.

List of 21 demands

This week the Catalan regional government released a list of 21 demands they had given to Sánchez last December, piling extra pressure on the PM for not having made it public himself at the time. Top of the wishlist is recognition by Madrid of the right of Catalonia to self-determination.

The PP, Ciudadanos and Vox parties have called a march for Sunday in Madrid under the slogan, 'A united Spain. Elections now'.

The trial of separatist leaders arrested in 2017 is due to start next Tuesday, 12 February, in Madrid, further adding to the political tension with Catalonia.

Collateral Damage:

Mark Naylor, Page 16

IN BRIEF



Taxis wait for business on Wednesday morning in Madrid. :: EFE

Taxi drivers' strike in Madrid ends after refusal to meet demands

MADRID

After 16 days on strike, taxi drivers in Madrid narrowly voted to return to work on Wednesday. They had been demanding tougher rules

for Uber-style cars, which they see as unfair competition.

But, unlike concessions made in Catalonia, the Madrid regional government didn't give ground and, faced with loss of income, the strike was ended. Local politicians are now looking at loosening restrictions on taxis in Madrid to bring them closer to the private-hire business model.

Town halls told to take down last Franco symbols

MADRID

M. A. ALFONSO. The Ministry of Justice has asked the 656 municipalities in Spain that still have street names or symbols linked to the dictatorship of General Franco to remove them and comply with a 2007 law. According to government data, there are 1,171 streets, squares and avenues with names such as Calle General Franco or Plaza Falange Española, as well as less obvious ones linked to military or political figures. The regions with most offending names are Castilla y León (259) and Castilla-La Mancha (124). In contrast, there are only six recorded in Catalonia and none in the Basque Country. The list also includes symbols and crests linked to the old regime.

Arrests over cremations fraud using just coffin lids

VALLADOLID

SUR. Police have arrested 15 people in Valladolid, northern Spain, in connection with a supposed fraud at city crematoriums. It is alleged that bodies were switched from their coffins before being incinerated and placed in cheaper coffins that were then burned. The incidents are said to stretch back as far as 1995 and over 70 police have been involved in searches and arrests. There was disbelief among the funeral-service industry as to how a complex deception could be carried out, as family members are mostly present during a cremation. Police said on Wednesday that there is evidence some bodies were cremated using only coffin lids or uncovered bases.

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UK and Gibraltar quick to respond over 'colony' footnote

A draft EU document regarding visa-free travel even if there is a No Deal Brexit includes a footnote added at the behest of Spain

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. The good news last Friday was confirmation that the EU would reciprocally allow short-term visa-free travel to British citizens in the event of a No-Deal Brexit. The bad news, for Gibraltar anyway, was that the draft EU document stated this would not cover British overseas territories citizens who have acquired their citizenship from a connection with Gibraltar, although chief minister Fabian Picardo later pointed out that this would not affect Gibraltarians, as they are full British citizens.

A footnote to the draft text, added at the behest of Spain, said "Gibraltar is a colony of the British Crown. There is a controversy between Spain and the United Kingdom concerning the sovereignty over Gibraltar, a territory for which a solution has to be reached in light of the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly of the United Nations."



Gibraltar says its relationship with UK is a partnership now. :: SUR

Officially, Gibraltar is on the UN list of territories pending decolonisation. Every year, it applies to be removed, but the move has always been blocked by Spain.

The UK government was quick to respond by insisting that Gibraltar is no longer a 'colony', and that describing it as such is "completely unacceptable". In a statement headed 'Gibraltar's legal status is a matter of fact, not opinion', the Gibraltar govern-

ment pointed out that the relationship with the United Kingdom nowadays is that of a partnership and is no longer colonial in nature.

In a TV interview, Picardo said the wording would have no practical effect on Gibraltar leaving the European Union, or its sovereignty, but he described it as futile, unnecessary and provocative. "This is totally out of place in the modern Europe of today," he said.



The discovery has provided fascinating new information. :: SUR

University-funded research sheds light on post-medieval period

An excavating team has discovered over 250 skeletons from a former naval hospice dating back to the time when Gibraltar was Spanish

D.BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. A major research project co-funded by the University of Gibraltar, the Gibraltar government and Cambridge University has uncovered more than 250 skeletons dating back to Gibraltar's little-stud-

ied Spanish period between the 15th and 18th centuries. This discovery was featured in a major research article entitled 'Death in the sun: the bioarchaeology of an early post-medieval hospital in Gibraltar', recently published in the Post-Medieval Archaeology journal. The discovery was made at the old St Bernard's Hospital site - now St Bernard's School - in the Upper Town between 2014 and 2017.

The excavation also revealed the remains of an earlier Moorish occupation at the same site, dating from the 14th and 15th centuries.

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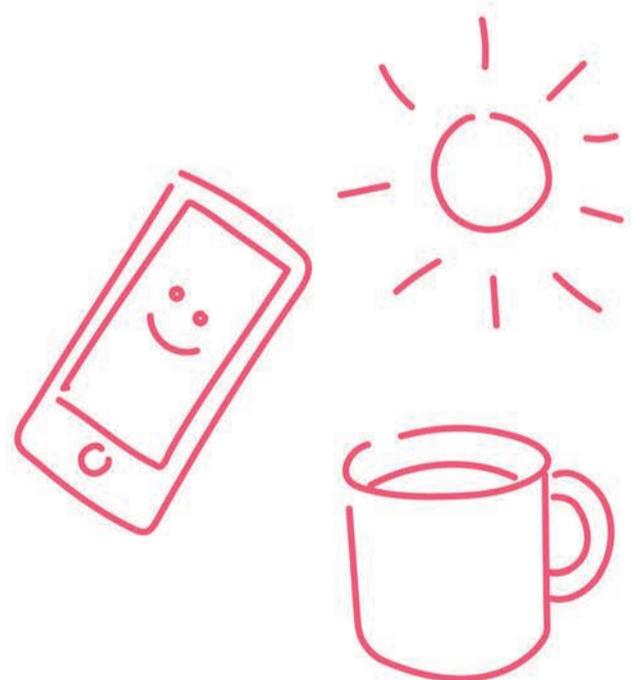
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The Venezuelan crisis, suffered from 7,000 kilometres away

Migrants from the South American country who now live in Malaga talk about their experiences and feelings

They say it is difficult to obtain food and medicines and some are calling for international intervention to heal deep social and economic divisions

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

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MALAGA. Laura Di Benigno used to live in Puerto La Cruz, a city with a population of over 300,000 inhabitants in the north of Venezuela. When she was pregnant, she was diagnosed with dermatitis and told it wasn't serious. She spent days trying to find the commonly-used antibiotic she had been prescribed, but without success. Her condition became worse, and "I was frightened. What would happen if my baby was taken ill one day?" she says.

Three months after the baby was born, Laura and her husband, Aníbal Muguerza, moved to Torremolinos. Official figures show 2,851 Venezuelans living in Malaga last year. Twenty years ago, there were 190. They have been watching the crisis in Venezuela, submerged in hyperinflation and poverty, from a distance of 7,000 kilometres, and are distressed at what they are seeing.

"The last time I was there, in August, it broke my heart. When light bulbs go out they are not replaced. There is no gas for sale and people are cutting trees down for firewood. It's so sad," says Nieves Colmenares, a retired administrator whose mother still lives in Venezuela. "She is nearly 89. She is malnourished and the milk gives her diarrhea," she says. The milk comes from the so-called 'CLAP', Comités Locales de Abastecimiento y Producción; these committees determine each family's needs and provide them with a pack, or sometimes just a bag, of basic food items. The beneficiaries have no say in the contents, or when they receive the bags.

"Prices of essential items like rice, pasta, flour, oil and sugar have shot up on the black market," says Nieves. A carton of eggs now costs the same as a low monthly salary. It has always been hard to find some items in supermarkets, most of which are government owned, but now there are very few supplies and it is almost impossible to buy meat or vegetables. Nieves sends money to her family when she can. "I send them ten or 20 euros to help them out. I can't afford any more because they have stopped paying my pension and our only income is from my husband's work," she explains. Regular non-payment

of retirement pensions and the devaluation of the bolívar is making life very difficult for pensioners.

The bags of food from the 'Clap' have the faces of Hugo Chávez and Nicolás Maduro printed on them; they are not available to those known to oppose the government.

"If you protest, they make your life impossible," says lawyer Tulio Enrique Mendoza, who now lives in Malaga. "They persecuted me because of my political ideas, because I didn't agree with the regime. The courts there are not impartial and I had to get out. My parents don't get the monthly food bag from Clap, just because they are my parents and my wife used to work for Kellogg's." That was one of the companies expropriated by Maduro, in this case more than 50 years after the factory opened. The company, which employed about 500 people, closed down in the end.

Amaya Rodríguez, who is from Sucre, has been on the Costa del Sol for two years. "Even if you have money in Venezuela it doesn't do you any good. You can't buy medication or food. I didn't want that for my chil-

dren," she says. She met her present partner, Javier Durán, here. He is a member of Voluntad Popular, Leopoldo López's party, one of the scourges of 'Chavism'. "I decided to flee when they set my car on fire," he says. "The regime has completely oppressed the population. People are hungry, they'd do anything for a bag of food. Imagine a family with four or five children. The government says, if you become party members we'll give you a bag of food a month. What are they going to do?"

Aníbal Muguerza agrees: "Chávez turned out to be a snake charmer. He seemed to be an alternative to 40 years of bipartisanship but he created a huge breach in society. He believed all business owners are thieves," he says.

Luz Poveda and Miguel Espildora, a married couple in their 60s, believed Chávez would change things: "When he won in 1998 it looked as if things would improve, but he annihilated the middle class and drove the poor into misery," they say. Miguel's parents are from Malaga, and after 11 years in Panama the couple decided to move here. "We still dream that Venezuela will recover and we'll be able to go back one day, but right now the situation is terrible," they say.

Jeannie Lizarábal is a retired architect. Her voice shakes when she recalls a recent conversation with her sister. "I told her I was a bit homesick, and she told me not to even consider



Venezuelans who now live in Malaga, posing in the Plaza de la Merced

going back. My niece had just queued for four hours for medication for diarrhea, because the water is dirty and making a lot of people ill, and when she got to the front of the queue, there was none left," she says.

Mary Carmen Llanos, a collaborator with Leopoldo López, stayed in Venezuela until a year ago and also reports that it is impossible to find medication. "My mother had high blood pressure, but there was no way of obtaining the tablets she was prescribed and she had a stroke and died. In some hospitals there is no cotton wool or stitches. The surgeons have

to operate in the light from a mobile phone because the electricity keeps going off. Before, you could express your opinion, there were all types of TV and radio programmes, but now only one type of thought is allowed," she says.

Llanos, who accuses Chavism of manipulating the election results ("people who had been dead for years apparently voted, others presented duplicated documents..."), believes people have become used to poverty. "It seems normal to queue for a basic product. If they have no soap, they wash their clothes with shampoo. If

HUNDREDS PROTEST IN MALAGA AGAINST MADURO

Hundreds of people, mostly from Venezuela, gathered in the centre of Malaga last weekend to call for an end to the regime of Nicolás Maduro. The rally in Plaza de la Constitución was attended by the mayor of Malaga, Francisco de la Torre. He said, "We are with the National Assembly. We are always with you, with those who want a democratic Venezuela." The organisers thanked "Malaga and the European Union that receive and support" migrants from Venezuela.



GERMÁN POZO



during a recent demonstration. :: GERMÁN POZO

they have no shampoo, with mouth-wash. And they end up wearing the same clothes for two weeks at a time, using bicarbonate and lemon as a deodorant," she says.

The announcement that Juan Guaidó had proclaimed himself interim president of Venezuela, because he considers Nicolás Maduro's second mandate illegitimate, is keeping the whole country on tenterhooks, and also thousands of migrants. Carlos Pérez Ariza, who was born in Malaga but lived in Venezuela for over 30 years, says he can see "a certain light at the end of the tunnel" and is calling for international humanitarian intervention during a "period of transition".

The High Court of Spain has already authorised citizens of Venezuela to stay here because of the difficulty of accessing food and medication in their own country. Unicef has also included Venezuela in its list of nations whose children need urgent assistance because of the risk of malnutrition. Pérez Ariza says it is incomprehensible that a country which is so rich isn't covering the population's basic needs. "They have plundered Venezuela for their own benefit," he says.

The Monasterio Torres family, who came to Malaga a few months ago, say Venezuela is unsafe. "We only lived one block away from the school, but my grandparents always took me and picked me up" says Cris, Marisa and Domingo's daughter. What is life like for teenagers there?

"You don't have much of a life. You hardly ever go out. I only used to go

from home to school and back, and even so there were robberies sometimes," she says.

Broadcaster Rebeca Lizcano is also not planning to go back, at least for the moment: "I was there for a wedding in March and it was chaos. My mother has been robbed several times," she says. Poverty has caused the crime rate to rise to 81 homicides for every 100,000 inhabitants, making Venezuela the most violent country in Latin America.

Behind the cold statistics lie stories like that of Olga Toleda, whose husband, a civil servant, was assassinated. The death certificate says he died "from of a head injury caused by a firearm". Olga now lives with her daughter in Granada and is finding life very difficult because her pension from her home country is not being paid, a problem she shares with dozens of Venezuelan pensioners in Malaga. As Victor Di Gerónimo explains, "They barely have anything to live on".

Sports journalist Merche Celta talks about the "normalisation" of poverty: "There aren't even any tampons or sanitary pads. The government says we should make them at home, like they used to do centuries ago, with bits of cloth," she says.

The Venezuelan community in Malaga agrees there is a "need" to bring an end to the regime, but they differ about the best way out of the crisis. They do, however, agree that society in their own country is completely divided in two, and that it is going to take decades for that deep wound to heal.

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THERE IS A PRIZE FOR THE BEST
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Empathy

Very little attention has been paid to the death of Laura Sanz, a woman from Burguillos, Toledo, mother of three children, who died as a result a gas explosion in a bakery near the hotel in Paris where she was staying. This was the first time she had ever left Spain, thanks to a surprise trip organised by her husband as a present.

But what make this story even more heart-wrenching is her husband's account of how, as he left the hotel carrying his seriously injured wife in his arms, his desperate cries for help were totally ignored by everyone he came across. They

were all filming the scene with their mobile phones.

This inhuman behaviour is typical of social media; wherever in the world a disaster happens there is always an impassive public ready to record everything.

One issue that is now the subject of interesting debate about our imminent future is the level of empathy and intelligence that robots could have. It seems that the level of empathy of some human beings is evident as soon as they are given a mobile phone.

MIGUEL ÁNGEL LOMA
BY EMAIL

Driven mad by Brexit

I wish to make your British readers on the Costa aware of a potential worry saver if they are trying to swap their UK driving licences to Spanish ones.

While nobody has said that 10-year British photocards used by many residents will be invalid after Brexit, many expats have decided to take the plunge and change to a Spanish/EU one.

However the appointment wait at the provincial 'tráfico' office in Malaga is several months due to the demand from us Brits.

If somebody has a bit of spare

time, earlier appointments can currently easily be got in Cordoba, Granada and Cadiz and the process is just as valid as Malaga.

It will take a minimum of two trips, (to submit the paperwork and to hand over your old licence), but is a good way to discover more of Andalucía. Details: https://sede.dgt.gob.es/Galerias/tramites-y-multas/permis-de-conduccion/canje-de-permisos/03-Canje-PC/03-Canje-PC-EU-Islandia-Liechtenstein-y-Noruega_EN.pdf

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No alarms and no surprises

PETER EDGERTON
MUSIC MAKER WWW.E-PETER.COM

I bought a house alarm the other day, albeit completely unbeknownst to me. Apparently, the mere mention of such a possibility down at the bank was enough to guarantee the whipping out of just under two thousand euros from my account. I called immediately to see what was going on.

"Good morning, might somebody like to inform me why I've just been charged one thousand nine hundred euros in some kind of mysterious transaction?"

"Ah yes, that's for the house alarm we mentioned when you enquired about a loan."

"Would that be the house alarm that I specifically and categorically stated that I didn't need because the loan would be for renovating an old abandoned house that only a thief with a fetish for dry rot and woodworm would bother his sorry self

with?"

"Er, well, yes."

"I never even confirmed the loan, let alone the alarm. Refund me immediately, you halfwits."

"It'll take a few days."

"That's odd. It took precisely twelve hours from a very vague conversation where precisely nothing was agreed or signed to grab the money. Now you say it'll take a few days to return it?"

"Er, yes, sir, that's right. Can we help you with anything else, this afternoon, for you, sir?"

"No, you certainly can't. In fact, I'll be very wary next time any of your staff asks me where I'm thinking of going on holiday this year on the off chance you send me a couple of Ryanair tickets and a gold plated bucket and spade and then charge them to my account within twelve hours. Good day."

Later in the afternoon, I received

a call from the bank's central office asking me if I had five minutes to talk through the details of my recent house alarm purchase. This clearly meant they hadn't even started the cancellation process yet and I now envisaged "a few days" meaning that I'd get my money back around the time the late autumnal mist rolls in off a restless sea.

These are precisely the kind of antics I can clearly recall the banks indulging in in 2006/7 just before they - and we - were given a sharp smack around the chops to teach us all a lesson.

Sadly, however, it appears that the financial crisis of 2008 taught us precisely nothing and our unfettered desire for more and more unnecessary stuff is once again being hungrily nurtured by our greedy chums down at the banks.

It is, if I may say so, all rather, er, alarming.

SANSÓN

Have you all gone
completely mad!?

Do you want
to get
us all killed!?

SUR in English

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In 2016 David Cameron called a referendum over the UK's possible exit from the EU with one sole objective - to end the division among the Conservatives and unite them once and for all on European issues. It backfired and today his party is more divided than ever. When the prime minister lost, the shared fear around the entire continent was that Brexit would divide the European Union. Two and a half years on, the UK's possible departure from the EU on 29 March has weakened the European project, but much less than expected.

This is the first time that a member state has chosen to leave, and what's more, an important EU partner. However, among the remaining 27 members, there is a notable

The Brexit paradox

JOSÉ M. DE AREILZA
JEAN MONNET CHAIR AT ESADE

unity of action to contain the damage. The country that will really suffer from the split is the one that leaves. The financial and business costs have yet to be calculated, but in any case they will be hefty. It depends on whether in the end the exit takes place with a deal or not,

and what kind. But the magnitude of the possible material damage, and also the loss of "soft power", or ability to attract, is incomparable to the negative impact the United Kingdom's constitutional system. And here is the greatest paradox: on leaving the EU, the British people will

see their unity and their unwritten constitution directly under threat. The slogan of the cheerful Brexiters was the exact opposite: they wanted to "take back control".

The internal balance among the four nations and the guarantee of territorial cohesion are being lost along with the anchorage of integration in Europe. In Northern Ireland there is a growing feeling in favour of unification with the rest of the Irish. This comes in response to the problems after Brexit to preserve the Good Friday peace agreement made in 1998, which demands a completely open border on the island and is based on the application of European law in two member states that share a market.

In Scotland, MPs from all parties are calling for the same treatment

offered by Brussels to Northern Ireland: to be more connected to the Union in terms of free circulation of goods than the rest of the UK.

If they don't achieve this the Scottish nationalists could speed up their demands for a new independence referendum, with the double aim of gaining independence and then joining the EU, an argument that is more difficult to fight from London.

The exit from the Union is not just a terrible business move; it is also a threat to the constitutional system of the most venerable democracy in the world. Historian and columnist Timothy Garton Ash sums up the different options on the table up to the last minute of negotiations with these words: "The only good Brexit is no Brexit."

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Truths and tales from an Axarquía village

John Hardy has recently published a book based on the history and people of Sedella

JENNIE RHODES

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The men who went in search of work abroad and the goat herds who walked to the French border to sell their animals are just two of the stories

SEDELLA. John Hardy, who has lived in the village of Sedella in the Axarquía for 24 years with his wife, Wendy, has recently published a book about the place he calls home. 'Sedella - the story of a Spanish village' combines facts with fictional tales based on stories that people have told him over the years.

The book starts in 1994 when John and Wendy first arrived and moved into the house in the campo, along with a collection of animals, which they still live in today. "We have seen a lot of changes in Sedella," explains John. "A lot more houses have been built since we arrived and it's become more popular with foreign people. When we moved there we were among very few foreigners living in the area."

The last chapter is a reflection on the village as it is today and how although cars have taken over from donkeys, like with all of the villages in the area, customs and traditions are still a vital part of village life.

Each of the 21 chapter headings are in English and Spanish and John hopes to have the whole book translated into Spanish this year. "I felt it was right to put the headings in Spanish as well as they describe the story," explains the author.

John, 84, has written a number



John Hardy talking about his latest book. :: JENNIE RHODES

of books based on the villages of the Axarquía, most of which are short crime stories, into which he weaves facts about the Spanish way of life as well as traditions and customs. The author explains that this is how the idea to write a book about the village came about.

He says that the book "sat on the shelf for ages", until he had the idea to come up with fictional stories based on the facts that he had gathered up. "Each chapter has a factual piece of information followed by a story which illustrates the fact," he explains.

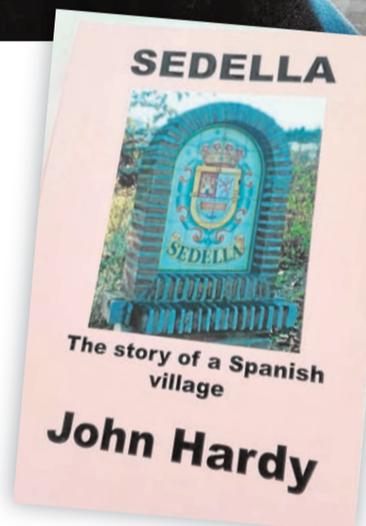
True stories of rural life

It's hard to choose a favourite chapter, he says, but one that stands out is El Camino de Francia ("The French way") which tells the story of two goatherds from the village who on two or three occasions walked to the French border to sell their goats. John

got to know the two men and protagonists of this extraordinary story of the harshness of rural life, who have since passed away.

John describes how as the two men walked, they would sell milk from their goats to buy bread and cheese each day. When they reached the border with France and managed to sell their goats, they would have more than enough money to buy a bus ticket to get home. In fact, John says that the last time they did the trip, they earned so much money that they flew home. "I wouldn't want to have been the person sitting next to them on the plane. They'd spent weeks sleeping rough with the goats. Imagine the smell!" John jokes.

The book also touches on emigration to other countries, particularly of men from the village. Employment was scarce and what there was of it, was largely seasonal. In fact the



The book about Sedella. :: J. R.

current mayor, Francisco Albolafío, described to me recently how he and his five siblings grew up without their father, as he worked away in Germany for most of the year. The men would return once or perhaps

twice a year - at Christmas or for the annual summer feria.

In 2017, a statue was installed at the entrance to the village to pay tribute to the men who gave up family life to search for a job abroad to send money home to their families.

The book covers the history of Sedella, from its early beginnings and brings the reader up to the modern age. John's interest in Spain didn't just start when he and Wendy moved here. "I have always been interested in Spain, its history and culture and I first started coming here on holiday in the mid-1970s, shortly before Franco died when the country had really started to change," he explains.

He goes on to say that two of his favourite authors are Laurie Lee, whose most famous work, *As I Walked Out One Summer's Morning*, describes his journey through a Spain on the verge of Civil War, and Gerald Brenan, who himself lived in Malaga province for many years.

John and Wendy have travelled to different parts of Spain and some years ago John did the Camino de Santiago. "I did it for the village and had the village logo on my rucksack," he says. Upon his return he was presented with a book about the Axarquía by the then mayor of Sedella in recognition of the walk, which John says has been another "extremely useful reference" for his writing. In fact, all of the writer's research has helped greatly with writing the book about Sedella, but John admits that the book was easy to write as it came from "personal experience and from the heart."

He and Wendy have close friends in the village and have always been involved in village life; Wendy even plays the flute and saxophone in the local band. John says that he has more ideas for books, but is returning to crime writing for now.

Further information about the book and to buy a copy: www.johnhardybooks.com or on Amazon

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A day devoted to art in Benahavís

International artists helped bring their work to a wider audience during the Art in Action exhibition



ASH BOLTON

✉ ashbolton@hotmail.com

BENAHAVÍS. Some of the best international artists on the Costa del Sol showed off paintings, sculptures, photography, stained glass, textiles and bronze sculptures at an exhibition organised by the Arts Society of Benahavís last Sunday.

More than 500 art lovers attended the seventh annual event, supported by Benahavís town hall and wealth management advisors Blevins Franks, at the Gran Hotel in Benahavís.

During the five-hour event there were also performances by the local Spanish band Devils in the Sky and a ballet display by the Marbella Performance College.



More than 30 artists showcased their work in the Gran Hotel, Benahavís. :: SUR

Jane Norrie, one of the judges of the young artist competition, told SUR in English: "It was fantastic because all day there were throngs of people and there was such a happy atmosphere. It certainly put Bena-

havís on the map for the day. "One thing we are particularly proud of is that this is a British organised event but includes many Spanish people too."

The free exhibition also featured

a young artists' competition, a start-a-novel competition and a children's workshop.

Jane, who is originally from Edinburgh, and has lived in Spain for 20 years, added: "The 30 artist stands

were the core of the event, but another highlight was the young artist competition. We had 24 artists from three local schools taking part.

"The Devils in the Sky were great too; they did two sessions so the whole of Benahavís must have heard them."

The winners of the young artist competition were: Alexander Khrol, 11, from Swans International School, who took first place and won 150 euros; Sean Cronin, 13, from Laude International College, who finished in second place, winning 100 euros; and Poppy Frost, from the British International School of Marbella, who came third and claimed 50 euros.

Local writers were also represented at the Writers Wall, with visitors taking part in the Start-a-Novel Competition.

Former SUR in English editor Liz Parry and Arts Society Europe representative Jo Ward judged the competition and awarded a bottle of wine to the winner, Gillespie Robertson.

The Arts Society Benahavís was established in 2012 and is one of more than 385 local societies worldwide that are members of The Arts Society. The group hopes to further the enjoyment, knowledge and awareness of the arts and to stimulate interest in the cultural heritage of Spain.

More information: www.theartsocietybenahavis.com

Another success for Marbella singer

Talented Charlotte Summers sang to an international audience on Japanese TV show Fujiyama

✉ A. BOLTON

MARBELLA. A Marbella youngster is celebrating after winning a singing competition on Japanese TV.

Charlotte Summers won first place on the show by singing "I Was Born to Love You" by Freddie Mercury last month.

Representing Spain – she competed against a host of child singers on the prime time TV show called Fujiyama on Fuji TV.

In addition, the 13-year-old has also just made another appearance

on the holiday special of the American TV show Little Big Shots.

As reported in SUR in English last May, Charlotte previously appeared on Little Big Shots, after a video clip of her singing in Marbella went viral and caught the attention of the show's bosses. Before that, she sang on Spanish TV show La Voz Kids at the age of nine, where she reached the semi-finals.

Charlotte, who goes to school at Las Chapas in El Rosario, told SUR in English: "I feel very excited and I was delighted about how my performance went. Singing in another country, against the best from that country was quite a challenge. I felt very honoured that the public enjoyed it so much and voted for me."

Charlotte, who was born in Spain and has an English father and Span-

ish mother, started singing at the age of six in school plays and got her first big break singing in Les Misérables at the Teatro Cervantes in Malaga.

Her father, Simon Summers, 49, who works in real estate, explained how she ended up getting her big break after getting her hair cut in La Cañada shopping centre, Marbella.

He said: "One of the hairdressers asked her to sing something, as she recognised her from La Voz Kids. She sang a bit of a song that she had specially recorded for a competition, called Unicorn, and the hairdresser uploaded it. It went viral and has been seen by more than 20 million people worldwide. We were contacted by the producers of Little Big Shots who had seen the video and realised how good she is."



Charlotte Summers (l), on the Japanese TV show. :: SUR

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SOCIETY SCENE

Rotary Clubs join forces to clean dunes

ProDunas helped to organise the team of Rotary Club members who worked to collect rubbish from the nature reserve

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

The Rotary Club Cleaning up the dunes

The Rotary Clubs of Benahavis, San Pedro and Estepona, with the Asociación ProDunas, organised the collection of rubbish last Saturday at the Las Dunas de Artola in Cabopino. "Although the dunes can seem spotless at first glance, they collect an unfortunate amount of litter," Paul Noyer, president of the Rotary Club Benahavis explained. After the group collected several bags full of rubbish, Marbella town hall presented each helper with a certificate.

Nerja History Group Sampling Jerez

The Nerja History group went on a three-day trip to Jerez at the end of January. Their first visit was to the Bodega Fundador where they were given a tour and a tasting of the sherries produced there. They then visited a privately-owned stately

home and were shown around the elegant house. The following day the club walked around the city and made another visit to a bodega, the Bodega Tradición, which specialises in rare and aged sherries. They were also shown the bodega's art collection which included works by Goya, Velázquez and El Greco. On the final day they visited the clock museum and then the famous riding school to watch a performance of the dancing horses.

www.nerjahistorygroup.com

Adintre A birthday celebration

The founder of Adintre, Joyce Gyimah, has just celebrated her birthday with a party in the Adintre homeless centre in Fuengirola. Her centre, on Calle Feria de Jerez, offers the homeless a place to rest and get clean. The shop next door sells furniture, bric a brac and clothing. Donations are very welcome. Contact: 952 663 124 / 632 824 782 / 951 356 892, or email: info@adintrefoundation.com.

The La Cala de Mijas Lions support Adintre with a monthly contribution towards the costs of the centre. The Lions shop on Calle Torremolinos in La Cala de Mijas is open Monday to Saturday from 10am to 2pm.

Volunteers are welcomed, as are



The Rotary Club members and helpers with their certificates. :: SUR



The Nerja History group visited Jerez. :: SUR



Joyce Gyimah celebrates her birthday. :: SUR

donations of items for the shop. Call: 637185533.

Marbella Lions Club German Language

Cheque presentation

On 10 January, the Marbella Lions Club German Language presented a cheque for 1,000 euros raised by members to the Cudeca Cancer Care Hospice to help to continue their special kind of caring. Anja Straub, president of the Marbella Lions Club German Language, presented Esther

Ráez from the Communication and Fundraising department of the hospice, with the cheque. The donation was raised by all the members of the club during their Germany Unification celebration in Marbella on 3 October 2018.

What are you up to?

If you are involved in a club or association and planning events, trips or activities that would be of interest to other readers of SUR in English, we would love to hear from you:

Email: surinenglish.su@diariosur.es



Lions Club German members. :: SUR

Standing ovation for Arts Society chair for stirring flamenco commentary in English

It is hoped that the Heartbeat of the South talk will be given at Malaga's Cervantes theatre, other parts of Andalucía and in the UK

:: JENNIE RHODES

NERJA. The Nerja Arts Society attracted its biggest audience yet to a dynamic narrated talk about the history and culture of flamenco. Heartbeat of the South was presented by the Nerja society's chair, Helen Sijlsing and performed by members of Antonio Guerra's flamenco company. Antonio and Pili Franco danced, while Rubén Portillo played the guitar and Rosa Linero sang.

More than 300 people packed into the town's cultural centre on Calle Granada last Tuesday evening to learn about the origins and rhythms of Andalucía's most popular performing art. "It was all very emotional, twice as many people came as normal," said Sijlsing after



Helen Sijlsing narrates the flamenco demonstration. :: PRINA EDENBURG

the event. "They all said it was the first time ever they had heard an explanation in English and we had a standing ovation, also for the first time ever," she said, visibly emotional.

While the performers demonstrated different types of singing, dancing, guitar and clapping techniques, Sijlsing, who herself takes flamenco lessons with Guerra and Portillo, explained the components that

make up a flamenco performance.

Flamenco dancer, Pili Franco, said, "I found the interaction with the audience very interesting. This speech isn't only to understand better flamenco but also so that they can be part of it. They learnt how to clap their hands in different rhythms and styles. Maybe they'll bring themselves to clap or just cheer 'olé!' on another occasion."

Future performances

A number of Arts Society members from along the Costa del Sol attended the talk, as well as visitors from the UK, with a view to holding it at other societies' meetings.

Sijlsing hopes that they will be able to take it to the Teatro Cervantes in Malaga in 2020. The Nerja society is also working on another flamenco performance, focussing on 'malagueño' flamenco from the city and its villages.

A promotional video of the evening can be found on YouTube: Heartbeat of the South. For further information visit their website (www.theartsocietynerja.com).

PILI FRANCO DANCER

FLAMENCO HEARTBEAT

I was asked to dance at the Arts Society Nerja's talk about flamenco last Tuesday. People often want to understand how a flamenco singer sings with so much emotion or why a dancer dances with a smile on her face or as if she were feeling pain. The audience was able to get an idea of all of that in Heartbeat of the South, a speech about flamenco, its history and its rhythms.

It was perfectly directed by Helen Sijlsing as she tried to translate lyrics of some songs and explain the moves of Antonio Guerra, a well-known flamenco dancer, and his company.

I enjoyed the speech and what I found interesting was the interaction with the audience. The talk allowed them to be part of flamenco, learning how clap their hands in different rhythms and styles and cheer saying ¡Olé! and ¡Arsa!

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DENISE BUSH



GARDENING

Fascicularia bicolour

A clump forming relative of the pineapple, Fascicularia bicolour has sky-blue flowers surrounded by red leaves

The genus Fascicularia only has one known species and that is F. bicolour. It is a member of the Bromeliaceae family (bromeliads) and a relative of the pineapple. It is one of the few bromeliads that are terrestrial, i.e. they

grow on the ground as opposed to growing on another plant (epiphytic) or growing on or among rocks (saxicolous).

Fascicularia are native to Chile where they are found grow-

ing on the forest floor in large clumps. They have leathery, strap-like leaves up to one metre long that have soft spines along the edges. The leaves form large rosettes which over time will form a large mound. They stay olive-green for the first couple of years and then develop a silvery sheen.

Once the plant is mature it will also start to turn bright red at the base of each leaf at the end of the summer and produce a cluster of sky blue flowers in the centre of each rosette.

Each tubular flower has three petals surrounding bright yellow anthers and makes a stunning and unusual contrast to the red leaves.

After flowering Fascicularia dies but usually leaves behind lots of offsets. The dead leaves should be removed to prevent any spread of disease to the young plants. Potting up the offshoots is the best way to propagate F. bicolour as the seeds are rarely viable.

Fascicularia needs well-drained soil and a sunny position which gets some shade during the hottest part of the day. It is not fussy about soil type and does not need excessive feeding; in rich soil it will produce a lot of leaves and no flowers. Once established it is drought resistant and will also withstand some short periods of frost. Its genus name comes from the Latin 'fasciculus' meaning 'bundle'; and 'arius' meaning 'pertaining to', probably in relation to its clump-forming habit.



Fascicularia bicolour and close up of flower (inset). :: FLICKR

READER'S PHOTO



:: CAROLINE SELLERS

A HEART-WARMING SIGHT

Caroline Sellers sent in this photo of mimosa in flower which she found on a winter's walk along a river bank.

GARDENING IN FEBRUARY

Beneficial tidying up

February is often too cold and/or too wet to do much in the garden but on bright, sunny days wrap up warm, grab the secateurs and do some tidying. If you have window boxes or bedding planted with pansies, snipping or pinching off the spent flowers will prevent them putting their energy into seed production and promote continued flowering. Ornamental grasses are usually looking very tatty by now so clip them back hard before new growth starts (shears might do the job better than secateurs). Winter flowering shrubs that are starting to go

over like Forsythia, mahonia and viburnum can be given a prune. The long stems of Forsythia can be cut back by at least a third, mahonia doesn't often need pruning but remove dead wood and any frost damage. Evergreen viburnums tend to only need light trimming to remove any dead or damaged wood. Winter flowering, deciduous viburnums can get very leggy and produce blooms only at the end of the stems. Cutting back hard one in every three or four stems will leave young growth that will produce flowers along their length next year.

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

We know that many of our readers have lovely gardens, or enjoy growing plants on their terraces or balconies, so why not share them with others?

Email your photos to english@diariosur.es or send them to SUR in English, Avda Dr Marañón 48, 29009 Malaga, with a caption and a few words of explanation. Alternatively, you can send them to us via Facebook ([surenglish](https://www.facebook.com/surenglish)) or Twitter ([@SUR_English](https://twitter.com/SUR_English))

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Top prize for Malaga actor at the Goyas

Antonio de la Torre brought home the best actor award for *El Reino*, while *Campeones* was crowned best picture at the Spanish Film Academy gala held in Seville

FRANCISCO GRIÑÁN

MADRID. The makers of *El Reino* (The Realm) were celebrating last weekend after picking up seven Goya awards, the Spanish film industry's 'Oscars'. It failed to pick up the best film statuette, however, being beaten to the mark by Javier Fesser's *Campeones* (Champions).

The Goyas picked up by *El Reino* included best original script, best director (Rodrigo Sorogoyen) and one that comes home to Malaga. Local actor Antonio de la Torre, who played the lead role, was finally crowned best actor after 12 previous nominations.

De la Torre played the controversial politician Manuel López Vidal,

whose high-class lifestyle, based on illegal activities, was threatening to be exposed after a newspaper caught wind of his illicit affairs.

He was praised by director Rodrigo Sorogoyen for "becoming the person, not the character". De la Torre dedicated his award "to the politicians who wake up every morning wanting to change the world".

Another star of the evening was Jesús Vidal, who was awarded best newcomer for his role in *Campeones*. Fesser's Goya-winning movie tells the story of a mentally-disabled basketball team, who, in overcoming adversity, learn lessons that help them in their everyday lives.

Vidal expressed his gratitude for the award, not only for him personally, but also for others in the industry with disabilities. Vidal, who is partially sighted, addressed the audience: "Ladies and gentlemen of the Academy, by awarding me with this prize you may not know what you have done for the industry. You have encouraged inclusion, diversity and acceptance."

The awards also had a strong feminist voice. The slogan "Not one more" was a visible reminder of the movement against gender violence, brought to the forefront once more by the CIMA association of women filmmakers. What's more, Eva Llorach, winner of best newcomer actress, told the women in the audience: "In the years when

we become invisible, after our forties, fifties and sixties, we are still alive."

The best actress in a leading role award went to Susi Sánchez, for *La Enfermedad del Domingo* (Sunday's Illness), directed by Malaga-born Ramón Salazar. The movie tells the story of a complicated mother-daughter relationship.

The star-studded audience at the night of the Goyas, held this year in Seville, included Penélope Cruz, dressed by Chanel, and her husband Javier Bardem.

Both international stars were nominated in the best actor categories for their roles in *Todos lo Saben* (Everybody Knows), but came away empty-handed.



Antonio de la Torre with his Goya. :: AFP



Penélope Cruz. :: EFE



Jesús Vidal. :: E.P.



Susi Sánchez. :: EFE

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JENNIE RHODES



WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

Massacre on the Malaga to Almeria road

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Carretera	Road
Masacre	Massacre
Tropas	Troops
Aviones	Planes
Bombardeo	Bombing
Mujeres	Women
Niños	Children
Huir	To flee
Pertenencias	Belongings
Seguro	Safe
Supervivientes	Survivors
Sangriento	Bloody
Evacuación	Evacuation
Canadiense	Canadian
Burro	Donkey
Refugiado	Refugee
Ambulancia	Ambulance

8 FEBRUARY 1937

As hundreds of thousands of people tried to flee Malaga when Franco's troops marched in, planes and boats opened fire and injured and killed refugees in what is known as the Desbandá



A photo taken by Norman Bethune of people fleeing on their donkeys. :: BETHUNE / SUR

On 8 February 1937, thousands of civilians, among them women, elderly people and children, trying to escape Franco's troops who had entered Malaga city the day before, were bombed by Spanish and Franco-supporting fascist and pro-Nationalist Italian and German warships and planes, as they fled eastwards along the coast road.

They took the belongings they could carry and those who had donkeys loaded the animals with as much as possible and went.

It is estimated that up to 150,000 people tried to flee Malaga in early February 1937 and that up to 5,000 were killed.

There was little other means of escape, due to the difficulty of crossing the



Child refugees during the Desbandá. :: BETHUNE / SUR

mountains to the north of the city, both in terms of their height and the fighting that took place in them.

Almeria was considered safe from Franco's Nationalists as it was still controlled by Republicans, to whom many Malagueños (both from the city and province) were affiliated.

The attack occurred as they travelled along the coastal road, now known as the N-340. Their flight, which became known as the Desbandá, was described by the New York Times at the time

as the "most terrible evacuation of a city in modern times".

As the refugees approached the town of Torre del Mar on that fateful day, they began to hear the noise of the planes getting closer and could see warships approaching the coast.

Canadian doctor and prominent communist, Norman Bethune,

along with a team of medical staff, came to the aid of the fleeing refugees. He would take those most in need to Almeria by ambulance and give them blood transfusions and other medical help. He later went on to write his account of the events in his book *The Crime on the Malaga-Almeria Road*.

The only existing photographs

of the Desbandá were taken by the doctor.

Commemoration events are held along the coast every year on the anniversary of the Desbandá. This year, between 7 and 16 February, around 70 people are walking the entire distance between the two cities, and another 2,000 are covering sections of the walk.

SUR produced a documentary to coincide with the 70th anniversary in 2007, which included accounts from people who, as children, survived one of the bloodiest episodes of Spain's Civil War.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

LEGAL ADVICE



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REF. C. A. C.

I have committed a crime (I stole a small amount of money) and the prosecutor is asking that I be sentenced to a few months in prison. I am working now, and I regret what I did because it was really stupid, but I am very worried about being sent to prison. If I am convicted, will I really have to go to prison? I have not slept

in months because of this.

In principle, you can put your mind at ease, since the penalty is not two years or more in prison the likely hood is that you will not be incarcerated. However, it will be up to the judge to decide on this if you are finally convicted, and to do so he or she will assess the circumstances of the crime, your personal, family and social circumstances, your criminal record, etc. You must also meet three requirements to avoid prison. Basically, these requirements are that this was the first crime you committed, that the penalty imposed does not exceed two years, and that you pay the amount you are sentenced to in concept of public liability, payment that can be made in instalments according to your economic capacity. If you meet all these requirements, you can rest assured that in normal conditions you will not have to go to prison.

REF. A. L. O.

I came to Spain to study two months ago and rented a two-bedroom flat in the centre. In order to reduce the costs of the rental, I decided to find someone to share the flat with. However, the landlord has assured me that he would terminate the contract and throw me out of the apartment if I decided to take a lodger into the apartment. Can he do that despite having signed a contract for a year with me?

Yes he can, you have to take into account that the lease was signed only between you and the landlord. Subletting, i.e. the total or partial re-allocation of a rented dwelling, must have the consent of the landlord. If you do not have his consent, the landlord can terminate the lease and evict you from the premises.

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DISCOVER ANDALUCÍA



Iberian pigs in the Cardeña area. :: SUR



JAVIER ALMELLONES

Iberian meats from Cordoban pastures

2 days in Cardeña and Vva. de Córdoba

Car and walking.
 Journey time: 2.5 hours from Malaga.
 Gastronomic events: 6 hours.
 Other visits: 5 hours.



Valle de los Pedroches is one of the regions of Andalucía which are famous for their traditional gastronomy. Thanks to its agricultural system and customs, this area has become a benchmark for Iberian ham throughout the whole of Spain.

Most gastronomic traditions take place in the winter, and are often based around the pig slaughtering which forms the basis of tourism events and attracts large crowds.

For example, in the village of Villanueva de Córdoba,

preparations are under way for the 'Fiesta de la Matanza y Artesanía Popular' which takes place on the last Saturday in February; this is a festival to celebrate a custom which until a few decades ago took place in many homes.

On 23 February, the festival will begin with the animal being sacrificed and then continues with tastings of different pork products. During the rest of the day, there will be performances of folk music and dancing.

In fact, this weekend

sees an event to whet the appetite before this festival in Villanueva de Córdoba, as the sixth Iberian Pork Tapas Route is taking place.

Tomorrow and on Sunday, more than 20 bars and restaurants in this town in the Valle de los Pedroches will be offering different tapas made with local pork and cured meats for just 2.50 euros.

Look out for dishes such as callos, orejas, albóndigas en salsa, carrillada, costillas, lagarto ibérico, surtidos de patés, jamón and secreto, all delicacies which will be available to tempt the palate all over the weekend.

There is also a rival to this gastronomic event, just half an hour's drive away in the small village of Azuel, which is in the municipality of Cardeña.

Tomorrow, Saturday 9 February, it is holding a festival based on its star product, 'morcilla', or black pudding. The 'Fiesta de la Morcilla Azueleña' features a very traditional recipe which has been handed down through generations in this pretty village.

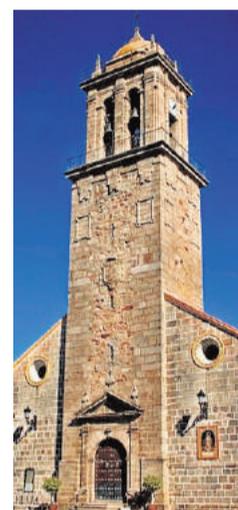
As well as sampling some of the genuine black pudding from Azuel, visitors will be able to see how it is made with the blood of Iberian pig.

However, not all the cuisine of the 17 villages in Los Pedroches region is based on Iberian pork. There is an extensive range of meats, including local beef, lamb and game, especially venison and wild boar.

In addition, traditional dishes here include a number of recipes which in the past used to be considered subsistence fare, but are highly coveted today not only because they are delicious but also because of their links to the history of the region.



Fiesta de la Matanza in Vva de Córdoba. :: SUR



QUICK GUIDE

What to visit in Villanueva de Córdoba

► **San Miguel church.** The main church of the town, built in the 16th century. Pza. de España, 13. 14440 Villanueva de Córdoba.

Civil War shelter.

Underground shelter built in 1937 as protection from air bombardments during the Civil War. Pza. de España, s/n. 14440 Villanueva de Córdoba.

La Dehesa information centre.

Historic building explaining the environmental and economic importance of local pasture land. C/ Pozoblanco, 3. 14440 Villanueva de Córdoba.



What to visit in Cardeña

► **San José church.** In the village of Azuel, built in the 19th century. CO-9010 highway, 26, 14447 Azuel.

Venta Nueva Visitors Centre.

Information centre about the Sierra de Cardeña y Montoro natural park. Between the N. 420 and CO 510 highways, 14445 Cardeña.



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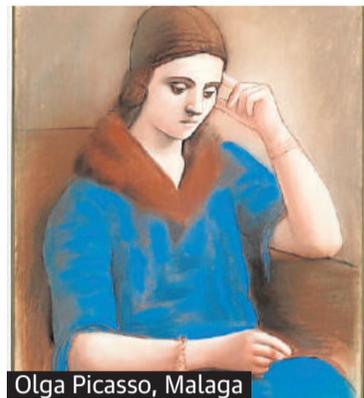
EXHIBITIONS

Azahares

Estepona. *Until 2 March. Casa de las Tejerinas, Plaza las Flores.* An exhibition of contemporary art work.

Emilia Rebollo

Malaga. *Until 28 April. Museo de Patrimonio Municipal.* Emilia Rebollo was a textile artist in Malaga in the nineteenth century. The museum has rescued her original designs and will be displaying twenty of them in a special exhibition.



Olga Picasso, Malaga

Movimiento Espartaco

Marbella. *Until 18 April 2020. Museo Ralli Marbella.* For the first time the interior staircase of the museum has an abstract painting by D. Darko entitled 'Primer Movimiento', completed as part of Málaga de Festival Cine en Español. It is on display until March.

Olga Picasso

Malaga. *From 26 February until 2 June. Museo Picasso Malaga.* Olga Khokhlova was Picasso's first wife. This exhibition is based on their relationship and how it and

the time of political and social change affected his art.

Inflatable art

Malaga. *Until 10 February, 9.30am - 8pm. Centro Pompidou.* An exhibition 'Constuir el aire. Arquitectura y diseño hinchable, 1960-1975' is based on inflatable furniture and other objects that were designed in the period between 1960 and 1975.

Antoine Dureau

Malaga. *Until 18 February, Antinoo Fine Art, Callejones del Perchel 2.* French artist Antoine Dureau is holding his first exhibition *Alien* which consists of a series of collages.

Alessandro Lando

Malaga. *Until 25 February. Sala Manuel Barbadillo.* The exhibition consists of works by hyper-realism artist Alessandro Lando. It is entitled 'Nature, Morte y Un Gato' (Nature, death and a cat)

Malaga Cathedral

Malaga. *Until 28 February, 10am - 6pm.* 'Unfinished Symphony' is the title of the exhibition at Malaga Cathedral. It demonstrates the development process of the cathedral which has been in construction through several periods of history from the Renaissance, from 1527 to 1588; and the Baroque, from 1721 until 1782. This architectural treasure is yet to be completed.

José Villanueva

Malaga. *Until 12 March. Alfajar gallery, C/Cister.* An exhibition entitled 'Obra en papel / Paperworks' by José Villanueva.

Pedro de Mena

Malaga. *From 16 March until 14 July. Palacio Episcopal.*

The exhibition will consist of religious works created by sculptor Pedro de Mena y Medrano.

A trip to New Guinea

Malaga. *Until 2 March. The Rectorada of the Universidad de Málaga.* Artist Ángela Calero is exhibiting a collection of souvenirs, photos and works he amassed during his 15 years in Papua New Guinea. The majority of souvenirs are pieces of jewellery.

Mimi Ripoll

Malaga. *Until March. The staircase to 'Colección Utopías Modernas, Centro Pompidou. Free.* 'Melodías Rítmicas' is the title of the exhibition which uses strong symbolism using black lines, shapes and textures which change in the natural light that floods in from the stairway next to the collection.

La Furia del Color

Malaga. *Until 3 March. Carmen Thyssen Museum.* The museum is exhibiting a selection of works by Francisco Iturrino commissioned by Lourdes Moreno.



José Villanueva, Malaga

José María Báez

Malaga. *Until 10 March. Centro de Arte Contemporáneo.* Around 150 works by artist José María Báez (Jerez de la Frontera, Cádiz, 1949), are on display.

Gómez Navas

Malaga. *Until 15 March. Sala de Muelle Uno.* Thirty-five works, all with a maritime theme, will be on display. Vicente Gómez Navas is considered to be one of the best maritime artists of today. Open Wednesday to Sunday 10am - 5pm.

Dionisio González

Malaga. *Until 17 March, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo.* Parresia y Lugar is the latest exhibition at the CAC in Malaga. It is the most important solo exhibition by Dionisio González in Spain in recent years. Around a hundred works are on display, among them photographs, videos, holographic prisms and scale models.

Jorge Rando Varnauskas

Malaga. *Until 4 May 2020. Museo Ralli Marbella.* An exhibition of works by Lithuanian artist Zenonas Varnauskas (1923 - 2010). The works cover the pre-war period, the Soviet Republic and the recuperation of independent Lithuania.

Cristóbal Toral

Antequera. *Until 26 April. Museo de la Ciudad de Antequera.* Internationally-famous, local artist Cristóbal Toral returns to his roots with a magnificent exhibition of over fifty of his large format works. The paintings were created over the last forty years and there is also a display he has made comprising



Varnauskas, Malaga

500 suitcases and holdalls.

Juan Leiva

Mijas. *Until 18 February. Casa Museo de Mijas* An exhibition of macrame and leatherwork by Juan Leiva. www.cueroymacrame.com

Olga Gorbunova

Mijas. *From 8 February until 14 March. Centro Cultural La Cala de Mijas.* 'Entre Pétalos de Seda' is the title of this colourful exhibition of art by Russian artist Olga Gorbunova

Juan Antonio Pérez

Mijas. *Until 25 February. Casa de la Cultura. Las Lagunas.* An exhibition of works by Juan Antonio Pérez entitled *Re_Plegado*.

Mariemma Yagüe

Torremolinos. *Until 17 February. Casa de los Navajas.* The exhibitio 'Our Voice', reflects the discrimination against women in workplace and in wider society. The artist will be displaying twelve, colourful acrylics depicting the plight of women in Africa, Latin America and India.

Photo exhibition

Mods and rockers unite to support 'butterfly children'

TONY BRYANT

MIJAS. Several local musicians and entertainers have joined forces to participate in a live music extravaganza to raise money for Debra, the Malaga-based charity founded with the aim of improving the lives of children who suffer from Epidermolysis bullosa, known as 'butterfly skin'.

Organised by local musician and presenter One Wish Steve, and sponsored by K and M Services, the concert will be held in the Millenium Bar in Calahonda on Saturday 30 March. Under the banner of 'A Way of Life', the event will present a night of music dedicated to the 1960s mod era and will include performances by Steve Owen, Anthony Wolfson, Debra Stacey and Maya Chewaluzza, among others. Specialist DJ Steve Goodey



Steve Hughes performing at last year's fundraising event. :: SUR

will keep the night swinging between acts, while members of the Los Motos Locos scooter club will show off their customised Lambrettas and Vespas to add to the ambience of the proceedings. This is the sixth edition of the annual fundraising bash and

Steve Hughes, who will host and play, has so far raised more than 12,000 euros for local charities. Tickets cost ten euros and will be available from the Millenium Bar in Calahonda and the Debra offices in Marbella from Monday 11 February.

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Torremolinos. *Until 27 February.* Centro Cultural Pablo Ruiz Picasso.

The exhibition 'Vecinos de Torremolinos' is a collection of photographs owned by José Díaz Jiménez. The photos depict the historical development of the town and its citizens.

Galería Krabbe

Frigiliana. *Until 13 April.* C/Rosarico.

Collective exhibition of art at the Krabbe gallery. Email: galeriakrabbe@gmail.com



Krabbe exhibition, Frigiliana

'Buly' exhibition

Vélez-Málaga. *Until 10 February.*

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. Huelva artist Aurelio Díaz Trillo, known as 'Buly', is exhibiting nine of his works which include drawings, paintings and sculptures.

Easterly Winds

Cádiz. *Until 15 February.* Palacio de la Diputación Provincial de Cádiz. Gibraltar are taking part in a cultural exchange programme with Cádiz and are holding an exhibition by Gibraltar artists. Cádiz will in turn be exhibiting works in the Gustavo Bacarizas Gallery in Gibraltar in March.

CHARITY

Meat Loaf tribute

Nerja. *9 February, 7.30pm.* Casa Grande. 20€.

Pippa's Pawprints Spanish Dog Rescue have organised a charity concert with Peter Young, a UK musician who performs a tribute to Meat Loaf. As a special incentive to support this new organisation they are offering a deal where if you sell three tickets you get one free.

Golf for Cudeca

Marbella. *15 February, 9.30am.*

Marbella Golf and Country Club.

The Marbella Golf and Country Club is organising its popular and traditional open tournament, the Memorial Members Charity Tournament to help the Cudeca Cancer Care Hospice.

Golfers will play in Stableford Individual format. Prizes will be awarded to the top three and to the nearest ball of ladies and gentlemen. Registration fee 35€ for members, 75€ for non members (both include 14€ donation to Cudeca). 20€ for lunch.

Email: reservas@marbella-golf.com or call: 952830500

Age Concern Estepona and Manilva

Estepona. *22 February, 7.30pm.*

Centro Cultural Padre Manuel. 10€ A concert, 'Classical Fantasia', is being given by the '3 Divas', namely Marika Rauscher, soprano; Sonia Garcia Quintero, soprano and Clarice Williams, mezzo soprano. The pianist Vera Sonia, is a professor in piano at the University of Jaén. The CantoLibre choir will also be performing. Tickets available from the Age Concern shop in C/ Zaragoza, Estepona or call Tony: 608458555. Facebook: Age Concern Estepona and Manilva.

MUSIC & DANCE

The Wall Bar

Malaga. *Hotel Vincci Posada del Patio, 11pm, entry free.*

16 February. Irissoboe. Oboe and acoustic guitar play adapted jazz, soul, rock and pop music.

23 February. Susan Valery & Adrian Lombardi. Voice and guitar. Jazz style.

Remember Queen

Almuñécar. *8 February, 8pm.*

Auditorio Casa de la Cultura A concert by Queen tribute band with Piero Venery as Freddie Mercury. Tickets from the cultural centre, Viajes Ecuador or www.bravotradados.es



Part of the 'Erotica' exhibition in Almuñécar. :: SUR.

An erotic exhibition in the lead up to Valentine's Day

:: JENNIE RHODES

ALMUÑÉCAR. Around 20 artists from Granada, Malaga and Madrid are exhibiting work at the 'Erotica' exhibition which is currently on at Almuñécar's Casa de la Cultura.

The featured work includes painting, sculpture and poetry by members of Almuñécar's Arte Sur artists' network as well as a number of invited artists.

The different works express the artists' impressions of eroticism and carnal desire, from more subtle pieces to the graphic.

Opening the exhibition last

weekend, Arte Sur coordinator, Loli Martín Morales, said "We can't deny that eroticism, as a motor for art and artistic inspiration, is one of the most powerful, controversial and explosive combinations to be found. Eroticism has always played an important role in art."

The exhibition runs until 16 February and is open from Monday to Saturday, from 5 until 9pm in the Rowland Fade exhibition room at Almuñécar's Casa de la Cultura on Calle Puerta de Granada. For more information see the Facebook page 'Arte-Sur Almuñécar'.



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www.villapadierna.es

MUSIC & DANCE

Piano and oboe recital

Estepona. 8 February, 8pm. *Centro Cultural Padre Manuel.*

A concert of chamber music with piano (Claudio Gómez Martínez) and oboe (José María Benítez). Pay after the show.

Delirium Blues Fusion

Almuñécar. 9 February, 8pm. *Auditorio Casa de la Cultura.* 12€.

Delirium Blues Fusion will be playing at the cultural centre. Tickets available from the Casa de Cultura or Viajes Ecuador.



Daniel Casares, Malaga

International piano concert

Almuñécar. 15 February, 8pm. *Auditorio Casa de la Cultura*

The international competition finishes at 6pm and is followed at 8pm by the closing concert with Francisco Escoda and music from Chopin's Concert 1. www.concursointernacionalpiano.com Tickets from bravoentradas.com.

KaM Musik

Torremolinos. 8 February, 8pm. *Centro Cultural Pablo Ruiz Picasso.*

The duo KaM Musik have a wide repertoire of music of different styles and from different eras, all written for flute and guitar.

Beatles versus Rolling Stones

Estepona. 9 February, 9pm. *Auditorio Felipe VI.* 12€ in advance, 15€ on the door.

The Silverbeats and the Honky Tonk Cats will be playing tributes to the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

Trumpet recital with Pacho Flores

Gibraltar. 13 February, 8pm. *Convent ballroom.* £20

Venezuelan trumpet virtuoso, Pacho Flores will be in concert accompanied by pianist Pepe Gallego. Tickets available from Sacarello's coffee shop, The Silver Shop or www.buytickets.gi

A limited number of tickets at £10 for senior citizens and students vfrom John Mackintosh Hall. Tel: 35020072134 or www.philharmonic.gi.

Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

Malaga. *Auditorio Edgar Neville*

8 February, 8pm. Conducted by Arturo Diez Bosovich, the orchestra will play works by composers Gershwin, Martino, Tadd Dameron and many others. **9 February, 8pm.**

A concert with flamenco guitar

soloist Daniel Casares playing pieces by Joaquín Rodrigo (Concierto de Aranjuez) and his own compositions.

Malaga. Teatro Cervantes

14, 15 February, 8pm. The first part will include works by R Strauss (Four Last Songs) and the second half will be Symphony N° 4 in G major by Gustav Mahler. Soprano Raquel Lojendio. Tickets: www.teatrocervantes.com/es/genero/ofm/ciclo/164/espectaculo/2176

Música Con Encanto

Marbella. 16 February, 7pm. *Les Roches, Urb Lomas de Sierra Blanca.* 25€

A tribute to Philip Glass with two pianos played by Alborado Moreno and Ignacio Torner. Also pieces by Ludovico Einaudi, Le-roen van Veen and Meredith Monk. Visit the website: www.musicaconencanto.org Tickets: 689 000 944

Chamber music at the Picasso Museum Malaga

Concerts start at 8pm. **19 February.** Quintet Arc-en-ciel.

A Touch of Class

La Cala de Mijas. 8 February, 7pm. *Avanto restaurant.*

A special concert by a Touch of Class for Lux Mundi Fuengirola.

Rockin Race Music Festival

Torremolinos. *Until 10 February.*

Main stage in *Auditorio Príncipe de Asturias, also Hotel Barracuda, Plaza del Remo and the Paseo*



Pacho Flores, Gibraltar

Marítimo Playamar.

A five-day music festival featuring music from the 50s with over 40 international bands, solo musicians and DJs. 50s attire and hairstyles as well as classic cars from the era and jitterbug and sock-hop dance classes. More info, tickets etc from www.rockinrace.com

Opera Cádiz

Estepona. 15 February, 7pm. *Teatro Padre Manuel.* 10€.

The Ópera Cádiz will be performing arias from Bizet's Carmen. The cast includes alto Clarice Williams and baritone David Geary.

FLAMENCO

Flamenco in the Museum

Malaga. *Museo de Arte Flamenco Peña Juan Brea, C/Ramón Franquelo.* 8.30pm.

9 February. Mariola Martin and Daniel Romero.

14 February. Bastián Soto and his flamenco group.

16 February. Eva Bravo and flamenco group. For information and bookings call 687 607 526 or email: info@flamenka.com

LECTURES

The Dash, Classic car event

Torremolinos. 9 February, from 10am.

Presented by Coast Classics, The Dash will include an exhibition of classic vehicles, an eighth of a mile sprint, food trucks, Rock'n'Roll and a flea market.

Blacktower Brexit Update

Nerja. 13 February, 11am. *Salón de Actos, Town Hall.*

Blacktower Financial management in collaboration with Nerja Town Hall have organised an informative talk that will address the implications of Brexit for expats living in Spain. Bookings email: ilse.liebrechts@blacktowerfm.com or call: 952816443

USA Lectures

Fuengirola. *Lux Mundi reference Library, free to members, guests 5€.* Email: u3afuengirola@gmail.com

Debate and Discussion: 'Recent pictures of the Royal Family crowded onto the balcony of Buckingham Palace perhaps caused many to ask- 'Continuity or Change?''

20 February, 1-2.30pm. In order to answer this question it



MOVIE LISTING
From Friday 8th
to Thursday 14th February
ORIGINAL VERSION SUBTITLED SPANISH

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY
Director Bryan Singer
Starring Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton, Gwilym Lee
BIOGRAPHY · 134 min.

Golden Globe Awards for 'Bohemian Rhapsody'
BEST MOTION PICTURE - DRAMA
BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR IN A MOTION PICTURE - DRAMA
'Rami Malek'

Friday 8: 22:30
From Saturday 9 to Wednesday 13: 19:45, 22:30
Thursday 14: 22:30

GREED II
Director Steven Caple Jr.
Starring Michael B. Jordan, Sylvester Stallone
ACTION · 129 min.

Friday 8: 18:00, 19:45
Saturday 9 and Sunday 10: 18:00, 20:10, 22:30
From Monday 11 to Wednesday 13: 18:00, 20:00, 22:30
Thursday 14: 18:00, 20:00

SECOND ACT
Director Peter Segal
Starring Jennifer Lopez, Leah Remini, Vanessa Hudgens
COMEDY · 104 min.

A big box store worker reinvents her life and her life-story and shows Madison Avenue what street smarts can do.

Friday 8: 18:15
Saturday 9: 15:30, 18:15
Sunday 10: 11:45, 15:30, 18:15
From Monday 11 to Wednesday 13: 18:15
Thursday 14: 18:00

GREEN BOOK
Director Peter Farrelly
Starring Viggo Mortensen, Mahershala Ali, Linda Cardellini
BIOGRAPHY · 130 min.

A working-class Italian-American bouncer becomes the driver of an African-American classical pianist on a tour of venues through the 1960s American South.

Friday 8: 20:15, 22:45
Saturday 9 and Sunday 10: 15:45, 20:15, 22:45
From Monday 11 to Thursday 14: 20:00, 22:30

THE OLD MAN & THE GUN

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10: 16:15

GLASS

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10: 15:50

Geoff Cooke examines the background of each of those on the balcony to see whether they are suitable to represent the Monarch or the people in any way, or indeed whether a Royal Family is needed at all or just a monarch.

Science and technology:
'The voyages of the Beagle - Tragedies and triumphs'

20 February, 11am. The Beagle made Charles Darwin famous, but what of other voyages?

The Arts Society Costa del Sol Fuengirola. 11 February, 4.30pm. Salon Varietés Theatre. Visitors 10€. www.theartssociety-costadel-sol.org

Nerja. 12 February, 6pm. Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja. www.theartssocietynerja.com Visitors 10€

'Lawrence of Arabia: Tortured Hero of Troubled Times- Excavating a Legend'

Lecturer Dr Neil Faulkner contrasts the legend of Lawrence of Arabia with the true story of what happened in the famous desert war of 1916 to 1918. Is the legend a myth? Was Lawrence, as some claim, a liar and a charlatan? Or does the legend reflect reality?

Mijas. 12 February, 10.30am. The Danish Club, Haza del Algarrobo, Crta de Mijas. Visitors 10€.

'Petra, Caravan City of the Ancient Arabs.'

Lecturer Dr Neil Faulkner explains how Petra, famous for its hundreds

of rock-cut tombs, was a great trading centre of the ancient Arabs on the edge of the desert.

www.theartssociety-costadel-sol.org

Lux Mundi Art Appreciation

Torre del Mar. 18 February, 10.30am. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre. 2€

The Great Artist Series' which was a BBC arts documentary telling the stories behind great artists. The original narrations were done by Tim Marlow. Following a short introduction about El Greco the documentary will be played and followed by a discussion.

FESTIVALS

Fiesta de la Luz

Vélez-Málaga. 9 February. From 1pm.

The Paseo de Andalucía will be the location for the celebration of traditional music which is linked to the festival of the Candelaria. There will be dance performances, and Rocios choirs.

EVENTS

Faulty Towers dining experience

Officially the world's longest running dining experience, this one-of-a-kind original has been selling out at venues around the world for nearly 22 years. www.torquay-suitetheatre.com

Nerja. 20 February, Casa Grande. **Torre del Mar.** 21 February, Salon del Mar, C/ los Fenicios.

Trip to Gibraltar

Torre del Mar. 21 February, 21 March, 25 April Various departure points. 12€.

Coach trip to Gibraltar. Passports required. Lux Mundi Torre del Mar. Tel:952 543 334 or e-mail: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org

O. V. FILM

SUR in English advises calling cinemas to check for any last minute time changes. Lunchtime and

late night screenings weekends only.

Cine Albeniz

C/Alcazabilla 4, Malaga. Tel: 902 36 02 95 www.cinealbeniz.com

The Favourite: 18.15, 20.25, 22.35 (every day).

Green Book: 18.15, 20.30, 22.45 (every day).

The Old Man and the Gun: 18.15 (every day).

Three Identical Strangers: 21.30 (every day).

Cinesur El Ingenio

Avda. Juan Carlos I, Vélez-Málaga. Tel. 667 77 31 87.

Mary Queen of Scots: 18.30, 21.00 (Tues).

Glass: 18.10, 20.45 (Tues).

Green Book: 18.00, 20.40 (Tues).

Cinesur Miramar

Avda. de la Encarnación, Fuengirola. Tel. 952 19 86 00.

Green Book: 20.05, 22.30 (every day).

Mary Queen of Scots: 11.50, 16.40, 19.10, 21.45, 0.10 (every day).

Edward Scissors Hands: 20.00 (Thurs).

Cines Teatro Goya

For tickets and information call 951196665. www.cinesteatrogoya.com

Bohemian Rhapsody: 22.30 (every day); 19.45 (Sat-Wed).

Creed II: The Legend of Rocky: 18.00 (every day); 19.45 (Fri); 20.00 (Mon-Thurs); 20.10 (Sat, Sun); 22.30 (Sat-Wed).

Second Act: 18.15 (Fri-Wed); 15.30 (Sat, Sun); 11.45 (Sun), 18.00 (Thurs).

Green Book: 20.15, 22.45 (Fri-Sun); 15.45 (Sat, Sun); 20.00, 22.30 (Mon-Thurs).

The Old Man & the Gun: 16.15 (Sat, Sun).

Glass: 15.50 (Sat, Sun).

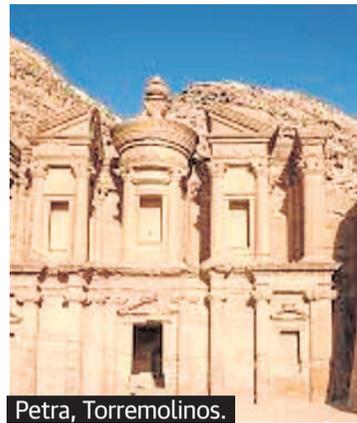
Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

Centro de Ocio Plaza Mayor, Avda. Alfonso Ponce de León.

Tel: 902 902 103 or visit www.yelmocines.es

Aquaman: 22.20 (Tues).

Bohemian Rhapsody: 21.45



Petra, Torremolinos.

(Tues).

World Tour Love Yourself Seoul: 16.00 (Sat).

Creed II: The Legend of Rocky: 20.45 (every day).

If Beale Street Could Talk: 21.40 (Tues).

Instant Family: 15.45 (every day, except Tues).

Glass: 12.20 (Sat, Sun).

Green Book: 12.45 (Sat, Sun).

Second Act: 20.05 (Tues).

The Favourite: 20.40 (Tues).

Mary Queen of Scots: 18.50 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón de la Victoria. Calle Arroyo Totalán

Tel: 902 220 922 or visit www.yelmocines.es

Bohemian Rhapsody: 19.35 (Tues).

Glass: 19.05 (Tues).

Green Book: 19.40 (Tues).

Second Act: 20.00 (Tues).

The Prodigy: 20.05 (Tues).

The Favourite: 19.10 (Tues).

Mary Queen of Scots: 19.30 (Tues).

Creed II: The Legend of Rocky: 22.20 (Tues).

World Tour Love Yourself Seoul: 12.30 (Sat, Sun).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902 220 922

or visit www.yelmocines.es

Bohemian Rhapsody: 20.55 (Tues).

Glass: 19.25 (Tues).

Vice: 21.45 (Tues).

Instant Family: 16.55 (Tues)

Green Book: 18.55 (Tues).

Second Act: 20.00 (Tues).

The Old Man and the Gun: 20.05 (Tues).

The Favourite: 21.05 (Tues).

Mary Queen of Scots: 19.10 (Tues).

Creed II: The Legend of Rocky: 19.30 (Tues).

World Tour Love Yourself Seoul: 12.00 (Sat); 16.00 (Sun).

Cine Club

Centro Cultural Padre Manuel, Estepona.

Three Billboards Outside

Ebbing, Missouri : 21 February, 8pm. Free entry.

Jumble sale in aid of local animal charities

JENNIE RHODES

ALMAYATE. ADA Animal Defence is holding a jumble sale to raise funds for a number of local animal charities including TAIL Torrox, APARiV and Pippa's Paw Prints, on Saturday 9 February in Almayate Bajo.

The market will be held in Parking El Llano in Almayate Bajo, just off the N-340 at km267 and will start at 11am.

Among the products on sale there will be fresh homemade cakes and fruit juices, as well as clothes, crockery and much more.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to learn more about the different animal charities including dogs and cats looking for their 'forever homes' and volunteering opportunities. For further information visit the Facebook page 'ADA Animal Defence'.



Lawrence of Arabia.



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Motherly love at the Jorge Rando museum

The art gallery in Malaga is displaying paintings of motherhood by Lithuanian artist Zenonas Varnauskas

ANTONIO JAVIER LÓPEZ

@ajavierlopez



MALAGA. They are never smiling. Never. Sometimes they are looking at their children, other times the children look at them. There are also scenes in which one of them fixes their eyes on the spectator. But they never smile.

It doesn't matter whether the image is set in the middle of the countryside or a diffuse landscape, beside a car at the side of the road or something that resembles a street, in vivid colours or discreet shades of grey. Neither the mothers or their children ever smile.

This melancholy pervades every one of the paintings of motherhood by Lithuanian artist Zenonas Varnauskas (1923-2010), which are currently displayed on the first floor of the Museum Jorge Rando.

This gallery in the El Molinillo district of Malaga is exhibiting 'Maternidades', about 20 of Varnauskas' paintings on motherhood, until 30 May. They were all painted during the last four decades of the last century, are medium-sized, on paper, and include watercolours, inks and gouache.

"Times may change, but women always find themselves in the same situation: giving birth, caring, burying," says the curator of the exhibition, Ina Mindiuz, about the works of this artist, who throughout his career focused on two main themes: motherhood and popular portraits under the title 'People from the Nemunas region', alluding to the river which crosses the country.

For the director of the Museum

'MATERNIDADES'

► **Artist.** Zenonas Varnauskas (1923-2010).

► **Where.** Museum Jorge Rando. Calle Cruz del Molinillo, 12.

► **Opening hours.** Monday to Saturday, 10am to 8pm.

► **Dates.** Until 30 May.

► **Entry.** Free.

Jorge Rando, Vanesa Díez, Varnauskas is "a painter of extraordinary artistic sensitivity" who developed his career during a turbulent period of history marked by three stages: the second world war, the inclusion of Lithuania in the Soviet Union and the country's later independence.

Ina Mindiuz points out that socialist ideology had a strong influence on his work. "Between 1956 and 1986 the socialist authorities in Lithuania looked critically, or at least sceptically, on the spiritual atmosphere and religious art as a means of expression," she says, and she suggests that Varnauskas' use of maternity was a type of strategy to escape this ongoing ideological censorship.

20th-century Madonnas

"By using a type of 'Aesopian language', a metaphorical, coded and symbolic language, an artist could hide a certain 'unauthorised' line of thought," says Ina. "It may be that behind Varnauskas' paintings of motherhood lies the image of a mother at that time: the thousands of Madonnas created by this painter, the repetition, meditation or mantra, are converted into a type of prayer. He showed an opening between form and content: in the faces of the mother and the child you can see the metaphor of the image and an urgent outline in an abstract painting: a thin layer of paint upon paper, sometimes, especially, rubbed and scraped in the same way they tore away and eliminated the ideals of the Mother of God at that time."

Mindiuz also explains why the work of Varnauskas is not better-known. "He always painted on paper, and never in large format. During the socialist period he stopped participating in collective exhibitions and if you stop going to those events, people forget about you. He didn't want to lose time in promoting himself or becoming famous. He just painted, and painted, and painted..." she says.

She also sees "many factors in common" between this Lithuanian artist and Jorge Rando, who also featured paintings of motherhood in one of his themed cycles. Now, Rando and Varnauskas are together, in the exhibition rooms of this art gallery in Malaga.

NEW EXHIBITION



▲ **New opening.** Ina Mindiuz, curator of the exhibition, with Al-dona-Ona Tamošaitytė, the artist's widow. :: FÉLIX PALACIOS

◀ **Colour.** Some of the works are brightly coloured. :: SUR



▲ **Black and white.** These pictures by Varnauskas feature mothers with their children. :: SUR

▲ **Abstract.** The artist avoids figuration in some of his compositions. :: SUR

Ronda ham slicer's 50-year career earns him coveted title

The National Association of Ham Slicers has given the Ronda businessman Leocadio Corbacho the title of 'Maestro Cortador de Jamón'

BY VANESSA MELGAR

RONDA. Leocadio Corbacho says that hams talk and he can tell at a glance how long it has been cured and its quality. He can also tell the

difference between an ordinary serrano ham and an Iberian one, with his eyes closed.

He is 72 years old and started slicing ham when he was just fifteen. His long career has earned him the title of Maestro Cortador de Jamón, (master ham slicer), which he was awarded at a surprise ceremony in Jabugo where he thought he was going to judge a competition.

The title is held by very few people in Spain, and Corbacho believes



Corbacho started his trade when he was just fifteen. BY V. MELGAR

there is only one other at the moment, in Madrid.

He started with a grocers shop and in 1989 decided to specialise in serrano ham. Start up costs were high as he bought 2,000 'jamones' for stock, but now he has a successful family business which also exports jamón to various countries and sells online, a concept which he leaves to his sons: "I'm better with a knife than a computer."

His main shop, which incorporates a cafe and gourmet counter, as well as the huge ham selection, is located in Calle Jerez, in Ronda.

His sons, who have taken over the reins of the business, run another shop in Ronda and one in Marbella called 'La Casa del Jamón'.

Corbacho offers advice about buying a ham saying "you get what you pay for". A good serrano ham can cost between 500 and 600 euros.

ANDREW J. LINN

GASTRO MARKETS



If you have ever tried patenting a concept or an idea, you will know it is not easy.

Last week I was reminded that the barman who invented Irish coffee never made a farthing as a result.

It just so happened that when a transatlantic flight that had taken off from Shannon (then the furthest western launch point for USA-bound air traffic) was forced to return on account of storms, the resourceful barman thought that putting a good slug of whiskey in the coffee would relax the nervous passengers.

He was right, and a drink that would become internationally renowned was born. Nothing in it for him though....

So who invented gambas al pil pil or beef stroganoff, and who came up with the idea of what are known as Mercados Gastronómicos? It translates badly because these are not markets, neither are they 'gastronomic'. They are open spaces where several different restaurant operations try to appeal to a wide public. They are really restaurant malls, offering a wide choice of food.

Just unlucky perhaps

The odd thing is that some are successful while others aren't. The San Miguel Market in Madrid is a classic, and the Boquería in Barcelona has been nominated by CNN as the world's best.

So why don't they work in Malaga? The million-euro Ambrosia investment in Nueva Andalucía had a promising start but did not last the year, and Malaga's La Merced, funded by

local investors, had no better luck.

Marbella's town-centre gastro market, small and attractive, is 'closed for improvements'.

Is it the character of the province's inhabitants that has anything to do with it, or have we just been unlucky?

I know many locals who feel they are not in control when they have to order the first course from one stall, the second from another, etc, and the wine from a central wine shop. Nor does the system encourage building up any sort of relationship with a waiter.

It has to be admitted that most of the successful gastro markets depend largely on tourism for their existence, but this should not be a negative factor on the Coast. So if they are successful in Cordoba or Seville, why not in Malaga?

WINE OF THE WEEK

Terras de Cigarón

If you are bored with those characterless Rueda whites and need something to get your tongue into, this is the wine. Spain's best white grape, Godello, from a little-known region in Galicia, made by the Martin Codax bodega. Unsurprisingly the rather limited production gets snapped up quickly, although major retailers still have some. Interesting label depicting a mask worn in a local feria. Around €8.65



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ADVERTORIAL La Fiorentina by De' Medici

Celebrate Valentine's Day the Italian way



Brigitte Pigani and her son Alessandro

ESTEPONA

Brigitte and her team at La Fiorentina De' Medici are busy preparing a fabulous event for St Valentine's Day. Chef Nico has created two tasty three-course menus for this special occasion. The premium menu costs 24.90 euros per person, with VAT included and consists of a homemade Valentine skewer appetizer, a starter of a parmesan basket filled with avocado mousse and prawns and for the main you have the choice of baked sea bass with pesto sauce and mashed potato or fillet steak with apple and port wine sauce. The economic menu costs just 19.50 euros per person and consists of an appetizer of avocados stuffed with tomato and buffalo mozzarella with fresh basil, a starter of fagioli-soup and the choice of a heart-shaped margarita pizza or ravioli amore with truffle sauce for the main course.

The event starts at 7.30pm and entertainment will be provided by saxophone and vocalist duo D&D. They will be performing some of the greatest romantic songs of all time. Seating is limited, so reserva-

tions are recommended.

NEW LOCATION

Since July 2018, the restaurant La Fiorentina now includes 'by De' Medici' in its name. This is because the restaurant moved to the former Ristorante De' Medici, just a stone's throw from the old beach resort. The restaurant is no longer located directly on the A7, but in the second row. In addition to the now much quieter location and the bigger premises, the sheltered position is a huge advantage over previous years. "With the strong storms in autumn and the latest cold evenings we would have had considerable problems at the old location. Now our guests are always cosy and comfortable and can enjoy their stay in our restaurant regardless of the weather," says owner Brigitte Pigani.

In addition, the prices and the menu have not changed. "The guests notice the improvements we have made but they don't notice any difference when the bill comes" laughs Brigitte, originally from Düsseldorf.

CHARITY EVENTS IN MARCH

Next month at La Fiorentina by De' Medici two very interesting events will take place.

On Sunday, 17 March there will be a Charity Dinner to raise funds for the animal welfare organization Triple A. The gourmet menu costs 59.90 euros per person. Half that amount will be donated directly to Triple A. The event starts at 8pm and will be accompanied with live music.

Another Charity Dinner is scheduled for 20 March. This time funds will be donated to the non-profit-organization for Alzheimer's sufferers. The menu will be served from 8pm and costs 25.50 euros per person including live music. Booking in advance for each of these events would be appreciated.

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Mobile: 609 516 526
Open daily from 1pm to midnight



Sicily is one of the suppliers of the fruit to Malaga. :: A. PELÁEZ

Malaga is losing its iconic prickly pear cacti

The prickly pear cacti are disappearing from Malaga province due to the cochineal beetle

:: AGUSTÍN PELÁEZ

MALAGA. Who would have thought a few years ago, before the cochineal plague - first detected in Murcia in 2007- that this little insect would devastate the 'chumberas' (prickly pear cacti) in Cadiz, Huelva, Malaga, Granada and Almería, making it necessary to import the fruit to meet local demand. However, this is exactly what happened, and is still happening.

The imported boxes of chumbos (the fruit of the prickly pear), usually start appearing towards the end of the summer, when local stocks are ending and imported produce is used to extend the season. Last summer the imported fruit was visible in markets a lot earlier than normal.

"We have had to increase the quantity of imported chumbos over the last few years," explained the director of the Málaga Natural company, Andrés Rojas, which specialises in the distribution of exotic fruit and vegetables from all over the world.

According to the company, chumbos have never been grown commercially in the province (they

grow in isolated clumps in ditches and along the side of tracks). Just a few families cultivated them for family use. In other countries they are grown for market and in a range of colours and varieties and at reasonable prices.

The only places in Andalucía where there are chumbera plantations are in Cordoba and Almería. Cordoba has a total of twelve hectares dedicated to growing this fruit and Almería has just two hectares.

At the beginning of last summer the price of chumbos went up to four euros a kilo for the unpeeled fruit. Towards the end of the season it oscillated between 2.40 euros and 3.50 euros a kilo for fruit imported from Sicily (Italy).

The loss of the chumberas in the province forced the majority of fruit suppliers to obtain the fruit from abroad, a move that was being gratefully accepted by consumers and which explains the sudden growth in imports of this product.

The cochineal plague continues without control across Spain with only the chumberas that have been looked after by landowners surviving. This has meant in some areas the iconic prickly pear cacti have disappeared completely.

The chumbera is a species that is included in the Spanish environmental agency's catalogue of exotic invasive species and was introduced to Spain in the sixteenth century.

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From a woman to a man in just 17 hours

Valencian surgeon César Noval has performed a gender reassignment in a single step for the first time in Spain

by FERNANDO MIÑANA

Rafa leads a normal life nowadays. Or at least, the life he wants. A life in which he shows himself to the world as a man and not a woman, an image which made him unhappy for 29 years. Rafa has fulfilled the two conditions which make a gender reassignment operation successful: he can urinate standing up and have sexual relations, although not as fully as a young man who was born with a penis.

This radical and profound physical change was carried out last year in Valencia. The city, a pioneer for heart transplants, is the home of Dr Cavadas, who performs marvels with legs, arms and faces, and also César Noval, a plastic surgeon who became the first in Spain to turn a woman into a man in a single trip to the operating theatre instead of in several phases. It was, however, a marathon 17-hour operation, in which Dr Noval led a team which included specialists in plastic and maxillofacial surgery, urology and gynaecology, an anaesthetist, two instrumentalists and two nurses, as well as the support of an endocrinolo-

Dr César Noval at a press conference to explain details of the operation at the IMED hospital in Valencia.

by KAI FORSTERLING/EFE

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Complete woman-to-man sex reassignment all in one go

The phalloplasty, removal of internal female genitals, mastectomy and facial masculinisation were performed in the same operation



THE TEAM IN THE OPERATING THEATRE
Formed by plastic surgeon César Noval, who directed the operation; Diego Cebrenos, maxillofacial surgeon; Alberto Borrell, urologist; Sara Cholvi, gynaecologist; Alicia Sánchez, anaesthetist; two surgical technicians and two nurses

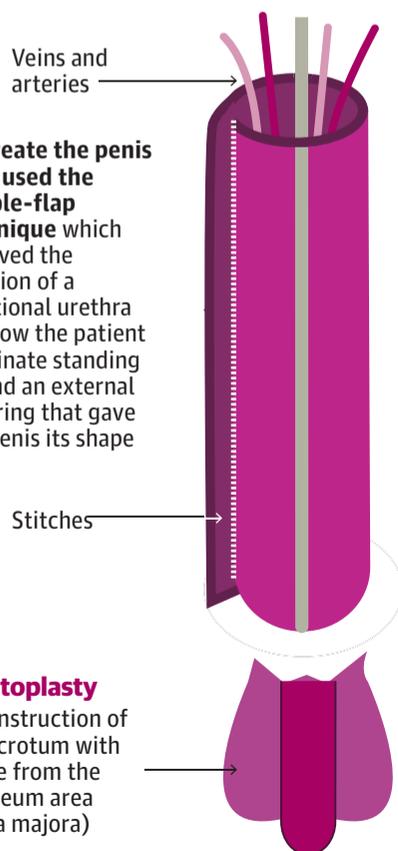
Mercedes Noval, endocrinologist, and Dr Bataller, psychologist, also assisted

The surgery took 17 hours and was divided into three phases:

1 PHALLOPLASTY Penis reconstruction

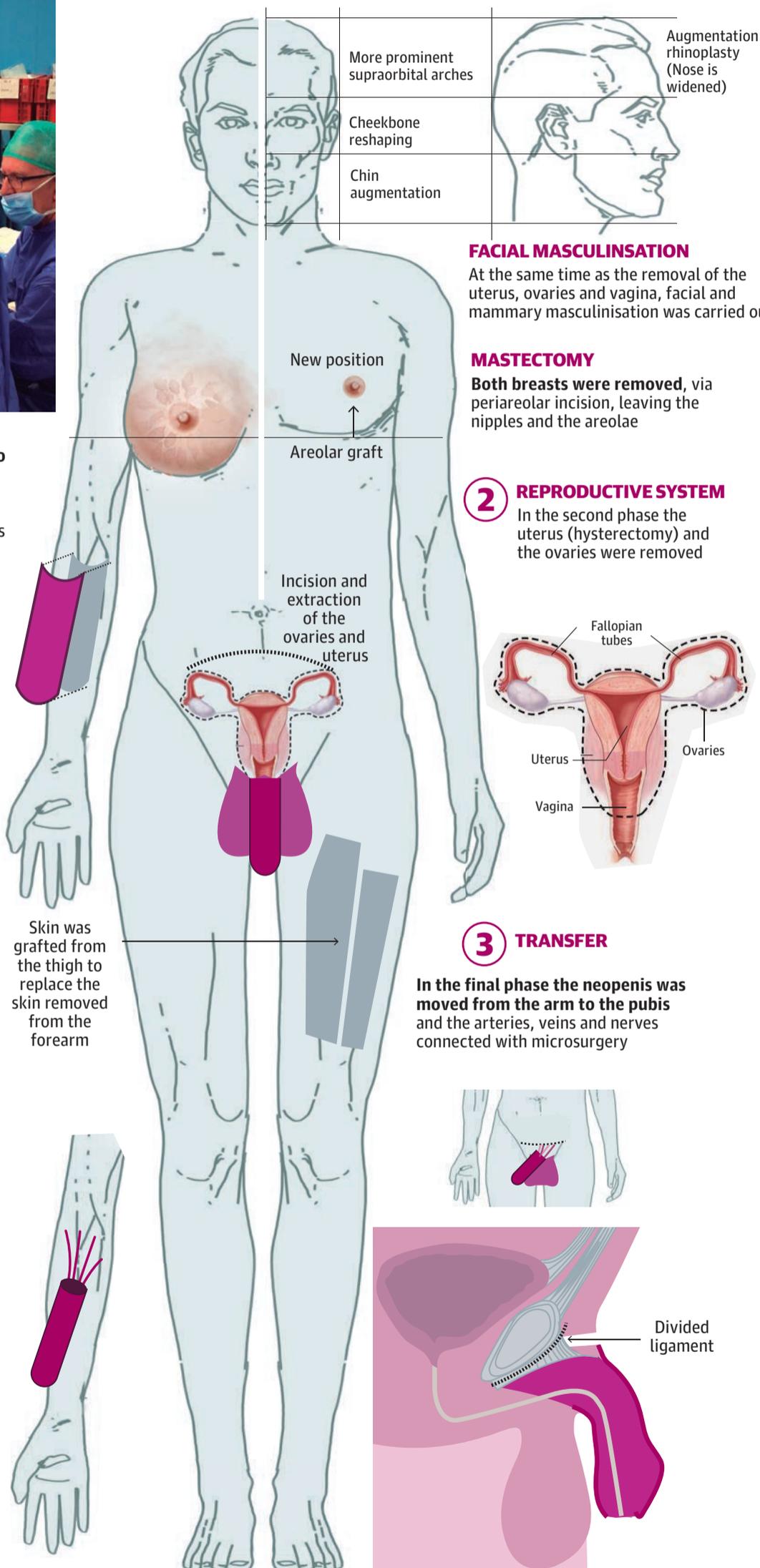
The penis was created using skin, arteries, veins and nerves from the patient's arm. The surgeons cut a rectangle of tissue of a thickness of 4mm from the forearm

The section of the skin, fat and part of the muscle are rolled and moulded into the form of a penis (this tissue is used for the urethra, penis and gland)



To create the penis they used the double-flap technique which involved the creation of a functional urethra to allow the patient to urinate standing up and an external covering that gave the penis its shape

Scrotoplasty
Reconstruction of the scrotum with tissue from the perineum area (labia majora)



More prominent supraorbital arches
Cheekbone reshaping
Chin augmentation

Augmentation rhinoplasty (Nose is widened)

FACIAL MASCULINISATION

At the same time as the removal of the uterus, ovaries and vagina, facial and mammary masculinisation was carried out

MASTECTOMY

Both breasts were removed, via periareolar incision, leaving the nipples and the areolae

2 REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

In the second phase the uterus (hysterectomy) and the ovaries were removed

3 TRANSFER

In the final phase the neopenis was moved from the arm to the pubis and the arteries, veins and nerves connected with microsurgery

gist and psychologist. This army of health professionals became pioneers in Spain, because normally four separate operations would be needed: mastectomy, facial retouching, removal of genitals and phalloplasty, the construction of a penis.

César Noval had other clients who wanted to change from being a woman to a man in one day, but he turned them all down except Rafa, a gypsy from Valencia who was suffering from the incomprehension of his family and only found the support needed to take this step from his partner, whose family was far more understanding than his own about the torture of being a man trapped in a woman's body.

Rafa was the first to fit the profile required for a case as complicated as this. "I have been asked before, but the patient needs to be very well prepared, in terms of physical health and psychologically. They have to be healthy to undergo surgery lasting so many hours and to handle a change as drastic as this," says Dr Noval, who is still only 30 years of age.

Only one 15-minute break

The operation was carried out at the IMED hospital in Valencia. Dr Noval got up very early that day, and as he always does when he will be performing lengthy operations, such as a face-lift or combined surgery, he had a good breakfast of oats, quinoa and toast with hummus. "You need plenty of slow-absorption hydrates," he says.

He arrived at the operating theatre at 7am and started work an hour later. It was gone midnight when he tidied up his instruments, took off the cap which covered his hair and went home, intending to sleep but "with an ear open for the telephone, in case any complications arose".

A year earlier, Noval had carried out the reverse procedure, from man to woman, in an operation which "only" took seven hours, during which they reconstructed the breasts, vagina and clitoris, and carried out changes to 'feminise' the facial features. Now it was Rafa's turn to finally feel fully Rafa after years of frustration and rejection from his family, who are described by sources at the hospital as "medium-low socio-cultural level".

There were several earlier stages he had to go through: personal interviews to make sure he was mentally prepared to handle the transformation of going to sleep with the body of a woman and waking up with that of a man just one day later; hormonal replacement therapy for at least 12 months to change the facial and body hair, fat and voice, and undergoing such a lengthy operation.

Surgery this aggressive carries the risk of thrombosis, the possibility of losing the phallus, as occurs with 30 per cent of patients, and, in most cases, not having the same functionality as someone who was born with a penis as part of their body.

GENDER DYSPHORIA

80% of consultations are from women

Gender dysphoria has a prevalence of one in every 10,000 people. About 80 per cent of consultations are from women.

200

gender reassignment operations are carried out every year in Spain, although until now none has been carried out in one single phase. Generally there are four separate operations, and the fact that the four have been integrated into one is a milestone in Spanish medicine.

A multidisciplinary team of eleven

On this occasion César Noval led a medical team of 11 people. Besides himself, there was a plastic surgeon, maxillofacial surgeon, urologist, gynaecologist, anaesthetist - the patient was only anaesthetised once - an endocrinologist, a psychologist, two instrumentalists and two nurses.

During those 17 hours of surgery, Dr Noval only stopped for 15 minutes at 6pm, to go to the bathroom and have some quinoa and a fruit juice. "You can't ingest anything with caffeine because the final stage involves microsurgery and your pulse has to be very steady," he explains. He then returned to the operating theatre, and carried on. "It might sound unlikely but the time passes quickly because when I'm operating I'm not aware of it, I'm entirely focused on what I have to do," he explains.

On this occasion, the operation involved building a penis from scratch. He did this using tissue

from Rafa's left forearm, with the skin, fat, an artery, two veins and two nerves. On this occasion, although it is very common, internal prosthesis was not needed. "Because we were doing the whole thing at once, I was able to create a bigger penis than usual without prosthesis and that enables sexual function, although not complete," he says.

A brilliant career

Noval says the post-operative period is not particularly painful; the patient only suffers discomfort in the area of the stitches because of the tightness. "The worst thing is that you can't get up for a week, and that is inconvenient," he says.

Rafa's recovery went as hoped, with just one setback: a urethral fistula, which they were able to resolve. Everything else proceeded as expected: within two weeks he could urinate standing up and sexual function was successful within a month.

César Noval's CV is extremely impressive. He did his baccalaureate at El Pilar school and passed with honours, and then went on to study medicine at Valencia university, graduating with honours. He worked as a plastic surgeon at the Ruber clinic in Madrid, the Teknon in Barcelona, and in renowned clinics in Manhattan, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

In Beverly Hills he worked in one of the most famous clinics in the world alongside specialists like Rollin K. Daniel, who patented ultrasonic rhinoplasty, the latest in cosmetic surgery.

Armed with all this knowledge, he opened his own clinic -Noval-Plastic Surgery Institutella- in the centre of Valencia. There he corrects noses, enlarges breasts and rejuvenates men and women. And in Rafa's case, he has made him the man he always wanted to be.

Plastic surgery and running the line in La Liga: all in a day's work

Noval is also an assistant to referee Martínez Munuera. "Sergio Ramos asks me questions about surgery," he says

■ SUR

Several times a year César Noval swaps his scalpel for a football whistle, because as well as being a plastic surgeon this doctor from Valencia is also an assistant to La Liga referee Juan Martínez Munuera.

It may seem surprising to many that someone with the ability to make history in gender reassignment in Spain, who makes a good living from his private clinic in the centre of Valencia, should sometimes choose to place himself at the mercy of football fans who are so inclined to hurl insults at referees.

Dr Noval can't say much about this second profession - it is quite possible to earn a good living as a La Liga referee - because the College of Referees forbids its members to talk to the media, but he says he will continue to do it because he enjoys it so much.

"I love football, I'm passionate about it, that's why I do it. I have had the chance to be an assistant referee at a Real Madrid-Atlético Madrid match, and that is a privilege and a unique experience," he says.

It didn't take long for his double career to become known. "A lot of players know what my main job is now, and Sergio Ramos has even asked me questions about surgery," says the man who in football, as occurs with all referees, is known by both his surnames, in this case Noval Font.

This is a life full of contrasts. A



César Noval, centre, beside Lionel Messi. ■ A.A. / REUTERS

couple of months after performing Rafa's gender reassignment surgery he spoke to the press about it for the first time, and a couple of days later he was assisting referee Martínez Munuera at the Eibar-Real Madrid match.

He has run the line at the Bernabéu, the Camp Nou, the Wanda Metropolitana and Anoeta, and also in Bucharest for the Europa League match between Steaua and Hajduk Split.

Between matches he returns to his everyday life as a plastic surgeon, and he often posts 'before and after' photos of his operations on Instagram.

On the TV show 'Botched'

César Noval lived in the US for a year and a half to learn from the top specialists in plastic surgery. During that time he took part in 'Botched', a TV programme which is now broadcast in Spain, on the Be Mad channel under the name 'Chapuzas estéticas'.

He laughs when reminded. "It's true, I was on that TV programme, with Terry Dubrow and, of course, Rollin Daniel, who patented ultrasonic rhinoplasty. I worked with them for a while in a clinic in Newport Beach, and we also operated in Beverly Hills," he says.

After learning so much from these experts he could have had a successful career in California, but he preferred to return to Spain. He didn't want to give up his refereeing, although he says that wasn't the deciding factor in his decision to come home.

"I had some very good offers in America, but I chose to come back, not because of football but because of my family," he says.

Noval, who is married with no children, leads a somewhat frenetic life, combining his work at the Clínica Noval-Plastic Surgery Institute with media interviews and his beloved football. He even finds the time to collaborate with some NGOs.

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Sarah's family asks the authorities to apply preventive measures against sepsis and provide information

"My commitment is to get the health authorities to take firm action to make sure cases like that of my daughter do not happen again", said Sarah's father in a letter to the Andalusian Health Service

:: MÓNICA PÉREZ

MARBELLA. In nearly every conversation he brings up the promise he made to his daughter Sarah when she was in hospital, suffering the serious consequences of sepsis which affected her without warning and resulted in her losing her hands and feet. "I will do absolutely everything possible to make sure your life will be as the same as it was before," he told her.

Ismael Almagro, Sarah's father, has stressed that this promise was

not just about obtaining the money necessary to buy the best prostheses available anywhere.

"It also means doing everything possible to make sure cases like this do not happen again, and for people to know about the dangers of sepsis," he said.

Sarah's family is working hard to honour that commitment. They have contacted the health authorities with the aim of making them "realise the true extent of this illness and take measures to reduce it". This, they say, includes vaccinating against it.

The latest letter, after one a few days ago to the regional government's Health Department, has just been sent to the managing director of the Andalusian Health Service, Francisca Antón, in which Ismael Almagro described his daughter's case and the consequences she has suffered from serogroup Y meningococcal septicaemia last July.



Sarah, at a recent fundraising event. :: S. A.

"I had no idea this illness was so prevalent in today's society, maybe because the health authorities haven't provided any information about it. We thought it was dormant, but here it is, going strong among us, like tuberculosis," said Ismael.

He said the number of sepsis cases in Spain has been increasing, especially on the Costa del Sol. He also wonders whether the health authorities

have kept that information quiet and failed to apply enough preventive measures.

For that reason, he is demanding a series of data from the Andalusian Health Service including the number of cases of meningitis, broken down by serogroup, in Malaga province during the period between 2015 and 2018; the number of deaths from these cases; the cases of meningococcal

septicaemia from all serogroups; and the number of cases of tuberculosis. All in Malaga province, during the same period of time.

"I'm basing my request on general and social interest, not for personal information, in order to be sure that preventive measures have been correctly applied for public use. I believe information about all cases registered in every single hospital and health centre in the province should be collected, together with reports issued during the period 2015 to 2018 by the relevant departments of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine in those centres," he said.

"For anyone affected, a great many things change"

In the letter, Ismael, who is making this the first step in his campaign, says to Francisca Antón: "I'm sure that for you, one case more or one case less probably doesn't change the statistics very much, but I can assure you that for anyone affected, a great many things change."

"I am convinced that if this illness personally affected somebody with the power to make decisions, they would take firm action in response. And this, Señora Antón, is going to be my commitment: to ensure that the health authorities take firm action to make sure cases like that of my daughter Sarah do not happen again. And if they do, that the same health authorities resolve the problem properly by making sure anyone affected can live a totally normal life afterwards."



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A surgeon who sees medicine as a vocation

Dr César Ramírez has just returned from a third humanitarian mission to Liberia during which over 250 patients underwent surgery

:: ÁNGEL ESCALERA

"A doctor's work should be vocational above all else. That's my understanding of my profession," says César Ramírez Plaza, a surgeon from Malaga who, for the third time in less than a year, has led a humanitarian mission in Africa to operate on patients there without resources.

Dr Ramírez, who is the head of the general and digestive surgery department at the Quirónsalud hospitals in Malaga and Marbella, has just returned from Liberia, where from 28 January to 2 February more than 250 patients underwent surgery.

If it had not been for the humanitarian team led by Ramírez, they would not have been able to have the operations they needed. The mission was organised by the Cirujanos en Acción and Bisturí Solidario associations.

Nine months ago, César Ramírez



Surgeon César Ramírez, with patients in Liberia on his second trip. :: sur

travelled to Liberia for the first time and performed a series of operations. What he saw and experienced during that trip left a mark on him, and strengthened his resolve to help people in need.

During that first stay in Liberia, he promised a woman with a huge goiter that he would go back and

operate on her, and he kept his word, performing the surgery in the town of Ganta, in the north of the country. That was the first operation he carried out on his second trip to Liberia; a further 27 patients underwent surgery in that operating theatre on the same day.

In total, more than 250 patients

had operations during those six days, made possible thanks to anaesthiologists Sonia Trabanco and Javier Mora, general and digestive surgeons Óscar Cano, Marta Jiménez and César Ramírez, pediatric surgeon José Miguel Morán and also Francisco Gómez, nurse and instrumentalist.

In Liberia, which is the sixth-poorest country in the world, health care is neither free nor good quality. For that reason César Ramírez, through his foundation Bisturí Solidario, offers training and expert hands to treat thyroid problems which are very common in Africa because of the lack of iodine. "I don't see this as an option; I see it as a vocation. This, for me, is what medical vocation is about. Trying to raise awareness of the need for help that exists in this world, especially in developing countries," he says.

Although thyroid problems are very common in Liberia, thyroidectomies are not an option. "Removing the thyroid gland means taking medication for life afterwards and it is extremely difficult to access that medication in Liberia," says Dr Ramírez. "So, instead, we remove most of the gland but we leave a tiny part, so there is not a total lack of thyroid hormones." However, on this occasion the patients will have extra help thanks to the generosity of members of Bisturí Solidario, such as the director and president of Grupo Piscis, José Gómez, who has paid for all the drugs needed by 50 patients for a year. That amounts to 18,000 thyroid hormone tablets.



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From a cancer ward to beauty queen



Current Miss Malaga María Sánchez spent much of her childhood undergoing chemotherapy; now she donates her hair and shares her story to help other sufferers



María Sánchez, in a recent photo. Above, as a child, pictured in the hospital. :: SUR

MALAGA. María Sánchez's story began a few days before her third birthday. She remembers the day perfectly, being rushed to hospital before even being able to blow out her candles at home. There was no time to lose. She was diagnosed with a tumour located between her sternum, spine and lungs, and needed treatment as soon as possible. This was the first of many birthdays and Christmases that she celebrated at the Niño Jesús Hospital in Madrid, where she lived.

Even as a young child she had a passion for fashion and modelling. In between chemotherapy sessions she would do catwalks for the nurses.

"I used to dress up for them, I wore headscarves and dreamed of being a model," María, current Miss Grand Málaga 2018, tells SUR.

Now 27, the young woman who spent much of her childhood fighting cancer is now not only the current face of one of the leading international beauty pageants, but is also an example of optimism and strength. She also donates her hair to the organisation Mechones Solidarios, who make wigs for women or children who have lost their hair due to aggressive treatments to fight this disease.

"I tell my story in the hope that I can help others who now have to go through what I did," explains María, who now lives in Antequera with her husband. She explained to SUR on Monday, World Cancer Day, that her advice to sufferers is to face the illness with a positive spirit, strength and surround yourself "always, always, always" with your loved ones.

For María, they are "indispensable".

María, who has a degree in Primary Education and is also a tattoo artist, remembers that soon into her treatment she had lost her hair. Yet, she never cared. In fact, it was quite the opposite. She wore her bald head with pride until she beat cancer seven years later. "I felt different. It was a look that nobody had, and I liked it," she confesses.

Despite her difficult story, María is remembered as a very happy and accommodating girl, who dealt well with the tests and treatments she had to endure. "I did not know another reality. It was the life I had to live."

Support of her family

Her parents and grandmother were her pillars of strength throughout her struggle. They never cried in front

Around 25 new cancer cases a day across Malaga

Some 9,000 news cases of cancer will be diagnosed across Malaga province this year (around 25 a day on average), according to figures provided by the Andalusian Society of Medical Oncology (SAOM).

This number is set to increase over the coming years, according to SAOM, but the good news is that treatments are continuing to yield better results.

In over half of these cases (55 per cent), the patients will recover and see an increase in their quality of life. This figure increases to 87 per cent in the case of breast cancer.

The reason for the increase in cancer patients is down to two factors, says Emilio Alba of Malaga university: the progressive aging of the population and better screening.

of her, but were happy, optimistic and full of spirit, despite the seven long years of intermittent hospital admissions.

When María was first discharged she soon relapsed and had to be re-admitted. "My parents had a hard time, it's the only thing that weighs me down and hurts me when I look back; the suffering they kept hidden from me. Sometimes I blame myself for it," says the model.

During her time at the hospital, friends she made in the wards did not always make it. "They told me that they had been discharged. Later I learned that they had not survived."

As she was hospitalised on and off for seven years, María was very isolated from her classmates. She studied in the hospital and when she was at home she had private tutors. Other children asked about her lack of hair, she recalls, but "without malice". It was more often the parents who made her feel like an outcast. Some mothers tried to separate their children from María. "I guess it was ignorance about the disease. Maybe they thought the cancer was contagious. My mother told me not to pay any attention," she explains.

In the future she wants to continue making her way in the world of modelling. She is off to a good start, being crowned winner of the Miss Grand Málaga contest on 20 May 2018. "Years after overcoming cancer I decided to take a step towards achieving my dreams in the world that had always intrigued me," María says. She will wear her beauty queen crown with pride, until April when the contest is held again.

María wants to continue encouraging the fight against cancer and give out a message of optimism. "Everything can be overcome by being positive, and with effort and enthusiasm. We just have to fight."



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Eighty ATP points up for grabs at the Marbella Challenger

The Puente Romano Tennis Club will host the second edition of the Casino Admiral Trophy from 25 to 31 March

:: JULIO RODRÍGUEZ

MARBELLA. Top-class tennis will return to Marbella next month as the Puente Romano Tennis Club hosts the Casino Admiral Trophy for the second consecutive year.

The tournament, which will run from 25 to 31 March, was officially unveiled last Thursday with the news that this year's edition will see 80 ATP points up for grabs for the winner.

Local tennis star Adrián Menéndez continues as host and ambassador of the competition which is aiming to consolidate itself on the ATP Challenger Series, the second highest level of competition in world tennis.

Last year, Roberto Carballés, Jaume Munar, Enrique López Pérez, veterans Marcel Granollers and Tommy Robredo, and future star Alejandro Davidovich all participated, as well as international stars Alexei Popyrin (Australia); Dustin Brown (Germany); Dudi Sela (Israel); Guido Andreozzi (Italy), who recently climbed into the top 100;



Santana, centre, with other organisers and sponsors. :: J. RODRÍGUEZ

and Stefano Travaglia (Italy), who went on to win the tournament.

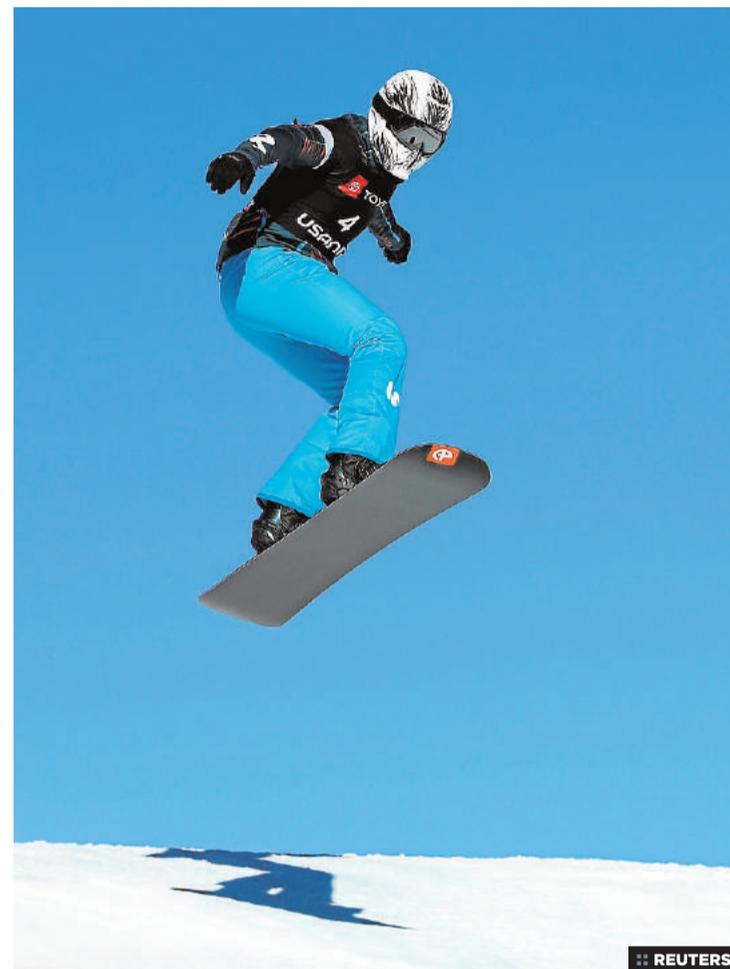
In total this year there will be 43,000 euros in prize money and it is expected to attract some of the current top 100, as well as some of the sport's most prodigious young talents, looking to make their mark on the international stage.

Manolo Santana, after whom the centre court is named, appealed to the world's tennis fans, encouraging them to attend every round. He said at the presentation: "We are going to see some spectacular tennis in Marbella, which is the best loca-

tion possible."

In its second edition, the Casino Admiral Trophy will add further entertainment in the form of a music festival, with flamenco, classical and opera performances, which will take place in the VIP tent during the weekend of the final.

The festival will be coordinated in collaboration with AnyTech365, whose CEO, Tero Turunen, says he was attracted to the tournament because he wanted to contribute to "spreading awareness about Marbella as one of the prime tourist and sporting destinations in Europe".



REUTERS

FALL COSTS REGINO MEDAL CHANCE

Mijas snowboarder Regino Hernández fell out of medal contention for the World Championships after a fall last Friday. The Winter Olympic bronze medallist at Pyeongchang 2018 crossed the finish line last at the quarter-final stage of the competition this year which are being held in Utah until Sunday.

IN BRIEF

Nerja Rugby see off El Ejido in hard-fought first home clash of the year

NERJA

:: SUR. Club Nerja Rugby's successful season continued on Sunday with a 28-20 home victory over El Ejido - but they did not make it easy for themselves.

Despite going 10-0 up, the hosts were pegged back to 13-13 at the break.

It was much the same story in the second half, with Nerja surrendering a lead and even going 18-20 down, giving the large home support a tense period of 15 minutes as they faced up to the possibility of their first home

loss of the season.

Their spirits were lifted with nine minutes to go, however, when Nerja were able to convert a penalty to take a one-point lead.

Three minutes from the end the home side crossed the opposition line but the try was disallowed due to a knock on.

Nerja won the ball from the opposition five-metre scrum and pushed over for the try which, with the conversion, left them victors by an eight-point margin.

Nerja's next home game is on 14 March when Jaén are the visitors.

They are Nerja's closest rivals this season so this game may be the deciding one of the league campaign.

Fuengirola Lions return to the top of the Andalusian League

FUENGIROLA

:: SUR. The Fuengirola Lions claimed top spot in the Andalusian League at the weekend as they moved level on points with the Fuengirola Vikings.

Following the match day, played on the new floor at the Santa Fe rink in Los Boliches, the third Fuengirola team, Barona, moved level in third with Sancti Petri despite having played a game less.

On Saturday, Liga Sur action resumes in Seville and the Fuengirola combined team will be looking to preserve their lead at the top.

England international walking footballers take on Gibraltar and WFS

LA LÍNEA

:: SUR. The England international walking football squad arrived in Spain on Wednesday for a warm-weather training camp in preparation for the European Walking Football Championships which will take place in Paris (France) this May.

The squad is based in La Línea and have arranged a full international walking football match against Gibraltar WF Selection this Saturday (9 February) at the Victoria Stadium in Gibraltar as part

of their preparations.

They have also invited Walking Football Spain (WFS) to play a warm-up match today, Friday, ahead of the showpiece event on Saturday.

"It is an honour for Walking Football Spain to be asked to get involved. We will send a strong team and hopefully give a good test to the 'old enemy'," said Ronnie Waugh, WFS's oldest player, aged 75.

"We hope this will provide a boost for walking football in the south of Spain," he added.

This match will also be played at the Victoria Stadium (9.30am kick-off). Entry is free and all spectators are welcome to come and cheer the teams on.

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Goalkeeper Munir is powerless to stop Luis Rioja's close-range strike. :: SALVADOR SALAS

LA LIGA 123

Results	Next match day
MALAGA - Almería 1-1	Sporting - Osasuna
Numancia - Lugo 3-0	Gimnàstic - Reus
Majadahonda - Nástic 1-0	Elche - Oviedo
Córdoba - Albacete 1-3	Extremadura-Majadahonda
Deportivo - Tenerife 0-0	Tenerife - Córdoba
Mallorca - Alcorcón 2-0	Lugo - Zaragoza
Oviedo - Cádiz 2-1	Alcorcón - Cádiz
Reus - Elche 0-1	Albacete - Mallorca
Osasuna - Granada 1-0	Granada - Deportivo
Extremadura - Sporting 0-3	Almería - Numancia
Las Palmas - Zaragoza 1-1	MALAGA - Las Palmas

Table	TEAM	PT	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
★	1. Albacete	45	24	12	9	3	34	21
★	2. Granada	44	24	12	8	4	30	16
■	3. MALAGA	44	24	13	5	6	27	18
■	4. Osasuna	44	24	13	5	6	31	24
■	5. Deportivo	43	24	11	10	3	35	18
■	6. Alcorcón	38	24	11	5	8	24	20
	7. Mallorca	37	24	10	7	7	29	22
	8. Oviedo	36	24	10	6	8	28	29
	9. Cádiz	35	24	9	8	7	30	20
	10. Sporting	33	24	8	9	7	26	20
	11. Las Palmas	33	24	7	12	5	30	27
	12. Almería	31	24	7	10	7	26	23
	13. Numancia	30	24	7	9	8	30	30
	14. Elche	28	24	6	10	8	23	29
	15. Tenerife	27	24	5	12	7	20	25
	16. Zaragoza	27	24	6	9	9	27	31
	17. Lugo	26	24	6	8	10	23	28
	18. R. Majadahonda	26	24	7	5	12	21	31
▼	19. Extremadura	22	24	5	7	12	28	35
▼	20. Córdoba	18	24	3	9	12	28	45
▼	21. Gimnàstic	17	24	4	5	15	13	37
▼	22. Reus	21	24	5	6	13	16	30

Malaga let derby win slip deep into stoppage time

Almeria snatched a point from La Rosaleda on Friday night courtesy of former Marbella winger Luis Rioja's strike in the 91st minute

1-1

MALAGA-ALMERIA

Malaga: Munir; Cifu, Diego González, Pau Torres, Ricca; Renato Santos (Ontiveros, 62'), Keidi, Erik Morán (Seleznov, 74'), N'Diaye, Adrián; Blanco Leschuk. Unused substitutes: Kieszek, Iván, Lombán, Dani Pacheco, Koné.

Almeria: René; Romera (Demirovic, 58'), Owona, Seveljich, Iván Martos; Corpas, Yan Eteki (Rocha, 83'), De la Hoz, Luis Rioja; Juan Carlos (Chema, 73'), Álvaro Giménez. Unused substitutes: Lario, Gaspar, Andoni López, Caballero.

Goals: 1-0 Adrián (12'); 1-1 Rioja (90+1').

Referee: Arecos Franco. Yellow cards for Erik Morán, Owona, Juan Carlos, N'Diaye, Demirovic.

Ground: La Rosaleda (13,313 spectators).

was greeted with enthusiasm from the home faithful, almost finished off the game when he neatly brought down a long diagonal in the area, before sending the ball across the face of goal where Esteban Saveljich got back to clear.

In truth, a goal at that moment would have relieved a lot of tension as the visitors started to control pos-

controlled volley, had their fair share of chances to put the game to bed but were punished for their wastefulness as the visitors grew into the game in the second half.

Blue and Whites coach Juan Ramón Muñiz surprised everyone with his starting line-up by including new signing Erik Morán from the start, despite having only trained with the first team for three days. The Basque started at the base of a five-man midfield which on paper lacked width. However, it was through the man operating from the left that scored the opener.

Keidi Bare's first-time cross from the right evaded the entire Almeria backline and found Adrián at the back post whose side-foot volley left René with no chance between the sticks.

Despite the compactness of the midfield and the extra composure added by Morán who seamlessly slotted into the system, Almeria had the ball in the back of the net shortly afterwards. Juan Carlos' left-footed volley cannoned back off the post before Álvaro Giménez stabbed home the rebound from a marginally offside position.

The hosts headed the warning and

started to control the play better and came within inches of doubling their lead when Renato Santos' freekick rocked the crossbar.

An even better chance came just after the break when Bare hit the ball straight at the keeper from six yards out when he had the whole goal to aim at.

After being on the receiving end of a clatter, Morán's debut was over after 74 minutes and he was replaced by fellow new recruit Yevhen Seleznov who has quickly become a fan favourite.

The Ukrainian, whose every touch



DARYL FINCH

MALAGA. Luis Rioja's 91st minute strike sent Almeria fans home ecstatic as the visitors snatched a late draw in the Andalusian derby at La Rosaleda on Friday night.

Malaga, who had taken the lead in the 12th minute courtesy of Adrián's

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Up next

LAS PALMAS (H)

They may have been relegated at the same time as Malaga, but the two sides' fortunes couldn't have been more different.

Languishing in mid-table, the Canarian side have already changed their manager after a run of ten games without a win. Now in the hotseat is former Liverpool assistant manager Paco Herrera, who replaced Manolo Jiménez on 16 November for his second spell in the hotseat.

Since then, form has improved and they are now within eight points of a play-off place (after drawing 1-1 with Zaragoza on Monday), having strengthened the squad in January with the additions of right-back Eric Curbelo, the returning centre-back Aythami and winger Srnic.

Malaga host 'La Unión' on Sunday (kick off 8pm) and will have forward Jack Harper back in the ranks after he completed his one-match suspension for accumulating five yellow cards.

session and send balls into the area where keeper Munir rarely came off his line to command the situation.

Chema tried his luck with a lofted pass into the area but neither Lucien Owona nor Saveljich could connect at the back post.

The hosts hoped they had weathered the storm but the pressure finally told in stoppage when former Marbella winger Rioja slotted home from close range to steal a point, raising the total of points lost in the final minutes to seven for Malaga.

"In the final minutes we lost our cool," admitted Muñoz after the game. "We started to panic and that's when they got the equaliser."

Despite the slip-up, Malaga remain just a point off leaders Albacete who are only there having been awarded three points as they had been due to face Reus who have now been banned from competition.



Iván Alejo (left), Axel Werner (centre) and Rajko Brežančić (right) came in on deadline day. :: NITO SALAS

Three in and two out on a busy deadline day for Malaga

Iván Alejo's deal finally got over the line, but the surprise additions of Rajko Brežančić and Axel Werner came as Juanpi and Héctor headed out the door

ANTONIO GÓNGORA

MALAGA. Malaga left it late but they got their business done on a busy transfer deadline day last Thursday.

First, a loan deal for Getafe winger Iván Alejo finally got over the line in the early evening. The wide man, 23, who is comfortable playing on either flank, reinforces an area of the field that coach Juan Ramón Muñoz had been unhappy with, frequently turning to youth players Hicham and Hugo Vallejo to plug the gaps in his squad.

Then, as the clock started to tick towards midnight, a late flurry of action saw another two coming in and two going out.

With Andrés Prieto being al-

lowed to join Leganés on a free earlier in the week, a new first-choice goalkeeper was being sought and he came in the form of Axel Werner. The 22-year-old terminated his loan deal with Huesca and signed for Malaga from Atlético Madrid until the end of the season.

Left-back Rajko Brežančić followed, also from Huesca, who terminated his contract. He joins on a one-and-a-half year deal.

Going the other way, surprisingly, was Juanpi. The diminutive midfielder, who had started to force his way back into the coach's plans, heads to the side from Aragón on loan until the end of the season.

Also on his way out was Héctor. His time at Malaga has come to end after the club terminated his loan from Atlético Madrid. Though it was known at the start of January that this was the club's intention all along, Atleti left it late to sanction the deal as they waited for Rayo Majadahonda to agree to cover the same proportion of his

Multimillion-euro deal blocked for Diego González

One player who will not be leaving Malaga is centre-back Diego González. The 24-year-old was the subject of a bid, thought to be in excess of four million euros, in the final hours of deadline day from German side Augsburg. Despite the elevated fee, the club ultimately decided to reject the deal, primarily because of continuing doubts over the injury recovery of Luis Hernández.

wages that Malaga had until now.

In total, Malaga made five signings in the winter window with Alejo, Werner and Brežančić following Ukrainian striker Yevhen Seleznov and Spanish midfielder Erik Morán through the door at La Rosaleda.

Femenino's terrible run of form continues with another heavy loss

MALAGA F.1 VALENCIA 4

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Malaga's women's team's worrying run continues. The side remain in the relegation zone after a resounding 4-1 defeat at home to Valencia on Saturday in which they showed a concerning lack of experience.

Goals from Coleman and Carolina Férez meant that the hosts went in at half time two goals down with a mountain to climb.

Captain Adriana reduced the deficit from the penalty spot after Gaëlle was brought down in the 73rd minute, but Valencia continued to have success with crosses into the area and Sandra Hernández and Mari Paz finished the job with goals in the final ten minutes.

Malagueño still bottom after conceding last-minute winner

MALAGUEÑO 0 LINENSE 1

EMILIO MORALES

MALAGA. Just as it looked like Atlético Malagueño were about to bag a late winner and earn back-to-back victories for the first time this season, Linense ripped up that particular script and left Malaga with all three points on Sunday.

After the visitors' Carrasco received his marching orders in the 50th minute, Malagueño took the ascendancy and pushed for the winner. However, in a cruel twist of fate, N'Diaye condemned Malagueño to defeat, converting his side's first chance since going down to ten in stoppage time.

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A LOOK AT LA LIGA

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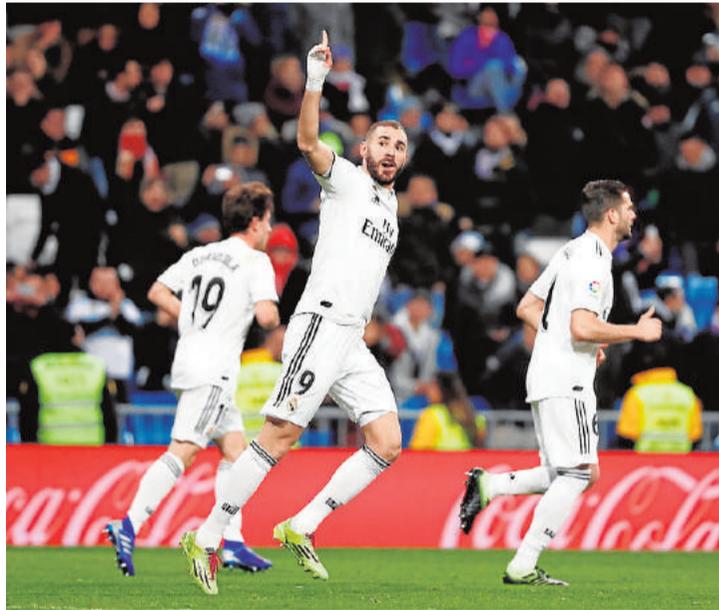


Benzema solves the mystery

Just like all good sidekicks, the Real Madrid forward has been happy to let others take the limelight - until now

We've all seen the TV detective series where the trusty lieutenant does all the leg work but disappears from the clinching scenes after the ad break. Karim Benzema is the football equivalent to the trusty sidekick who steps aside to allow the star, whose name is the title of the show, to grab the glory.

He was always the subordinate to Cristiano Ronaldo, taking a beating from the baddies, creating leads and covering all bases before disappearing into the shadows at the conclusion. Now, like Taggart and Inspector Morse, the



Karim Benzema is back in the goals. :: REUTERS

headline act has moved on and he finally gets to play the lead and act the hero.

You could tell how far he'd come

when he swaggered off the club jet as it landed in Barcelona wearing his shades and cool headphones. Suddenly there is a full apprecia-

tion of the Frenchman's talents. This is marked by his improved goalscoring record and importance to the Real Madrid storyline.

It has taken a decade for the striker to be truly valued. This season he is the leading scorer with eighteen goals in all competitions.

Bear in mind that when he first signed he played second fiddle to Gonzalo Higuain in the reign of José Mourinho and his national team manager Laurent Blanc said he was "not used to working". But he saw off Higuain and other challengers like Emmanuel Adebayor to secure a role as the 'legs man' for the 'galácticos' Cristiano and Gareth Bale.

Traditionally he would run himself into the ground and get hooked by the manager in the closing stages. Last season alone he was replaced on twenty-four occasions. But in the summer he knuckled down, lost five kilos and has returned to grasp the limelight.

He's more vital to the Real Madrid team than even Bale, has new status as one of the club captains and is showing the teenage sensation Vinicius Júnior the ropes.

The reward is measured in more playing time, he's finished the majority of his Liga starts, he's already doubled last season's domestic tally and has a one in two goal scoring ratio across all competitions. He even surpassed the legendary Hugo Sánchez to become the club's sixth all-time leading scorer.

Just like Ronaldo last winter he's started the year in sensational form with six goals in his last five games. Unlike Cristiano, though, he's unlikely to be shipped out at the end of the season.

It's quite a turnaround for a player who always sought to be accepted in the capital. Every season there was a question raised about whether the club could find a better number nine with Robert Lewandowski annually linked.

Lesser professionals would have taken a pay day in China or sought a lucrative move to a Premier League club but Benzema stayed on the scene and he's solved the mystery.

Marbella's winning run ended by late Bryan Gil goal

The visitors, who were out for their fourth win in a row, were pegged back by the wonderkid in stoppage time

SEVILLA ATLÉTICO 1 MARBELLA 1

:: OPTA

SEVILLE. Just as it looked like the three points would be coming back to the Costa del Sol, Sevilla won-

derkid Bryan Gil popped up with the equaliser deep into stoppage time at the Cisneros Palacios sports complex on Sunday afternoon.

Sevilla Atlético saved their best until last in their clash with Marbella as a moment of genius from Bryan Gil, with a neat one-two, opened up the backline for the forward to slot past Wilfred who had been on top form throughout the afternoon.

This was a crushing blow for the visitors who had gone ahead with



Samu Delgado presses Bryan Gil, scorer of the hosts' goal. :: OPTA

20 minutes left to go after Dani slotted home at the far post after a well-worked set piece.

This result sees the end of the

Costa side's winning run which was very nearly extended to four. They sit in 11th place, six points clear of the danger zone.

Xiong Zhenfeng, the first Chinese player in the club's history

January was a busy one in terms of transfer activity for Marbella with five players coming in (Dani Pérez, Samu Delgado, Samu de los Reyes, Faurín and Paulo Vitor) all with one thing in common - experience in the second and third tiers.

One player, however, broke the mold. Xiong Zhenfeng became the club's first Chinese player in its history, joining from Liaoning FC on loan until 30 June.

The full-back, 21, had been training with the squad all month but his trial was turned into a deal on deadline day.



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Contact the SUR in English distribution call centre for any queries relating to the delivery and distribution of SUR in English.

This service is available every Friday from 9:00 to 13:00, so for all your distribution enquiries in English call 952 649 669, in Spanish 952 649 720.

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SUR
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THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21 - February 19
Talking too much could see you get yourself in tangles. However, a few select words in the right direction can solve a dilemma.



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
There is much to gain from putting your ideas forward to someone who can progress them. Try not to be over-sensitive to comments that are meant to help.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
A last-minute chance to shine should not be missed. Someone who has great faith in you could be working away in the background, lucky you!



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Do something special for a loved one midweek and the weekend could be surprising! This time is all about deciding what you really want and setting about a plan to get it.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Something that has been forming in your mind may now come out. Don't be afraid to put your ideas and suggestions forward.



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
Taking the lead at the weekend sees you in charge and helping others. This certainly takes your mind from a longer-term question that you do not yet have the answer to..



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
They say that travel broadens the mind. In your case, this week it could fire off a great money-making idea. Distractions, however, could cost you money!



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
There could be a conflict between work and romance but you are more than capable of juggling this situation. Maybe a special date could be arranged for the weekend rather than the week?



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Have a good chat about anything that is troubling or puzzling you. Things that irritate at work could impact on your home or love life. Keeping control of your temper is a good start.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
Where you cannot find solutions maybe there is a need to be more flexible and even forgiving. Others make mistakes that seem stupid to you.

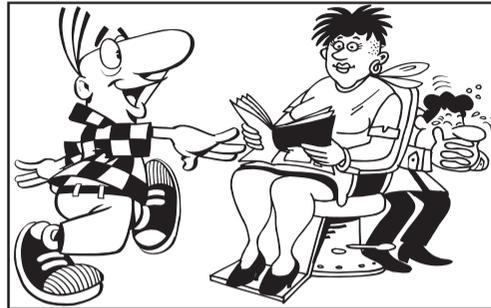


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
There is no point in mentioning past mistakes to someone in authority. Over-confidence could lead you to do this. Where someone is higher in the pecking order, respect is expected.

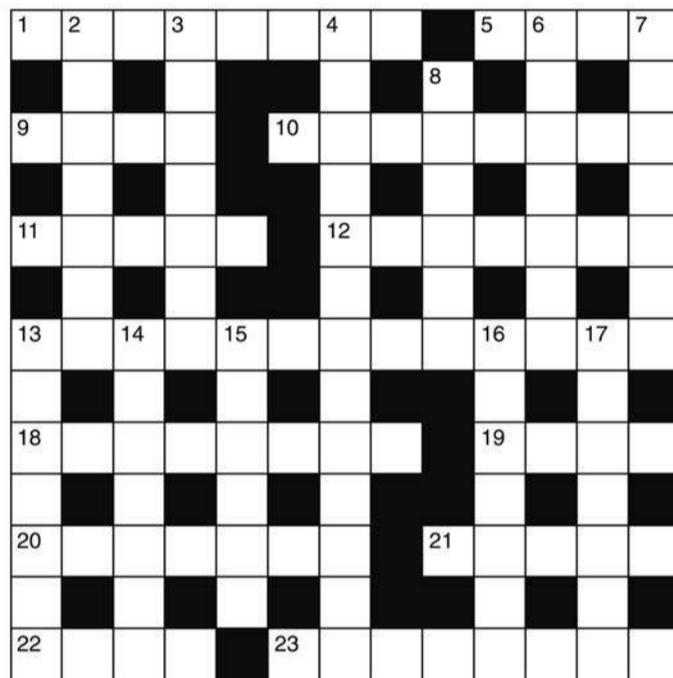


Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
Keep communications open on the home front. This is worth doing even if you see no chance of a real breakthrough. Taking anyone for granted is not to be recommended.

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11333



Across

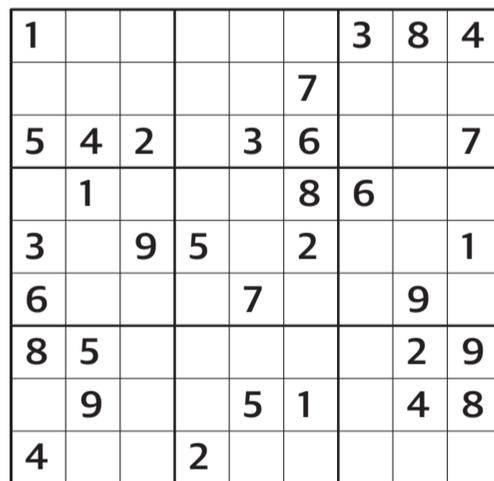
- 1 It's found in the laboratory, but try the Underground (4,4)
- 5 Nothing we'd failed to settle (4)
- 9 Help a sailor finish off the claret (4)
- 10 Shows some evidence in court (8)
- 11 Old instrument comes before a modern one (5)
- 12 Not a straight musician? (7)
- 13 Successfully persuade others to have a private road built? (3,4,3,3)
- 18 An admission to charm one (8)
- 19 Throw light on a building (4)
- 20 Nothing left from the galleon (3,4)
- 21 Command a fraternity (5)
- 22 They may be pierced or just pricked (4)
- 23 His praises are sung in the services (8)

Down

- 2 A current recession (3,4)
- 3 To agree completely (7)
- 4 Carton of biscuits that goes with a bang? (3,2,8)
- 6 Owl with unusually inflamed growth (7)
- 7 Make a mess of things perhaps but does try in a way (7)
- 8 I'm lewd, perhaps, a sign of decay! (6)
- 13 It should have a safety pin in it (7)
- 14 Gossip later, perhaps, about a nondrinker (7)
- 15 He may well appeal to the public (6)
- 16 Rum's not what the cure's made of (7)
- 17 Eternal theme of the beautician (7)

SUDOKU BY HANZO

Instructions
Complete the square making sure that every row of nine numbers includes all digits from 1 to 9, every column includes all digits from 1 to 9 and every 3 by 3 subsection includes all digits from 1 to 9



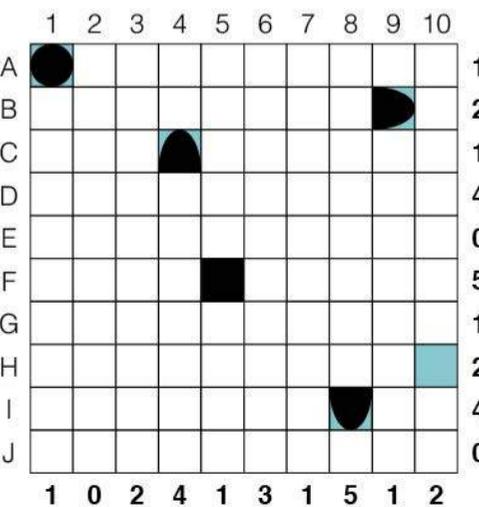
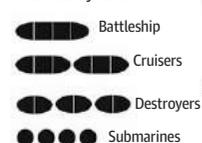
THE WORDPUZZLER



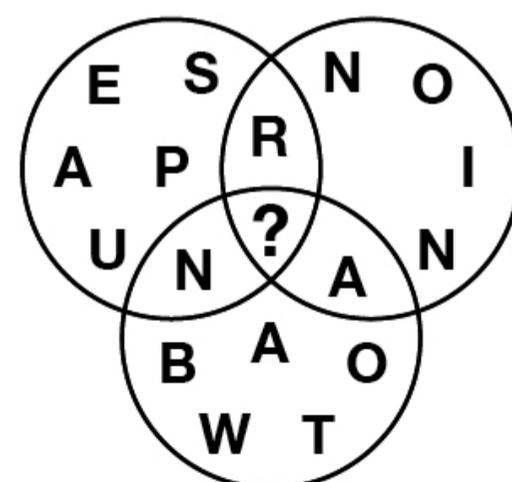
- Can you identify the words that may follow 'white' from the clues listed below?
- 1. 1st place medal
 - 2. Condiment
 - 3. Titled woman
 - 4. Writing material
 - 5. Untruth
 - 6. Warmth
 - 7. Ghost
 - 8. Residence
 - 9. Emblem
 - 10. Lamp

BATTLESHIPS

Instructions Find where the fleet of ships (1 battleship, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 4 submarines) are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some have been filled in to start you off.



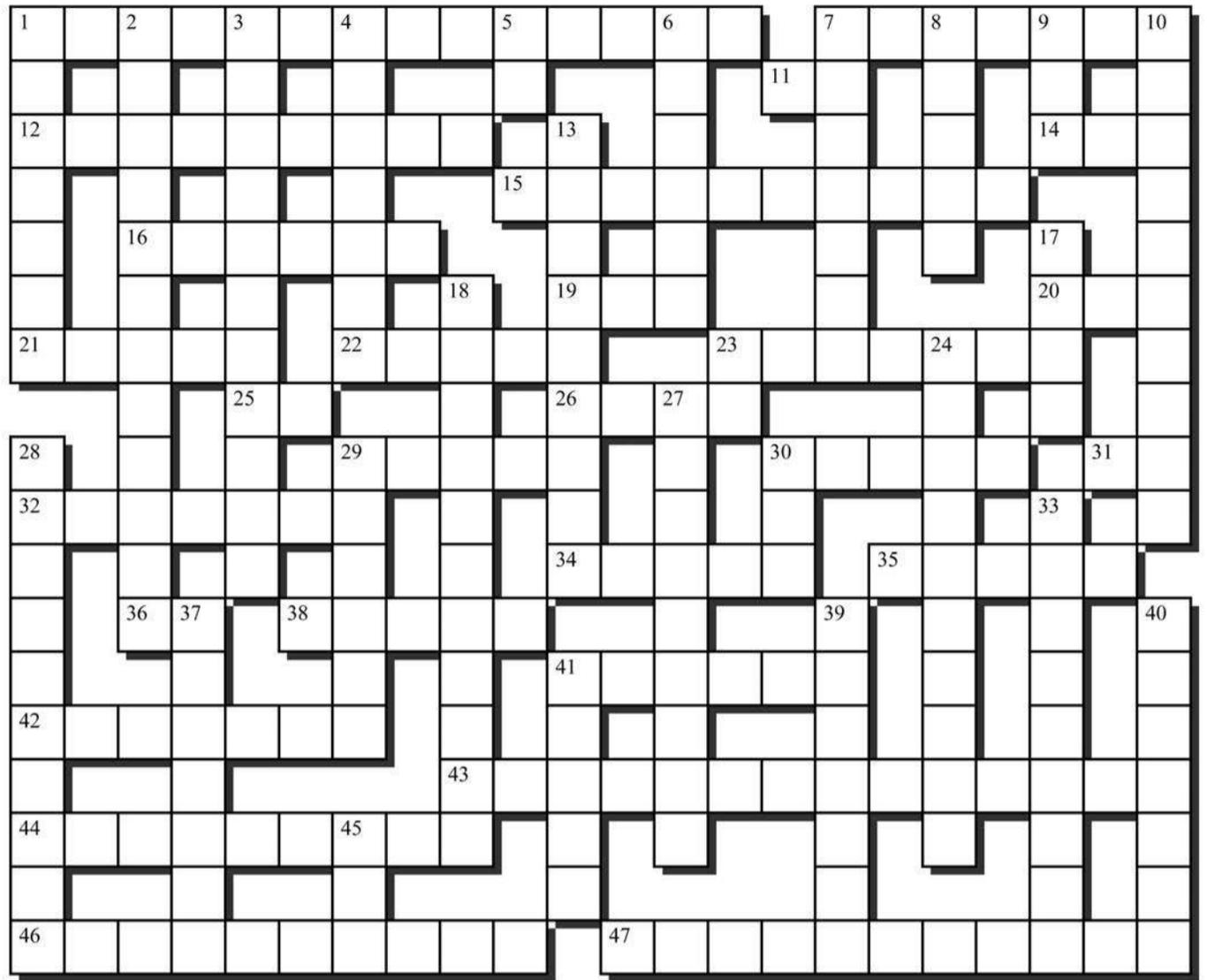
CIRCLEGRAM



Instructions
Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD

- Across**
- 1) Survivors (14)
 - 7) Massacre (7)
 - 11) His (2)
 - 12) Sunflowers (9)
 - 14) Anger (3)
 - 15) Bloody (10)
 - 16) He teaches (6)
 - 19) Rum (3)
 - 20) Mine (3)
 - 21) Seven (5)
 - 22) Smooth (5)
 - 23) Toast (7)
 - 25) Nor (2)
 - 26) Taboo (4)
 - 29) Arab (5)
 - 30) Bomb (5)
 - 31) I (2)
 - 32) To start (7)
 - 34) Tree (5)
 - 35) Small village (5)
 - 36) If (2)
 - 38) To do (5)
 - 41) Donkeys (6)
 - 42) Located (7)
 - 43) Confrontation (14)
 - 44) Stools (9)
 - 46) Landing (10)
 - 47) Authorities (11)
- Down**
- 1) Safe (pl) (7)
 - 2) Belongings (12)
 - 3) Resistance (11)
 - 4) Islanders (7)
 - 5) It is (2)
 - 6) They choose (6)
 - 7) Women (7)
 - 8) Jump (5)
 - 9) I fell (3)
 - 10) Evacuation (10)
 - 13) Road (9)
 - 17) To love (4)
 - 18) Canadians (11)
 - 23) You (2)
 - 24) Ambulance (10)
 - 27) Bombing (9)
 - 28) Difficulty (10)
 - 29) Armed (6)
 - 30) Bowl (3)
 - 33) Brotherhood (9)
 - 37) It includes (7)
 - 39) To escape (7)
 - 40) Planes (7)
 - 41) Buffoon (5)
 - 45) Aunt (3)



ANSWERS

Quiz answers

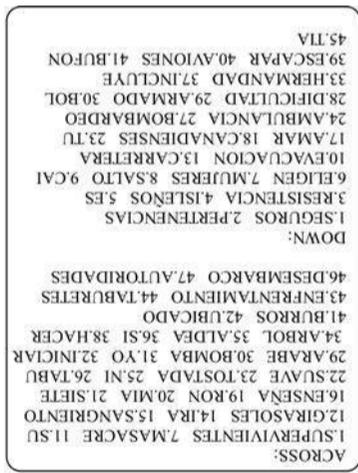
Of interest: Waverley station opened in 1846 and was rebuilt between 1892 and 1902. It lies between the old town and modern Edinburgh, adjacent to Princes Street, Edinburgh Castle and the Princes Street Gardens.

Answer: Edinburgh.

Of interest: In 1990, the Peruvian (nuevo) sol replaced the 'inti', the legal tender at the time. One new sol, at the time, was equivalent to one million intis or a thousand million old Peruvian soles.

Answer: Nuevo sol.

Language Crossword



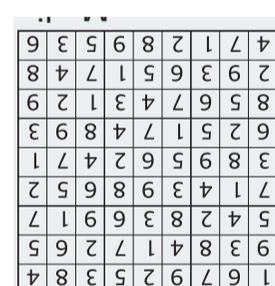
Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 1 Test tube; 5 Owed; 9 Abet; 10 Exhibits; 11 Viola; 12 Fiddler; 13 Get your own way; 18 Entrance; 19 Shed; 20 All gone; 21 Order; 22 Ears; 23 Palmist. Down: 2 Ebb tide; 3 Totally; 4 Box of crackers; 6 Whitlow; 7 Destroy; 8 Milddew; 13 Grenade; 14 Tattler; 15 Orator; 16 Nostrum; 17 Ageless.

Wordpuzzler solution



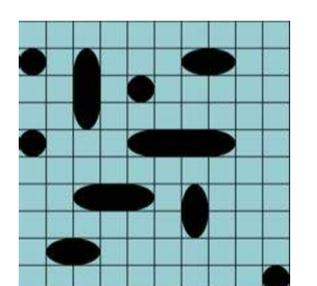
Sudoku solution



Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is M. Superman, Iron Man, Batwoman, all superheroes.

Battleships



WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN THIS?



Last week: Sedella

This is a 2017 statue that pays tribute to the emigrants who left Sedella to find work in Germany, Switzerland and further afield during the 20th century



MALAGA PORT INFORMATION

CRUISE SHIP MOVEMENTS (SOURCE: MALAGA PORT AUTHORITY)

Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Mein Schiff	09/02	Gibraltar	Valencia	07.00	21.30
Corinthian	09-10/02	Gibraltar	Cartagena	07.00	16.00
Norwegian Spirit	12/02	Funchal	Alicante	07.00	17.00
Corinthian	18-19/02	Cartagena	Tangier	08.00	23.00





The dragons from Game of Thrones starred in the commercial which premiered during the ad break. :: HBO / BUDWEISER

These ad breaks are traditionally the most-watched advertising on American television

ment with a knight sponsored by Bud Light and which evolves into a parody of the fourth-season confrontation in the Game of Thrones series between The Mountain and the Red Viper.

“We were filming until 19 December,” said Weber, “and in the mornings we had to put up with temperatures eight degrees below zero.” He joked that at least they had had the dragons to keep them warm.

Two brands in one advert

Welter explained that the advert was made in record time as up to three weeks before the planned shooting no sign-off had been given to create the props and scenery for the joust, while the green light wasn't finally given until two weeks before.

“Super Bowl rules don't allow two brands to be in the same advert, so until the final authorisation arrived, we couldn't start the filming, and in fact the advert ended up being a trailer for the start of the final season of Game of Thrones,” explained Weber, adding that the eagerly awaited last installments of the saga will see their worldwide launch on 14 April.

The Super Clio awards were decided on Monday in New York and the jury also chose as finalists the Cashew campaign by Audi and #EatLikeAndy by Burger King, in which an actor mimics late artist Andy Warhol enjoying a hamburger instead of a tin of Campbell's soup.

But the first prize went to HBO and Bud Light who, besides the costs for this extravagant production, paid ten million dollars for the 60-second slot during Super Bowl night. And the Fresco team, managed from Malaga, played a key part in bringing home their prize.

Local firm triumphs at the Super Bowl

Production company Fresco Film wins prize for best advert shown in Sunday's game

The Malaga-based company filmed the joint campaign, which was a Game of Thrones parody, for HBO and Budweiser at El Escorial, near Madrid

FRANCISCO GRIÑÁN

MALAGA. The Super Bowl final between the best two American football teams is known for being the most-watched annual sports

match on the planet. And the New England Patriots weren't the only winners during the duel in Atlanta last Sunday night.

A Costa del Sol film and television production company came away with the prize for the best television commercial aired during the ad breaks, traditionally the most-expensive and most-watched advertising on American television.

The Super Clio award for the best commercial went to a joint advert

between HBO's Game of Thrones and beer-giant Budweiser which was shot in December by Malaga-based producers Fresco Film at El Escorial, near Madrid.

“The adverts premiered during the Super Bowl are the most important in the year in America, something like what happens in Spain with the first adverts after midnight on New Year's Day,” explained German-born Peter Welter, owner of Fresco Film and the man behind the filming of all the

episodes of Game of Thrones that have been shot in Spain.

A joust with 'The Mountain'

A large part of the Game of Thrones team took part in the recording, including director David Nutter and Hafþór Júlíus Björnsson, who plays Gregor 'The Mountain' Clegane. The dragons were also called upon.

The minute-long Super Bowl ad was created by the agency Droga5 Weiden + Kennedy and was named Joust, reproducing a medieval tour-

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