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**GOLF**

## A historic year draws to a close

A round-up of a great 2017 for Spain's golfers and Andalucía's courses in this month's Costa del Golf **INSIDE**



## SERVING UP A CHRISTMAS TREAT

Market traders at Mercamálaga are working around the clock to satisfy their customers' festive demands **P38&39**

Fishmongers at the wholesale market on the outskirts of Malaga. :: SALVADOR SALAS

## Parties vie for votes in Catalan election countdown

Polls suggest that separatist parties will be just short of an overall majority in next Thursday's regional ballot

Political parties in Catalonia are in the final stages of campaigning for the election to the regional parliament on 21 December, as former president Carles Puigdemont, still in Belgium, makes video appearances at rallies. The removal of religious artworks to Aragón has caused upset among separatists this week. **P16**

## Young Wimbledon champion among province's finest

recognised at SUR awards this week **P8**



:: S. SALAS

# Former Andalusian presidents in court as ERE trial gets going

A decade of alleged corruption in redundancy fund administration is under scrutiny

Two former presidents of the Junta de Andalucía, Manuel Chaves and José Antonio Griñán, are among the accused in a high profile trial that got under way in Seville this week. Prosecutors are calling for the 22 defendants to be given sentences that add up to a total of 114 years in prison for corrupt practice and embezzle-

ment in relation to the administration of a fund set aside for subsidies for struggling businesses between 2001 and 2010. The case hit the headlines in 2013 when an investigation revealed that funds had been used to pay redundancy and early retirement packages to firms whose lists of recipients included people who

had never been employed there. Further inquiries discovered that some of the firms receiving funds were dummies apparently created solely for that purpose. Among the defendants are five former Andalusian ministers and other ex-officials. The trial is expected to last several months. **P2**

**Extreme weather strikes again.** Trees were uprooted in some areas while others experienced snowfall **P5**

**SPORT**

**Cyclist Chris Froome under the microscope** after failing drugs test during this year's Vuelta a España **P51**

**An unexpected boost for Malaga CF.** A win against Real Sociedad will soon be followed by new midfield signings **P52&54**

**Kenya at the double at the Malaga marathon.** Forty-five nationalities took part in a record-breaking race **P55**

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# ERE trial gets under way with two former regional presidents and 20 ex-officials among the accused

José Antonio Griñán and Manuel Chaves are among the defendants in the case that questions a decade of subsidy policy under the socialist government in Andalucía

## ■ MARÍA DOLORES TORTOSA

**SEVILLE.** The high profile defendants in the "ERE" case filed into a Seville court on Wednesday for the first day of a trial that is expected to go on for several months.

Among the accused are two former presidents of the Socialist-run Junta de Andalucía, Manuel Chaves and José Antonio Griñán, as well as 20 former officials at the regional government, among them six ex-ministers.

The trial will scrutinise the alleged corrupt practice and embezzlement within the regional authority over almost an entire decade between 2001 and 2010.

The case broke into the headlines in 2013 when several arrests were made in connection with an investigation into irregularities concerning the granting of subsidies to help struggling businesses.

## False redundancies

Most of the grants under scrutiny were to help firms pay redundancy and early retirement packages in order to reduce their workforces and stay in business.

The case got its name from the acronym ERE (which stands for 'expedientes de regulación de empleo') used in cases of mass redundancies.

The investigation revealed years of apparent abuse of the system: numerous names that appeared on the lists of employees to be paid off belonged to people who had never worked for the firms applying for



Chaves and Griñán (centre) surrounded by five former Junta ministers and other ex-officials. ■ EFE



The former presidents exchange comments during the session. ■ EFE

dalena Álvarez, Andalusian minister for Finance between 1994 and 2004, who, like Chaves, went on to become a central government minister in Madrid in the cabinet of Socialist prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, is among this group of seven who face a ten-year ban on holding public office - the penalty called for by the public prosecution - or a two-year prison sentence called for by the PP party's prosecution case.

## Embezzlement "by omission"

Chaves' successor, José Antonio Griñán, faces charges of embezzlement as well as corrupt practice. Griñán was regional finance minister between 2004 and 2009 and president from 2009 to 2013. The prosecutor believes that he not only knew about the system but also failed to act on warnings from auditors about the inappropriate use of funds. This, says the prosecution, amounts to embezzlement by omission. Griñán faces a six-year prison sentence and a 30-year ban on public office. The 14 others accused of the same two offences face between six and eight years in prison.

This is not the first time that former presidents of a Spanish region and officials have been on trial for a criminal offence, however it is the first time that the high profile defendants are not accused of increasing their own personal wealth through an illegal system.

Wednesday's court session involved the prosecutors reading out their accusations, calling for a total of 114 years in prison for the defendants. Thursday saw the defence lawyers laying down their case. The representatives of the two former presidents stated that their clients neither took part in the awarding of the subsidies nor knew about the irregularities.

the funds, and some of the firms had been set up with the sole aim of receiving the subsidies.

The suspects arrested included Francisco Javier Guerrero, former director general of Employment, and his driver who allegedly received benefits through firms created for the purpose and spent the money on cocaine and parties. Another branch of the case involved over-inflated commissions for insurers and intermediaries.

Manuel Chaves, who was president of the Junta de Andalucía between 1990 and 2009, is among the seven defendants accused of corrupt practice. The prosecution believes that he was aware of the "opaque" system being run by the agency IFA-IDEA responsible for processing the subsidy claims. Mag-

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# Airport's annual passenger figures reach 17 million for the first time ever

The volume of travellers who used Malaga Airport between January and November was up 11.9 per cent on the same period of last year

:: EFE

**MALAGA.** Between January and November this year some 17.6 million passengers have used the Malaga-Costa del Sol airport, almost a million more than the figure for the same period of the previous year.

The figures, released on Tuesday by the Spanish airports authority Aena, revealed that the increase in passenger figures of 11.9 per cent reflected the increase in the number of flights, up 11 per cent to 128,796 in the last 11 months.

The vast majority of passengers used commercial flights and of



Malaga airport is the third busiest in mainland Spain. :: SUR

them more than 15 million travelled to or from airports outside Spain (up 12.7 per cent on last year), with domestic flights representing just 6.9 per cent of the total. The busiest day in November was Sunday 5th when 385 flights brought 51,934 passengers through the airport.

The growth looks set to continue into next year.

A new route between Malaga and Lyon was announced this week by Transavia, the low cost arm of Air France-KLM. Flights will link the Costa del Sol with Lyon-Saint Exupéry twice a week from April 2018.

Ryanair ground staff threaten to strike on 30 December

Spain's main trade unions have said that the Ryanair ground staff in Spain will go on strike on 30 December if the company does not meet their demands for salary increases and improved conditions. In a report submitted to the mediation body SIMA, the unions, which represent around a thousand workers, outline 12 demands, which include a three per cent salary increase, no more than 214 working days a year and a higher overtime pay rate. The news comes just days after Ryanair's Irish, German, Italian and Portuguese pilots announced strikes. The Italians were due to stop today, 15 December, and the Irish on Wednesday 20 December.

## Plaza Mayor will have to build two new lanes on the motorway before it opens outlet

The developers of the new designer outlet shopping complex need to widen the MA-20 to avoid further hold-ups at the junction

:: JUAN SOTO

**MALAGA.** The developers of the future designer outlet centre next to Plaza Mayor, Sonae Sierra and McArthurGlen, have been told by the central government that they must build two extra lanes on the MA-20 to improve access to the



Tailbacks already form at the Plaza Mayor exit. :: SUR

centre. The current dual carriageway needs widening, said the highways agency at the Ministry of Public Works, which blames the tailbacks that already form on the MA-20 at this point on the existing shopping and leisure complex.

The cost of the works, whose plans have been unveiled at city hall, will cost some three million euros, and take five months to complete. Work could start next April, if the ministry approves the plans submitted, and could be complete by mid-October, which is when the developers hope to open the designer outlet village.

The developers predict that the centre will receive some three million visitors in its first few years, who will join the ten million people who already visit the Plaza Mayor centre every year.

## Benalmádena's Vincci Aleysa named best luxury hotel in Spain in Trivago Awards

:: ALBERTO GÓMEZ

**BENALMÁDENA.** The Vincci Selección Aleysa Boutique & Spa in Benalmádena has been named the best luxury hotel in Spain in the Trivago Awards. The recognition is based on the reviews posted by users online. The hotel, which has 35 rooms and around 60 employees, was praised for the "warmth" of the staff and the "quality" of the services.

The manager Sara González said that one of the reasons for this special attention on the part of the members of staff is that the hotel does not outsource its services and that all the workers are direct employees.

The mayor of Benalmádena, Víctor Navas, described the hotel as a national benchmark in its field.

## Costa del Sol in the top twenty destinations with the highest hotel profitability

:: P. M.

**MALAGA.** The Costa del Sol is moving up the ranking of profitable tourist destinations for hoteliers. According to a study by Exceltur, while the Costa del Sol in general is in the top 20, Marbella is second in the country after Ibiza in terms of RevPar (revenue per available room). During peak season the average for Marbella was 153.9 euros, up 4.5% on last year. In Malaga city the RevPar was up 12% this year to 85.4 euros.

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# Tensions rise in Archidona migrant detention centre

As internees get restless, another boat with migrants from Africa reaches the Costa del Sol

:: SUR

**MALAGA.** Tensions have been rising inside the new Archidona jail, which has been acting as a temporary migrant detention centre ahead of its formal opening as a prison.

Currently there are some 500 illegal immigrants held there and on Wednesday, sources said, disturbances broke out.

Workers who were supervising had to be withdrawn for their own safety and specialist riot police called in.

According to campaigners against the use of the prison building to house migrants, the increasing unrest is due to the realisation that some will be soon repatriated. "They are aware that they will soon be expelled. After risking their lives to get here, they are not going to make it easy," said a campaigner. The same sources said that smoke had been seen coming from the building and noises were heard inside.

Meanwhile a further 53 sub-Saharan boat migrants reached El Hornillo beach near Torre del Mar, east of Malaga, on Wednesday.

So far this year over 2,000 illegal immigrants have arrived by sea along the Costa del Sol, double the number that arrived last year.

# Two held over thefts from passengers at Malaga airport

:: SUR

**MALAGA.** A 58-year-old man from the Czech Republic and a 39-year-old man from Kosovo have been held

by police in connection with the theft of cash and personal belongings from passengers at Malaga airport. According to sources, the accused targeted tourists who had just arrived at the airport by distracting them and making off with bags and purses.

They allegedly carried out nine thefts and have taken in total 130,000 euros, 30,000 roubles, 450 pounds, 10 laptops, smartphones, jewellery, watches and other electronic devices.

## 112 REPORTS

### Owner injured in raid on Christmas biscuit factory

ANTEQUERA

:: **SUR.** The owner of well-known La Perla, maker of traditional 'mantecado' almond treats in Antequera, was stabbed this week after surprising two late-night raiders in the factory below his home. The alleged assailants were arrested after police examined local CCTV footage.

### Toddler left locked inside school bus for 5 hours

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA

:: **E.C.** An inquiry has been ordered into how a three-year-old girl managed to get locked inside a school bus and be left for five hours on Tuesday. Sources said that the girl, who is in pre-school, had fallen asleep and nobody had checked whether the bus was empty.

### Pair accused of poisoning their neighbour's cats

MALAGA

:: **SUR.** A couple are waiting to be sentenced over the supposed poisoning of five of their neighbour's eight cats. A judge has been deciding whether to agree with the prosecution request for them to be jailed over accusations they threw poisoned meatballs over a dividing wall.



:: SUR

### LORRY DEATH BEACH TRAGEDY AT A-7 BEND IN LA CALA

A 58-year-old lorry driver was killed last weekend when the vehicle he was driving plunged onto the beach off the notoriously tight bend on the A-7 near Mijas Playa, in La Cala de Mijas. The accident happened on Sunday at kilometre 202 and caused a tailback of several kilometres.



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Most of the problems were caused by fallen trees. :: SALVADOR SALAS

## Another bout of extreme weather brings disruption to the region

Fallen trees was the main culprit as traffic chaos hit the province's street after a morning of strong gusts of wind

:: F. JIMÉNEZ / I. LILLO

**MALAGA.** Fire brigades around the region were swamped with calls on Monday morning due to problems caused by the strong winds and rain that hit the Costa del Sol and inland areas. Most of the call-outs were due to fallen trees or parts of trees blocking roads and causing traffic disruptions.

The situation was particularly chaotic in the city of Malaga where gusts of winds of up to 100 km/h were recorded.

The Alameda Principal was closed to traffic after a ficus tree (one of the youngest in the avenue - around 50 years old) fell onto the north section. One woman suffered minor injuries.

Another tree fell onto the area where metro works are under way. The Alameda and part of the Paseo del Parque were closed to traffic. More fallen trees affected traffic in the Paseo de los Curas, adding to the traffic chaos.

In Torremolinos part of the municipal swimming pool complex had to be evacuated after a section of the exterior wall covering fell to the ground.

In the rest of the province, fire brigades were called out to deal with problems caused by falling trees or

branches in Rincón de la Victoria, Alhaurín de la Torre, Vélez-Málaga and Pizarra, as well as a fallen electricity pylon in Estepona.

The amber weather warning for high winds kept the province's fishing fleets in port on Monday morning, when waves of 2.5 metres were recorded.

### Weather reveals weaknesses in thousands of trees in Malaga's streets

:: I. L.

**MALAGA.** Monday's gales of up to 100 km/h resulted in around 40 trees being uprooted in the city of Malaga. While this number is quite small considering that there are 130,000 within the city limits, it highlighted a problem that the city hall is already aware of.

According to its Environment department, there are around 9,000 trees throughout the city that need

to be replaced, either because they are an inappropriate species for their location or because their survival chances are low.

In the case of the Alameda Principal, known for its avenue of trees and where two trees fell, only four of the larger ficus are considered to be healthy.

The council plans to replant all of the high-risk trees within the next 25 years.

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## The first snow of the season reaches inland areas

:: F. J.

**MALAGA.** While in some parts of the region Monday's weather front brought strong winds and uprooted trees, inland areas experienced the first snowfall of the season.

The El Torcal nature reserve, in Antequera, and the Sierra de las Nieves mountains, located to the east of Ronda, were covered in a blanket of white, causing road ac-

cess to the former to be cut off as a precautionary measure.

The town of Yunquera was the only urban area to see snow, but it did not settle in the same way as it did at the Caucón and Saucillo passes.

There were no registered incidents as a result of the snow.

Elsewhere, waterlogging, caused by heavy rain, closed the N-331 (Malaga to Cordoba) as it passed through Antequera.



The Sierra de las Nieves, covered in white. :: RAFAEL FLORES

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# Seed 'bombs' launched to repopulate fire-damaged area

30 species of native trees and plants were dropped over the Barranco Pérez ravine from a Guardia Civil helicopter on Wednesday morning

by AGUSTÍN PELÁEZ

**CÓMPETA.** Malaga's Diputación, the public body which oversees the province's local authorities, carried out a pilot project in an attempt to plant new trees in a fire-damaged area near Cómpeta on Wednesday.

The project, which is the first of its kind in Andalucía, spread 27,000 seed 'bombs' containing over half a million seeds from 30 different species of native trees and plants, including pines, carob, rosemary, thyme, lavender, grasses, mustard and cereal crops, over the Barranco Pérez ravine which belongs to Cómpeta and is located in the Tejada, Almirajara and Alhama mountain range.

A Guardia Civil helicopter was used to distribute the seeds over the area which is impossible to access by foot. The 'bombs', or discs, are made of clay, which according to provincial Environment chief, Marina Bravo, "protects the seeds from birds, rodents and insects". She also said "rain will help their germination and they will be perfectly preserved." Bravo added that in previous experiments of this kind, 80 per cent of the seeds planted had germinated.



The 'seed bombs' launched over the Barranco Pérez area. :: SUR

Two hundred hectares of Mediterranean forest were destroyed by wildfires in 2014 and mayor of Cómpeta, Obdulio Pérez, said on Tuesday that the Junta de Andalucía had not done anything in the area since the fires happened more than three years ago.

The technique used by the Diputación, known as 'Nendo Dango', meaning 'seed ball', was developed

by the late Japanese farmer, biologist and philosopher, Masanobu Fukuoka, over 70 years ago.

According to Bravo, the experiment will be closely monitored and, if successful, similar projects could be carried out in other areas including Villanueva de Tapia and Sierra de Yeguas, which are both near Antequera and home to old rubbish tips.

## Junta de Andalucía gives green light to Periana hotel complex

by AGUSTÍN PELÁEZ

**PERIANA.** Periana's Villa Turística, a hotel complex which has been closed for 14 years, looks set to be given another chance.

According to Periana's mayor, Rafael Torrubia, the Junta de Andalucía has agreed in principle to allow Periana town hall to reopen the site, which has not been maintained

since its closure in 2003. Torrubia believes that as Axarquía is currently enjoying a tourism boom, the Villa Turística will bring visitors and employment to the town.

"Our objective is to open the Villa Turística again and generate wealth in the area and that is why we are working with the Junta," he said last Friday.

The complex comprises 20 individual apartments, six single rooms and 14 double rooms as well as a reception area and meeting spaces.

It was originally opened in the mid-1990s but closed its doors after just five years. There are other similar sites owned by the Junta de Andalucía that have remained open but the decision was taken to close the Periana one in 2003.

Torrubia said that four hotel groups have already "shown an interest" in the complex and he hopes that work will start to open it up again "within the space of a year".

### HERE AND THERE



Nerja's City Sightseeing train. :: SUR

### City Sightseeing tour company arrives in Nerja with tourist train

by J. RHODES

City Sightseeing, the open-top bus tour company which operates in cities such as Malaga and Seville in Andalucía, as well as major cities around the world, inaugurated a sightseeing train in Nerja on Tuesday.

Nerja is the eighth Andalusian destination for the multinational

company and the sixteenth in the whole of Spain. While the company usually uses open-top red buses in large cities, it has opted for a road train for its latest project.

The full tour, which lasts 45 minutes, takes in Plaza de España, the Nerja museum, the Balcón de Europa and the old town centre. It starts from Calle Diputación and operates between 11am and 4pm.

City Sightseeing gave residents the opportunity to try the new bus for free from Tuesday until yesterday.

### Weekend Beach announces more names

by J. R.

Organisers of Torre del Mar's Weekend Beach Festival added new names to the 2018 line-up earlier this week.

American rock band, The Offspring, along with Jamaican reggae legend, Jimmy Cliff, will be two of the biggest names at the fifth Weekend Beach event.

The Offspring, who are best known for their hits, 'You're Gonna Go Far Kid' and 'The Kids Aren't Alright', will be coming to Torre del Mar as part of their 2018 European tour.

Jimmy Cliff's career spans 50 years and his biggest hits include 'You Can Get It If You Really Want', 'Many Rivers to Cross' and 'Samba Reggae'.



The Offspring in 2013. :: B. A

### Judge orders removal of Torrox phone mast

by E. C.

A judge in Malaga has ordered the removal of a phone mast from the Generación del 27 neighbourhood in Torrox Costa. Torrox town hall initially requested the removal of the mast in 2014, which the company contested in court. Since it was installed, residents living in the area have reported a rise in the number of cancer cases, which they believe has been caused by the mast.

### Nerja becomes third beach-fine town

by E. C.

Nerja has become the third town in the Axarquía to implement fines for 'beach hogs'. Following in the footsteps of Torrox and Algarrobo, Nerja town hall will impose fines of 30 euros for anyone caught 'reserving' areas on the beach with objects such as chairs or parasols and then leaving them there. Making fires and sand sculptures on the beach without prior permission from the town hall will also be banned under the by-law, which is expected to come into force before summer 2018.

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# The pride of the province lines up at SUR awards event



Award winners and authorities after the ceremony on Monday. :: SALVADOR SALAS

Seven outstanding members of society were selected by the group's own journalists as the Malagueños of the Year

:: A. M. ROMERO / J. SOTO

**MALAGA.** More than a thousand people packed into Malaga's congress centre on Monday for the Malagueños del Año awards, given by this newspaper's Spanish sister, SUR.

In an event resumed after a break since 2011, recognition was given to outstanding members of the local community in six different categories. There to witness the ceremony were the president of the Junta de Andalucía, Susana Díaz, the president of the Malaga provincial government, Elias Bendodo, and the mayor of Malaga, Francisco de la Torre, among other authorities.

## Sport

The award in the Sports category was shared by past and present faces of Spanish tennis, Manolo Santana, and Alejandro Davidovich.

Santana, whose win at Wimbledon in 1966 was just one of many ti-

ties, was also recognised for his commitment to Malaga province and particularly Marbella, where he opened his racquets club in 1997. The Madrid-born player said he was "very proud" to receive the award and admitted that he fell in love with the province of Malaga when he came here to play a small tournament 37 years ago. He also said how delighted he was to share the award with Davidovich, the 18-year-old from Rincón de la Victoria, who was crowned Wimbledon boys' champion this summer. Despite his Russian origins, the young player stressed that he was Spanish and 'Malagueño' and that he was pleased to win the award alongside the "legend" Santana.

## Tourism

In the Tourism section the award was given to the Malaga's Miramar hotel, which reopened last year as a five-star luxury establishment 90 years after the building received its first guests, in recognition of the project's sensitivity and respect for local traditions. The Santos hotel group's chairman, José Luis Santos, said that the hotel had been one of his family firm's most important projects and that he was proud of being able to "recover part of the history of Malaga".

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## Local artists exhibit postcards to benefit people in need this Christmas

:: FÉLIX LORENZO

**MALAGA.** Until 5 January, 24 artists from Malaga are exhibiting small works of art in the exhibition room

at the Agrupación de Cofradías, in a collection entitled 'Postales Solidarias', as part of the annual Christmas campaign by SUR and Unicaja.

During the festive season these postcards will also be available for purchase for 3.95 euros anywhere that you can buy SUR. Proceeds from sales and the exhibition will all go directly to charities which aid families, children, and individuals in need around Malaga.

The artworks are filled with "joy, light, and hope", according to Pedro Luis Gómez, director of publications at SUR. This year's Christmas campaign has been made possible with the help of Malaga town hall and council, and El Corte Inglés. At the opening of the exhibition this week, he thanked supporters who have "made this dream possible" and the local painters who took part, which include Revello de Torro, Evaristo Guerra, Rittwagen, Andrés Merida, María Jose S. Perea, and Paco Jurado.

Some ten charities will benefit from the campaign, which has now been a tradition for 24 years.



María José S. Perea and Paco Jurado. :: SALVADOR SALAS



:: JOSELE-LANZA

## FRANCO-ERA WINDOW REMOVED

Work to remove the stained glass window in Marbella town hall, which features symbols from General Franco's era, has begun. The nine-metre-tall window weighs 80 kilograms and builders are working from 10-metre-high scaffolding. The old window will be conserved and new stained glass will go in its place which will include the coat of arms of the town.

**Business**

An Estepona businessman who started out with a small workshop and now runs three of the Costa's biggest hypermarkets was the recipient of the award in the Business section. Aurelio Martín's firm, Costasol de Hipermercados, holds the franchise to manage the Carrefour stores in Estepona, Mijas and Torremolinos and was praised for his ability to preserve the spirit of a family firm within a multinational giant.

**Science**

Innovation and professional and academic achievement in the field of medicine earned neurosurgeon Miguel Ángel Arráez the award in the Science category. The doctor whose feats include the removal of a tumour from a musician's brain while the patient was playing the saxophone, said that the award was "a real Christmas present" and that he would continue to work with "strength and pride, but also with the humility of a doctor".

**Society**

Flor de Torres, the award winner in the Society section, has devoted her career to the fight for equality and against sexual or gender discrimination and violence. The public prose-

cutor who now works in the gender violence courts, dedicated her prize to Ana Orantes, the woman who was murdered by her ex-husband after going public with her case of abuse, now 20 years ago. De Torres described Orantes as a "heroine who lit the path for the fight against violence against women", before naming other more recent victims.

**Culture**

The award-winner best known to many in the audience, however, was actor and comedian Dani Rovira, the recipient of the prize in the Culture category. The Malagaborn star of films such as Spanish Affair (Ocho Apellidos Vascos) was chosen not only for his professional career but also for his commitment to charitable causes through his foundation. He dedicated his award to Pablo Ráez, the young leukaemia sufferer who lost his battle earlier this year and the comedian Chiquito de la Calzada who died recently.

The president of the Junta closed the ceremony with words of recognition for the achievements of all the winners and stressed the importance of a free and critical press as a guarantee for democracy.

# Work expected to start late 2018 on A-7 exits east of Marbella

The first section to be improved will be from the town centre to the hospital, and Puerto Banús-San Pedro improvements could follow soon after

**:: MÓNICA PÉREZ**

**MARBELLA.** Long-awaited improvements to the motorway exits on the A-7 east of Marbella could start by the end of next year.

Central government has said it is to start a public consultation in February on its plans to upgrade the access sliproads on the section of the road between the Marbella arch and Hospital Costa del Sol.

The announcement was made in Madrid on Wednesday at a meeting between the mayor of Marbella, Ángeles Muñoz, and government highways officials. Once the pub-



The mayor of Marbella (right) with government officials. :: SUR

lic consultation is completed, the contract to carry out the works can be put out to tender and work start.

This will be the first phase of expected improvements to the A-7 in

the area. Madrid also hopes to put out to tender early next year the contract to design an extra lane on the A-7 between Puerto Banús and San Pedro, which is often congested.



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## Wall belonging to Saudi royal family to be rebuilt by council to allow beach access to reopen

**:: MÓNICA PÉREZ**

**MARBELLA.** The council in Marbella has reached an agreement with the owners of a large mansion off the Golden Mile that will finally allow a much-used access to the beach to be reopened.

For the last two years, the pedestrian path from the Miramar area near Nagüeles onto Playa de Casablanca, west of Marbella town centre, has been unpassable due the precarious state of a wall, forcing beachgoers to make a detour via a beach bar. The wall is part of the garden of a large beachside mansion that is linked to the Saudi royal family.

Officials were forced to close the walkway for fear of the wall falling on top of people using the pathway and have been in negotiations since then with the owners. The owners had wanted to increase its height during the rebuilding, which was the cause of the delay.

The owning family has now paid



The dangerous wall. :: JOSELE-LANZA

25,000 euros to Marbella council to carry out the work.

As the wall is located on protected coastal land, additional permission has had to be sought from different authorities.

**HERE AND THERE**

### Marbella gets tough on graffiti in public places

**MARBELLA**

**:: N.C.** Councillors in Marbella are getting tough on people vandalising public spaces with graffiti. A task force has been set up to blitz clean current graffiti in the town and the Local Police has committed to clamping down on suspects. Officials say that many offenders are underage and are "looking to gain notoriety" with their work.



Vandalism in Marbella. :: J-L

### Kempinski closes for two months in 4m upgrade

**ESTEPONA**

**:: C.M.** The Kempinski hotel, near Estepona, has closed for two months for renovations. The four-million-euro building work is affecting the lobby area and the restaurant, and bosses have decided that it is better to shut the doors.

Around a hundred people work at the hotel and sixty on full-time

contracts have been laid off in an agreement reached with trade unions which allows them to continue to receive their salary.

Lola Villalba of trade union Comisiones Obreras has welcomed the investment the owners of the hotel are making, saying that it is another sign that the tourism sector has overcome the financial crisis.

The hotel has said it wants to "create elegant and modern public areas".

### One million euros for Casares fiber optic

**CASARES**

**:: C.M.** Avatel, a Marbella-based telco company, is to invest a million euros in 2018 to roll out fiber optic in Casares. The company is already in Casares Costa and will now reach the village and the Sacerado area. It will also offer cable television with international channels. Avatel already has 25,000 customers on the Costa and the installation will create eight jobs.

### Las Flores work won't be delayed, says expert

**ESTEPONA**

**:: C.M.** The municipal archaeologist for Estepona has denied that building work in the town's Plaza de Las Flores will be held up if historically important remains are found. A new 10-million euro boutique hotel is to be built but local businesses are concerned that the work will be drawn out as the site could have many hidden remains. The hotel is due to open in 2019.

# Charities call for solidarity with the homeless during the season of goodwill



TONY BRYANT  
tonysureng@gmail.com

There are an estimated 7,000 people sleeping rough in the province of Malaga, and around forty per cent of homeless in Spain are foreign

**MALAGA.** Charitable organisations in the province of Malaga are reminding the public of the ongoing need to help the thousands of people sleeping rough in the region as well as those with reduced means to feed their families. The Christmas period often comes with a wave of solidarity which in turn helps volunteers provide extra support to the homeless and those in need.

Ángeles Malagueños de la Noche, a Malaga-based non-profit-making charity, supplies approximately one million meals a year to the homeless and underprivileged families. They serve over 2,500 people daily, providing them with breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## DROP-OFF POINTS

► **Angeles Malagueños de la Noche.** Calle Fuentecilla 2, Malaga. 691 154 973.

► **Lux Mundi.** Calle Nueva 3, Fuengirola. 952 47 48 40

► **Arte Contra el Hambre.** Calle Buenos Aires, Torremolinos. @ARTEContraElHambre.

► **Hula Tiki Lounge.** Calle Salvador Allende 44, Montemar, Torremolinos. 655 45 35 99.

On Christmas Eve the charity will offer 3,000 people a roast chicken dinner, which will be supplied by 30 local restaurants. They will also distribute food parcels to the homeless on the morning of Christmas Eve.

According to the Development Group for Homeless People in Malaga, there are more than 7,000 people sleeping rough in the province of Malaga. It is also estimated that around 40 per cent of the homeless people in Spain are foreigners, of whom 20 per cent have been living rough for more than ten years.

The Malaga branch of Bancosol, like the rest of foodbanks in Spain, makes a contribution with food to people at risk of social exclusion distributed through local charities and organisations. Its annual target is to assist 50,000 people and the recent Gran Recogida collection boosted its supplies by 600,000 kilos. Other collection campaigns continue throughout the year and members of the public are also invited to become, volunteers, members or make donations.

A Bancosol volunteer said, "Although in general people are quite openhanded at Christmas, we are asking for people to dig a little deeper this year so that everyone can enjoy a few comforts over the holidays."

## Soup kitchens

The Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre in Fuengirola works hard to see that the local underprivileged and homeless people get at least one hot meal a week. The soup kitchen operates on a Monday and cold packed lunches are available on Thursday. The centre always offers warm clothing and blankets to those in need, and this year they will be supplying new under garments as well. The centre will also offer a special Christmas lunch on 5 January.

"Every Christmas we like to give them a present. Last year it was shoes; this year we would like to



Lux Mundi runs a soup kitchen in Fuengirola. :: T. B.

## Long-term homeless man is housed by Torremolinos town hall

One of the long-standing homeless people in Torremolinos has recently been housed by the social welfare department of Torremolinos town hall.

José María, known affectionately as Rubio, was abandoned as a child and grew up in the town's former orphanage. A se-

give underwear, which many don't have," Marta Rivera of Lux Mundi explained to SUR in English.

Arte Contra el Hambre (Art against hunger) is a Torremolinos-based non-profit charity created to help people without resources through collections of food, clothing, appliances, toys and school supplies. The charity is always in need of donations and anyone wishing to contribute clothes, blankets and toiletries can deposit them in the association's charity shop, which is situated in Calle Buenos Aires in Torremolinos.

## Searching for support

It is not only the charities and organisations that are doing their bit for the homeless at Christmas, for one bar owner in Montemar, Torremolinos, has been looking after the homeless of the area for the last two years.

Charlie García, who runs the

ries of personal and financial situations led to a life of petty crime and homelessness, yet he has survived on the benevolence of a few kind-hearted expats.

It was one of these, an English woman who has lived in the town for several years, who helped Rubio obtain much of the documentation needed to qualify for social housing. Prior to this, the 72-year-old did not possess identification and being of no fixed abode, he basically did not exist.

Hula Tiki Lounge with her husband, went out into the streets last year with Christmas cards and food parcels for the homeless. She also collected over 80 kilos of warm clothing and blankets, which she personally distributed. However Charlie expresses her sadness at the lack of support for the homeless problem in the area

"If we could find a local charity to work with us we would love to host a free dinner on Boxing Day for the needy, however without the support to help drive people in our door it's not going to happen and it really is such a shame. I really struggled last year so we hope even just doing a little will help highlight that more needs to be done, because the problem is only getting worse," Charlie said.

**Comment :** Page 22.

## Fall in birth rate in Malaga province means almost as many deaths as new borns

### NIURIA TRIGUERO

**MALAGA.** The birth rate in Malaga province fell in the first six months of this year, meaning there were almost as many deaths as births.

In total, 6,728 babies came into the world, while the number of deceased rose to 6,654. These figures translate into a 5.6 per cent fall in births and a three per cent increase in deaths compared to the same period last year.

The national statistics institute, announcing the figures, pointed out that traditionally there are more deaths and less births than in the second half of the year.

On a national level, a negative birth rate continues, with 187,703 people born and 219,835 dying, a difference of 32,132.

## Junta de Andalucía updates and toughens law on domestic violence

### LALIA GONZÁLEZ

**SEVILLE.** The Junta de Andalucía regional government agreed this week to update domestic violence laws to bring them into line with national and EU standards as well as introducing some new, tougher measures of its own.

Among the new features are the inclusion of old or disabled persons who are in the care of an abused woman as potential victims of domestic violence, as well as her children. From now on the definition of what constitutes violence will be broadened to include sexual assault, harassment and exploitation; genital mutilation; forced marriage; cyberbullying and cultural traditions.

A woman's right to receive support and counselling without having reported any offence is also guaranteed.

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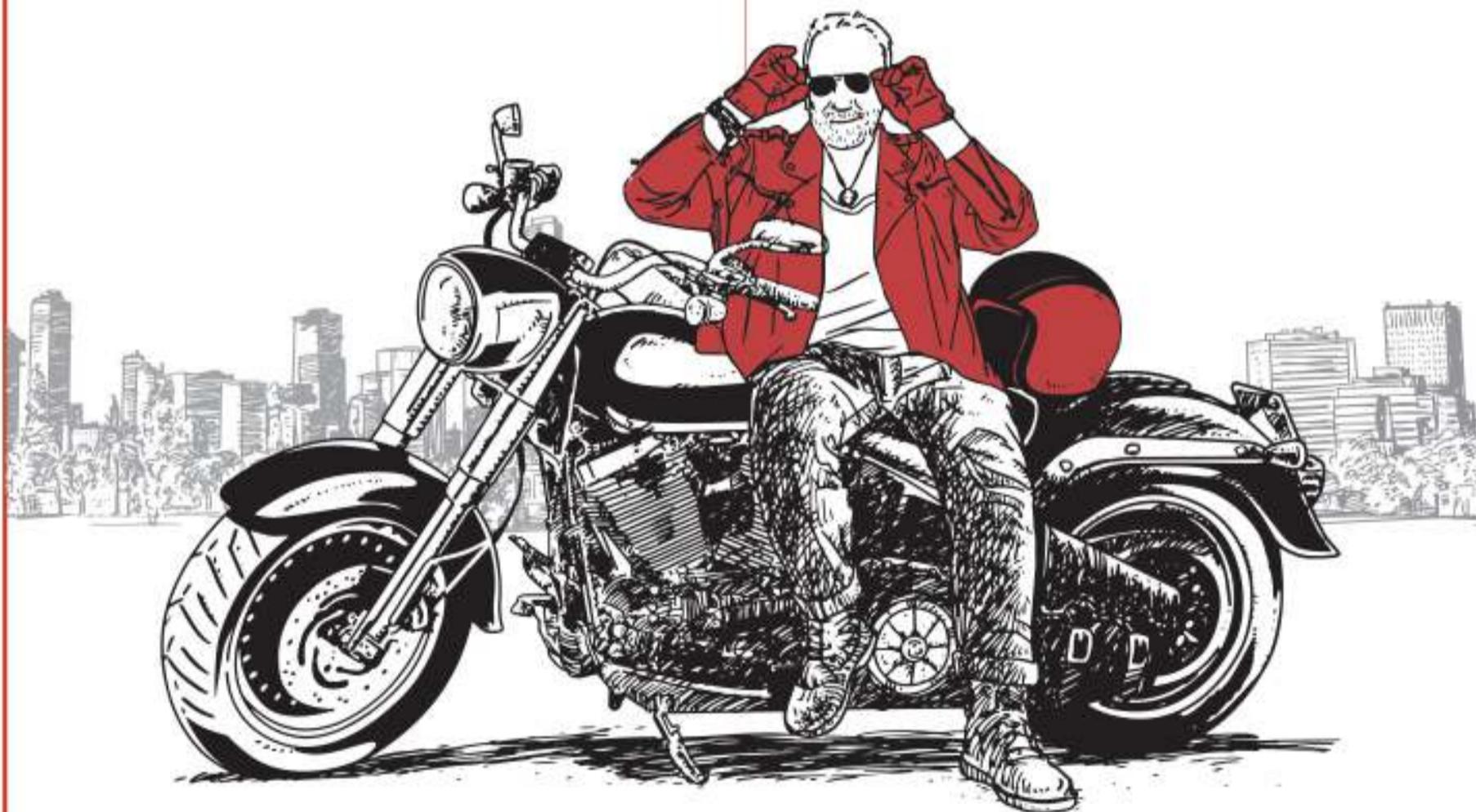
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# The renaissance of a forgotten 'ghost town'

Acebuchal was abandoned after Spain's Civil War but is enjoying a revival thanks to a local family



JENNIE RHODES

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The two restaurants are often busy with foreign visitors who are interested in local history or want a taste of the remotest parts of the Axarquía

**ACEBUCHAL.** Tucked away in a valley overlooked by the Tejeda, Almjara and Alhama mountain range lies the diminutive hamlet of Acebuchal. Situated between Cómpeeta and Frigiliana, this once forgotten place is enjoying a renaissance.

During Spain's Civil War it is said that the residents of Acebuchal hid and fed Republican Guerillas who were hiding from Franco's Nationalists in the surrounding mountains. In 1949 General Franco embarked on a final bid to rid the country of remaining Republicans. His forces ordered the remaining residents of Acebuchal out and they fled the hamlet, leaving their houses and many of their belongings behind. The Guardia Civil – the then Francoist police force – used the hamlet as a base to hunt down remaining Guerillas. The police eventually left, Acebuchal was forgotten about and the buildings fell into ruins.

## A family's vision

However, in 1998, a couple from Frigiliana saw the tourist potential of the place and started to buy up property. Their son, Sebastián, who now runs Bar Restaurante El Acebuchal, along with his brother, Antonio, says that his mother, Virtudes Sánchez, whose father was born in Acebuchal, "bought her first property for just 1,000 euros".

The restaurant, which is a converted school, opened in 2005. The menu is full of locally-sourced products and the homemade bread is sold as far afield as Malaga city. It is open from 10am until 4pm every day, serving breakfast, coffee and lunch. It also



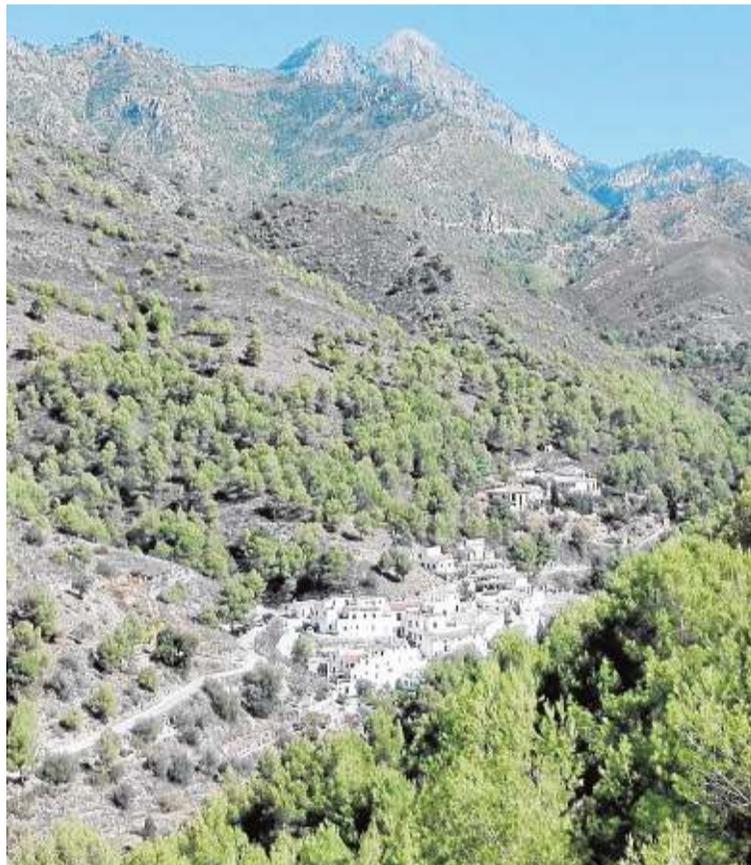
The cobble streets and restored houses of Acebuchal. :: J. RHODES

doubles up as a museum, with old photos of Acebuchal and nearby villages along with poems written by Virtudes lining the walls. The menus explain the hamlet's history in both English and Spanish.

Other investors have followed in the couple's footsteps and the streets of Acebuchal are now a collection of freshly-painted whitewash houses with brightly-coloured doors, windowsills and matching flowerpots. Most of the properties are either second homes or holiday cottages available to rent and another restaurant, La Montés, has opened up in the last year.

## Ask for Antonio

Antonio García, Virtudes' now ex-husband, runs the only shop in the hamlet, which is located about ten metres further down the hill from the two restaurants. The shop doesn't have a sign, but Antonio vows that he is always there and that visitors only have to "ask for Antonio" if they find it closed or unattended. It sells a variety of goods, from his own local sweet wine, to some of the ceramic pots and other trinkets that were found during the restoration of houses.



Acebuchal with the mountains in the background. :: J. R.

Although what makes Acebuchal famous is its 20th-century history, the earliest documentation related to Acebuchal dates back to 1569 and the Battle of Frigiliana during the Spanish Reconquest, according to a book detailing the history of the hamlet, published earlier this year and written by siblings Vicky and Ramón Fernández, whose family once lived there. Acebuchal also provided a stop on the trading route between Malaga and Granada and it could even date back to earlier times like most of its neighbouring towns and villages. However, the hamlet became known as 'the ghost village' between 1949 and 1998 and the name has stuck.

Although Acebuchal actually belongs to Cómpeeta, it is slightly closer to Frigiliana and is easier to access from Frigiliana than Cómpeeta by following the road up past Frigiliana and turning right at a sign for Acebuchal and the restaurant. Although the road is untarmacked in some areas, it's accessible by car.

While a few years ago only the most intrepid might have set foot in the ghost village, nowadays it is popular with both Spanish and foreign visitors alike.

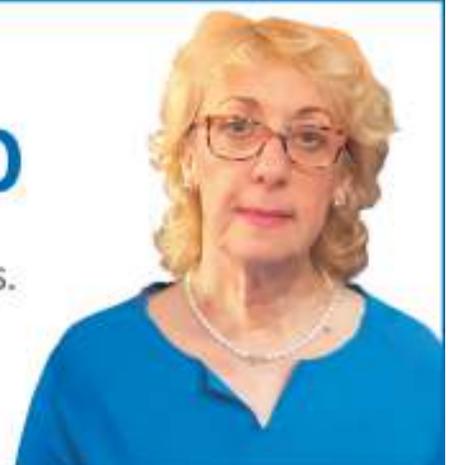


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# Tour of San Pedro school becomes 14th most-watched YouTube video

A student at Laude San Pedro British International School has a YouTube following of over one million

**|| MINDY BURROWS**

**MALAGA.** At just 12 years old, Martina D'Antiochia is a YouTube sensation. On her channel, 'La Diversión de Martina', which has over 1.6 million subscribers, she uploads fun videos with comedy sketches, tutorials and advice, and documents her adventures twice a week. Martina is now a recipient of one of YouTube's exciting Gold Play Buttons for reaching over one million subscribers.

The student at the British school Laude San Pedro is currently writing her third book, which is part fiction, part reality. Thanks to her popularity, Martina has had the opportunity to travel to Mexico and attend the Kids' Choice Awards, and recently she helped switch on the Estepona Christmas lights.

Her most recent video takes viewers on a tour of her school, Laude San Pedro. Uploaded last Saturday, the video already has over half a million views. In the video, Martina is interviewed by the school principal, Remedios López Padilla, about her book and how she came to be writing it.

"I have been writing stories for many years. One day a publisher contacted me and asked if I wanted to



Martina with her YouTube Gold Play Button. || SUR

write a book. I said yes!" Martina explains in the video. "In the future, I dream of acting in a TV show and writing more books at home," she adds.

Following the interview, Martina reads an excerpt from her book

to some Year 3 students, and then gives viewers a tour of the school grounds and facilities with some of her friends.

The video became the fourteenth most-watched video on YouTube in under 24 hours after it was uploaded.



J. Sander Pedersen, R. Salas, J. Styles and C. Pérez Ariza. || SUR

# Journalists link communities on the Costa del Sol

**|| SUR IN ENGLISH**

**MALAGA.** Local and foreign-resident journalists and media professionals look forward to working together following the recent signing of a cooperation agreement between the Costa Press Club and its Spanish counterpart the 'Asociación de la Prensa de Málaga y el Colegio de Periodistas en Málaga'. Professional training and employment opportunities are among areas where the two organisations hope to collaborate.

The Costa Press Club, which is the voice of foreign-resident journalism, was represented at the meeting in Malaga by the club's president, Jesper

Sander Pedersen, and secretary Joanna Styles, while the agreement representing Spanish media professionals by its president Rafael Salas and vice president Carlos Pérez Ariza.

Sander Pedersen said that in the international environment all media professionals work in, it is particularly important to maintain strong links and exchange information and experience.

Salas emphasised the essential role of the foreign media not only in communicating with foreign residents, but also in taking the image of Spain abroad.

# Cudeca and friends prepare to Light a Light in memory of loved ones

**|| SUR IN ENGLISH**

**BENALMÁDENA.** Cudeca is holding its traditional Christmas 'Light a Light' event in memory of loved ones this evening, Friday 15th, from 6pm. The celebration includes the traditional switch-on of the festive lights that decorate the hospice centre in Benalmádena by founder and honorary president, Joan Hunt OBE, and chief executive and medical director, Marisa Martín. The area will also be lit up by the more than 300 charity candles carried by volunteers, friends and employees.

Father Christmas will be another VIP at the event where there will be face painting for children, a performance by the Sunny View school choir and stalls offering handcrafted Christmas cards, calendars and lottery tickets as well as cakes and refreshments.

Anyone wishing to light a light in memory of a loved one can do so at [www.lightupcudeca.org](http://www.lightupcudeca.org) or at the Hospice Centre on the night.

# Malaga park's parrot invasion continues as new species is discovered

Researchers from Malaga university have discovered an example of a South American Scaly-headed parrot breeding in the city

:: IGNACIO LILLO

**MALAGA.** The city's parks have been home to non-native species of birds for several years now and the colony of Monk parakeets, which are everywhere, continues to grow. Now a pair of Scaly-headed parakeets (*Pionus Maximiliani*) have been spotted flitting through the trees and they have a chick in their nest.

They were discovered by Antonio Román, an ornithologist and lecturer in the Animal Biology Department of Malaga university. The Scaly-headed parrot originates from South America and the discovery, according to the expert, is extremely important as this is the first time that the parrot has been found living wild outside of its native environment. It is usually found in Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil.

## MAIN SPECIES

**1 Monk parakeet**  
Over 4,000.

**2 Rose-ringed parakeet**  
130-140.

**3 Senegal parrot**  
At least five.

**4 Scaly-headed parrot**  
At least four.

**5 11 other species**  
Not breeding at the moment.

"We were able to watch the adults feeding the chick during a field trip with a group of students," explained Román.

Including this new find, there are now four species of parrot breeding in Malaga city. The most numerous is the Monk parakeet, with more than 4,000 examples. Next is the Rose-ringed parakeet but with a lot fewer examples (between 130 and 140). Both species are considered invasive and it is illegal to sell them commercially here. The third most common species seen in Malaga is the Senegal parrot (very attractive with a deep yellow stomach). It is harder to spot as it usually stays hidden in the vegetation. It too nests in the city-centre park but up until now only five speci-



Scaly-headed parrot . :: A ROMÁN

mens have been seen. Now the Scaly-headed parrot has arrived and its numbers are expected to increase given the abundance of food available.

There are also up to eleven different species of individual parrots loose in the capital and at least one hybrid between the Rose-ringed and an Alexandrine parakeet.

Malaga is ideal for exotic birds, the large number of rubber trees (*ficus*) and *Erythrina*s (whose flowers the birds feed on) offer an "endless supply of food", said Román. Lentils and rice are given to them by locals and the parrots compete with the pigeons for food from the bins.

Although the invaders can be a nuisance and noisy, the disadvantages are compensated by the beauty of these birds and the attraction for tourists. Román admits that this is fine as long as the birds do not venture out of the city into agricultural areas.

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## HERE AND THERE

### Loa Álamos festival to move to Estepona

**TORREMOLINOS**

:: **A.G.** Los Álamos Beach Festival, a five-day summer electronic-music event, has failed in its bid to be granted a fresh licence for next year by Torremolinos council.

The town hall has said that the combination of complaints from neighbours in the Los Álamos district and the failure of organisers to keep the attendance level below 60,000 and control sound levels led to the rejection.

The event will instead be held from 1 to 5 August next year at an as-yet-unannounced venue in Estepona.



The new bridge. :: M. B.

### Sierra beauty spot finally gets new access

**RONDA**

:: **V. M.** The Cueva del Gato cave, a beauty spot in Benaolán, in the mountains of the Serranía de Ronda, has a new pedestrian access bridge over the river Guadiaro. The original bridge was damaged during storms almost eight years ago, making it difficult to reach the cave which is well known for its rock formations and cave paintings, and was once a popular local attraction.

The Diputación provincial authority has spent 200,000 euros on the new link and now plans a nearby visitor centre.

### Council to appeal order to demolish aparthotel

**BENALMÁDENA**

:: **A.G.** The mayor of Benalmádena is to appeal a court order to demolish an aparthotel next to Torremuelle train station. The court has said that the property was built based on an illegal planning decision by then mayor, Enrique Bolín, back in 2001.

Current town mayor, Victor Navas, has said that, while he doesn't condone the illegal planning permission, he will do all he can to avoid the council having to pay out compensation of an estimated four to five million euros to the owners.

## Mijas council 'looking into ways' to pay for new local hospital

:: IVÁN GELIBTER

**MIJAS.** The mayor of Mijas, Juan Carlos Maldonado, has said that the council is looking for ways to fund the planned new local hospital for Fuengirola and Mijas.

Faced with what it says is the urgent need to improve healthcare in the area, the council is considering advancing or organising funds for the facility itself in some form.

A site in the Las Lagunas area has been identified, however the Junta regional government, which is responsible for healthcare, needs to budget money to pay for it. The mayor has said that if the Junta cannot find funds, he wants to investigate other routes.

## GLOBAL FESTIVE CUSTOMS CELEBRATED IN BENALMÁDENA

The ninth Festival of Christmas Traditions took place in Arroyo de la Miel, Benalmádena, last Saturday. Organised by Benalmádena council's Foreign Residents Department, the event was a celebration of the diversity of the municipality, with presentations of festive customs from more than a dozen nationalities, including Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, Cuba, India and the UK. The festival, which was opened by town mayor, Victor Navas, brought the Plaza de la Mezquita to life and included a parade and live music.



:: SERGEY SMAGIN

# Final countdown to Catalan regional election next Thursday

Polls suggest that separatist parties will be just short of an overall majority as a police raid and the controversial removal of artworks increase tensions

:: SUR

**BARCELONA.** Political parties in Catalonia are in the final stages of campaigning for the election to the regional parliament next Thursday, 21 December.

Recent opinion polls have shown

that the combined votes of the pro-independence parties would give them the largest bloc of MPs but just short of an overall majority.

The regional election was called after the national government intervened in October when regional MPs in the last parliament passed an illegal declaration of independence.

None of the pro-independence parties have formed a political coalition this time round, and are fighting the campaign separately.

The polls seemed to show support for the left-wing republican ERC party declining and growing for the Junts per Catalunya candi-



A Ciudadanos election rally. :: EFE

dacy of the ousted former president, Carles Puigdemont. Puigdemont remains in Belgium with four ex-ministers and it isn't clear when he will return to Spain.

The largest of the unionist parties looks set to be Ciudadanos, who have widened their campaigning out of the larger cities into smaller towns in pro-independence areas.

## Another police raid

The campaign has been livened up this week by a further raid linked to the illegal independence referendum on 1 October. On Thursday police entered the offices of a courier and postal company in Hospitalet.

The final return of some 40 religious artworks from a Catalan museum to a monastery in Sijena, in neighbouring Aragon, also caused upset among separatist supporters. A court has ordered that they had been sold to Catalonia illegally.

## Pets to be treated as family members in custody disputes and divorces

:: ALFONSO TORRES

**MADRID.** Members of parliament have taken the first steps towards changing the law so that people's pets will no longer be treated as simple possessions, such as furniture and cars, in divorce proceedings. Instead, legislation has started to be approved which will oblige judges to treat domestic animals almost as if they were a human member of the family, ensuring that they are taken care of in custody battles, and to decide who should be given final custody.

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### REF. A.O.N.

Due to my age I no longer have the strength and the ability necessary to be able to carry out all the housework by myself, so I have hired a cleaner to help me, who comes once a week to do a thorough clean. I think that in Spain cleaners have a special situation, but no one has been able to explain if I need to register this woman

with Social Security, or if on the contrary I do not need it as she is considered self-employed. I do not want problems and would like to make sure that she is working legally. What should I do?

From the moment that a person starts working as a cleaner or domestic servant, they must have a contract and the employer must take charge of registering them and paying the appropriate social security contributions. In your case the amount will depend on the number of hours that she works. In other words, the less she works, the lower the contribution will be. Nevertheless, if she is working for less than sixty hours a month, which seems to be the case, you can agree with her that she takes charge of registering with Social Security and pays the appropriate contributions.

### REF. L.U.Z.

I have been officially work-

ing in Spain for the last ten years, but next year I will be 67 years old and I would like to retire. Is it true that I will not be entitled to receive the retirement pension, even if I have been working for all these years in Spain?

Yes, it is. It may seem unfair, but you will not receive the retirement pension in Spain. Law establishes a minimum and necessary period in order to be eligible for receiving the retirement pension, and in your case, you have not completed it. Therefore, even if you applied for that kind of pension, it would be rejected. Nevertheless, if you have worked before in any other country of the European Union, it would be advisable to check your specific case, in order to see if by applying the EU law there exists the possibility of adding that time that you have been working abroad, and this way, be eligible to receive that pension.

## Colourful coin to mark King's 50th birthday

The Spanish mint will issue a silver 30-euro commemorative coin early next year with the royal coat of arms in different colours

:: J. LUIS ALVAREZ

The Spanish mint (La Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre) has announced that it will issue a special commemorative coin to mark King Felipe VI's fiftieth birthday in 2018.

The monarch celebrates his milestone birthday on 30 January next year and this silver coin will be particularly memorable as on one side the royal coat of arms will be in full colour.

The coin, made of a copper and

silver mix and measuring 33 millimetres across, is due to be issued "in the first quarter of 2018", although no firm date has been set and it is possible that it will appear on sale after the actual birthday of the king.

The coin, which is designed for collectors and not to be used on the street, is expected to be in high demand because of the unique coloured shield. Initially the mint has said it will make a million of them in batches, according to demand, but this figure could increase or decrease.

The image of the King is the same one that was used for a commemorative coin to mark his coronation in 2014, but this time the collar of a military uniform has been removed. The edge of the coin design on both sides is bordered by a string of pearls.



The coat of arms on the coin, (actual size shown in the photo), will be eye-catching multicoloured. :: R. C.

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# Expats still in the dark despite "sufficient progress" in Brexit talks

Progress to phase two of negotiations is imminent despite a number of issues over citizens' rights still going unresolved

## ■ JENNIE RHODES

There was bitter disappointment from the organisation British in Europe to a joint report by the UK government and the EU which outlines the progress made during the first phase of Brexit negotiations. The 17-page document, released last Friday, talks of "agreements in principle" and states the caveat "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed", leaving millions of EU and UK citizens uncertain about their futures, some 18 months after the referendum result.

Chair of British in Europe, Jane Golding, said: "This deal is even worse than we expected. After 18 months of wrangling, the UK and EU have sold 4.5 million people down the river in a grubby bargain that will have a severe impact on ordinary people's ability to live their lives as we do now."

The key areas focused on during the first phase of talks were citizens' rights, the Irish border and a financial settlement. The publication of the report, which announced that "sufficient progress" had been made, now allows them to move on to phase two.

## Progress so far

In terms of citizens' rights, the report stipulates that Brits staying in EU countries and vice versa will still be entitled to the European Health Card (EHC) once the UK has left the EU and that any social security payments made before Brexit will still be amalgamated. However, with the "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" caveat, these and other decisions remain in the balance.

With regard to the Irish border situation, the report states that the



Theresa May and Jean-Claude Juncker. ■ AFP

two parties respect "the importance of the achievements made in the peace process" following the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and recognise the importance of a "soft border" between the two countries.

On the third point, the financial settlement, the joint report refers to the UK's budgetary commitments up to 2020, which includes a number of

ongoing funding projects to which the UK has already signed up. The UK will continue to participate in the current phase of European Development Funding (EDF), which is now in its eleventh round. This also means that the UK will continue to be a beneficiary of EDF money where projects are ongoing.

## Report approved

The report was approved in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Wednesday and an announcement is due to be made today, Friday, that the negotiations will enter phase two. However, some Euro politicians have voiced concerns about the lack of real progress in terms of citizens' rights.

With little more than a year to go before the UK is due to leave the EU, on 31 March 2019, Remain in Spain chair Sue Wilson echoed these sentiments in a press statement on Friday: "As we are moving to phase two of the negotiations, citizens' rights issues will be buried under discussions of trade and transition. If the outstanding issues could not be resolved when we were supposedly one of only three priorities, what chance is there when we are one of many more?"

## A setback for May in the Commons

**British Prime Minister Theresa May, who travelled to Brussels yesterday, Thursday, for a dinner with the 27 other EU leaders, did so on the back of a setback for her Brexit agenda in the House of Commons. MPs, including 11 Tory rebels, backed an amendment giving them a legal guarantee of a vote on the final Brexit deal.**

**In theory this gives Parliament the final say on a deal and could therefore force ministers to adopt a 'softer' Brexit to avoid delays in negotiations and the final implementation.**



**MARK NAYLER**  
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**THE EURO ZONE**

## BUSINESS-FRIENDLY

**E**xiled Catalan president Carles Puigdemont, it would seem, is not very commercially-minded. During October, the number of new businesses opening in Catalonia dropped by 14.3% compared to the same month last year. Existing companies are fleeing too: in total, around 2,700 have moved their headquarters from Catalonia since Puigdemont held an illegal independence referendum on 1 October. Yet since that historic day, the former journalist has made no attempt to reassure agitated businesses that their futures would be secure in an independent Catalonia.

In this respect, Puigdemont differs from his more (ahem) commercially-savvy predecessor Artur Mas, who also held an illegal independence referendum during his time as Catalan president (and who was banned from public office for two years for doing so). Mas is often described as "business-friendly" – a term one rarely hears applied to the current president, who remains in voluntary exile in Belgium.

Indeed, amid the furore over Puigdemont's secession project, it's often forgotten just how "business-friendly" former leaders of the European Democratic Party of Catalonia (PDeCAT) have been.

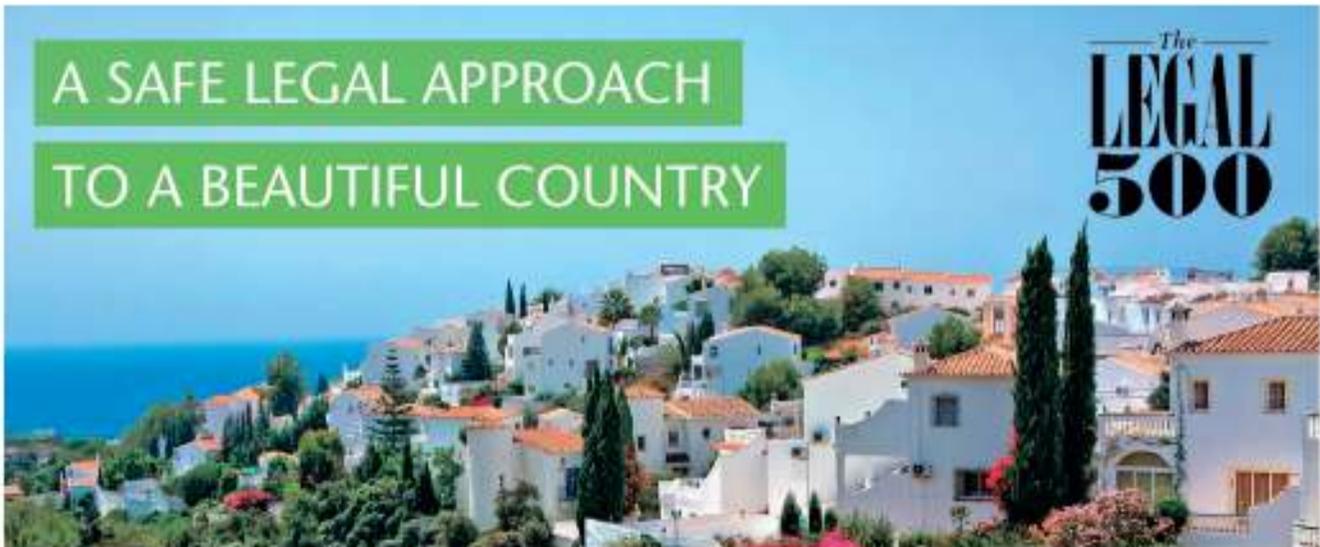
In October 2015, Andreu Viloca, the treasurer of Mas's Democratic Convergence of Catalonia (CDC) party (as the PDeCAT was then called), was arrested as part of an investigation into a contracts-for-cash scandal; it was branded the "3% case" because business leaders were alleged to have secured contracts by paying

CDC officials commissions worth 3% of their value. Two days after Viloca's arrest, former CDC treasurer Daniel Osácar was also detained as part of the same investigation.

The end of 2015 also saw the so-called "Palau case" coming to court after years of investigation. It provided evidence that the CDC took over six million euros in illegal commissions from construction companies during Jordi Pujol's 23-year premiership (Pujol was Catalan president from 1980-2003). This summer, Jordi's son Oriol was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in prison for accepting bribes during his time as the CDC's second-in-command.

Anti-secessionists argue that Mas seized on the secession issue to divert attention from corruption within the CDC, a party that up until a few years ago had never tried to divorce Spain (Pujol was a federalist rather than a secessionist). Puigdemont, according to this argument, is maintaining the diversion with an independence movement that's even more aggressive than that of his predecessor. As Inés Arrimadas, head of Ciudadanos in Catalonia, recently put it: "They covered up corruption with a great big [Catalan] flag".

We now look ahead to next Thursday, when Catalans will vote for their next government in a snap regional election called by Mariano Rajoy last month. Polls suggest that nationalist parties are equally-tied with secessionist parties. The directors of local companies, though, are unlikely to vote for another pro-independence leader, no matter how "business-friendly" Puigdemont's predecessors may have been.



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## A FUTURE CASHLESS SOCIETY - MYTH OR REALITY?

**S**peaking realistically, are we likely to live in a cashless society in the future, or is this wishful thinking? If Sweden is anything to go by, then we will.

There, some 85 to 90 per cent of all payment transactions are made electronically. The Swedes do not like using cash, but across Europe attitudes vary significantly. Some cultures are deeply reluctant to give up cash, a recent consumer survey showed. Germans believe that using cash gives them greater control over their spending and Europe's economic superpower still makes 75 per cent of its payments in cash. In Italy, where the cash culture runs deep, as much as 83 per cent of all commercial payments are made in cash.

However, looking globally, advances in mobile technology have been embraced with real cultural change. Societies in Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia have recently had the opportunity to leapfrog the old payment infrastructure, skipping the traditional PC in favour of the 4G phone. Societies have culturally embraced this change with resulting massive 4G cellular technology usage for everyday payments.

In Africa, and in particular Kenya and Tanzania, the cashless mobile banking system "M-Pesa" means millions of people pay bills, collect salaries, buy livestock and shop in local markets via accounts on their mobile phones. Not requiring smartphones, M-Pesa leverages old SMS technology for secure everyday payments.

It is in Asia and the US where the cultural change is greatest. In the case of China, western internet systems have been blocked and replaced by two local Chinese internet companies that run WeChat and Alipay, two mobile phone payment applications. Due to the sharp increase in the use of mobile phones to make payments for everything, from groceries to gasoline, these two companies are set to surpass global credit card companies like Visa and Mastercard in total daily transactions in 2018. Unless they open a local bank account, tourists and foreign

business in China will soon have only one choice - to make their payments by credit card. Asian culture from Japan to Singapore has unreservedly embraced the mobile payment technology, turning their phones into cash wallets.

In the US, using your phone to pay for a latte, watch a movie or take a taxi is nothing new. However, the three largest US banks will start rolling out ATMs that will also allow customers to withdraw currency using their smartphones, instead of cards. Wells Fargo expects that more than one third of its ATMs will have smartphone readers by the end of 2017. If successful, this could certainly replace bank branches.

The transition to mobile cashless payments is not just technological; it has been influenced by new cultural and generational preferences. In the US, Europe and Asia the millennials are driving the banks' agendas when it comes to how payments are made. The speed at which countries are weaned away from using cash speaks more of a society's developing culture than of its technology.

This may also be generational. As the baby boomers give way to millennials, cultures will change. The relationship that those in their 20s and 30s have with the financial system is very different to that of the prior generation. They rarely visit branches and prefer to make all transactions via their mobile devices.

Furthermore, the banks themselves do not like dealing unnecessarily with cash and they prefer to cut expenses, as profit margins are being squeezed by the costs of increased regulation and loss of proprietary trading opportunities.

A global, entirely cashless society? Unlikely - although some countries will have to deal with the reality of little cash in circulation in the near future.

*The comments and observations by the author are a reflection of his opinion and do not constitute an offer to buy and hold securities, nor does he receive any remuneration of any kind from names referred to.*

### IN BRIEF

#### Norwegian to fly low cost to US from Madrid

##### MADRID

**✉ SUR.** Low-cost airline, Norwegian is to challenge Iberia's dominance in Madrid by launching two routes to the United States next July. There will be flights to Los Angeles and New York. Fares will be between 199 and 229 euros. The airline already flies across the Atlantic from Barcelona.



Flight will start in July. **✉ SUR**

#### GDP up almost 0.9% in fourth quarter of 2017

##### MADRID

**✉ SUR.** The Spanish economy has continued to grow in the fourth quarter of this year, despite political uncertainty in Catalonia. GDP will grow 0.88% from October to December, slightly up on the last quarter. The data was supplied by AIREF, an independent body that monitors the country's economic activity in real time.



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## IN BRIEF

**35th anniversary of the reopening of the border****GIBRALTAR**

:: **D. BARTLETT.** Wednesday, 13 December, marked the 35th anniversary of a landmark event in Gibraltar, the opening of the border with Spain after a blockade imposed by General Franco in 1969 which lasted for 13 years.

Although Franco died in 1975, it was not until 1982 that the Spanish

government, led by the PSOE socialist party, took the decision to reopen the border. This was described as a 'humanitarian gesture', although it was closely linked to Spain's desire to join the EEC, which it did in 1986. The border was opened to pedestrians at first and then, two years later, to traffic as well, on a 24-hour basis.

In a statement to mark the anniversary, the Gibraltar government stressed that people both sides of the border are resolved to work together for mutual benefit.



The Gibraltar border nowadays. :: SUR

**New commissioner of police appointed****GIBRALTAR**

:: **D.B.** It was announced this week that Gibraltar's new police commissioner will be Superintendent Ian MacGrail, who will take over from Commissioner Eddie Yome in May next year.

Mr Yome, who took up his post nearly six years ago, had been due to retire in April this year, but agreed to stay on temporarily at the request of the government.

# A new way of looking at the Gorham's Cave complex

Visits to the caves have to be restricted, but a new viewing platform offers new perspectives of Gibraltar's World Heritage Site

**:: DEBBIE BARTLETT**

**GIBRALTAR.** A new viewing platform for the Gorham's Cave complex was inaugurated on Wednesday by the Minister for Heritage, Professor John Cortes.

Gorham's Cave is the last known home of the Neanderthals and it was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2016.

The new viewing platform offers unique perspectives of the whole site, which covers 280,000 square metres, or three per cent of Gibraltar's land area, from the sea all the way up to the highest point of the Rock at O'Hara's Battery (which is 426 metres above sea level) and including the famous Mediterranean Steps.

Visits to the cave complex have to be restricted because they are archaeologically so sensitive, so the viewing platform and information panels have been planned



The platform was inaugurated on Wednesday. :: SUR

as a way of enabling people to learn more about this important part of Gibraltar's history without causing any damage to the site.

The viewing platform will be managed by the Gibraltar Museum, which also runs the UNESCO

World Heritage Office on behalf of the Gibraltar government's Ministry for Heritage.

The new facility will initially be open from Mondays to Fridays between 10am and 2pm. Access is free of charge to holders of Gibraltar

identity cards, if these are shown at the ticket office, as part of the authorities' commitment to make the heritage of Gibraltar freely available to local people.

It is possible for the facility to be opened at other times for group visits, if this is arranged in advance.

As well as the information panels, visitors to the viewing platform will also find specialist staff on site to explain exactly what they are seeing from this unique location.

Further improvements are currently being prepared and will be announced in the New Year. Work at Gorham's and Vanguard Caves is also set to continue in 2018, with two months of excavations planned during the summer.

**Invaluable information**

The Neanderthals are known to have been in Gibraltar for a very long time, between 127,000 and 32,000 years ago, and the Gorham's Cave complex has proven to be of major significance in understanding the global story of human evolution and adaptation.

Excavations which have been carried out in the caves over the past 26 years have revealed invaluable information about how the Neanderthals and early humans lived and behaved, what they ate, what they wore, their social behaviour and the tools and materials they used. They have also provided a wealth of information about the wildlife of Gibraltar at that time.

## GEA customers to have the chance to sell their own electricity to the network

**:: D. BARTLETT**

**GIBRALTAR.** Customers of the Gibraltar Electricity Authority are to have the opportunity to produce electricity as well as consume it.

The government introduced a bill last week so that people can feed-in electricity which is produced at home from renewable sources, a pioneering measure which would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

GEA customers who install renewable energy micro-generation equipment into their homes will be able to enter into a feed-in agreement with the company which will mean that all units of electricity fed into the network will be credited to their electricity bills.

This new move will not only produce savings to the consumer but will also reduce Gibraltar's emissions and carbon footprint. A new gas-fired power station is also due to be built next year and other initiatives are planned to change the nature of power generation towards a cleaner, healthier future.

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THERE IS A PRIZE FOR THE BEST  
CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PAGE  
SO PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR ADDRESS

## The problem's not on the motorway

I love visiting the Plaza Mayor shopping centre between Torremolinos and the airport. It's the best we have in the area. I was also delighted to see that a British company is building an outlet village there which will no doubt encourage more tourism.

But what I don't understand is why such a fuss is being made about widening the old A-7 motorway to stop the current weekend bottlenecks of traffic entering the centre. Why do the powers that be not look beyond the end of their noses when planning road improvements? Wid-

ening the main road will not solve the problem. As a retired town planner it is obvious to me that the car park at Plaza Mayor itself is the problem. The entrance is just too small for so many cars to get in and out of quickly.

This happens so often with so-called 'road improvements' here; the wrong part of the road is improved and the problem is just pushed on to someone else's patch. I recommend adding a totally new access to the centre.

ALAN JONES  
BY EMAIL

## "The Pack"

The recent trial against five young men for the rape of a young woman during the San Fermín celebrations in Pamplona last year raises several questions that affect society in Spain in general. Women do not ask for sexual violence, they don't wish to be abused, nor do they seek to be raped. The suspicion that hangs over women who have been victims of sexual violence makes them responsible for acts that only those found guilty of assault and rape can be held accountable for. I think it is intolerable that this society continues to fall into traps such as those that have filled the media recently during the Pamplona trial. A society where everyone is equal must not continue to look at women, not even as a sidelong glance, as suspects.

JUAN GARCÍA  
BY EMAIL

New Year's  
Resolution

Age Concern Fuengirola y Mijas wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year. We would like to thank you all for your continued support throughout the year.

Have you made any New Year's resolutions yet?

Why not take that first step and become a volunteer with Age Concern.

If you have just a few hours a week and like talking to people we have many opportunities for you. Those few hours will make a REAL difference.

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If you have never done any retail work before, don't worry, full training will be given.

Or maybe you have a car and a few hours spare to take clients to their doctors appointment? Spanish language skills are not necessary.

Interested? Then please pop into our charity shop in C/Franco Cano 56 in Los Boliches. Friendly volunteer staff are there to help you.

We are easy to find. With your back to Los Boliches Church you will see a passageway. Cross the road, passing Spainsbury's on your right and you are facing our shop. We are open EVERY weekday from 10.30 to 14.00.

Alternatively you can pop into any one of our drop in centres - details in your local press.

Finally, if you prefer to phone then please call our LIFELINE on 652537615. The LIFELINE is open EVERY weekday from 10.00 - 17.00. If you ring out of hours, please leave a message and we'll call you back the next working day.

We look forward to hearing from you.

STEVE MARSHALL  
AGE CONCERN

## Virtual insanity

PETER EDGERTON  
MUSIC MAKER WWW.E-PETER.COM

Crypto kittens are selling for one hundred thousand dollars a pop, apparently. Crypto kittens - in case you didn't know - are virtual cartoon cats related in some way to Bitcoin, while Bitcoin itself is a virtual currency related in some way to total insanity.

It's difficult to think of a more appropriate symbol of modern living than a currency that doesn't really exist, or rather exists only if swathes of people are prepared to believe it does. Mind boggling numbers are being bandied about as everyone is encouraged to get on board the gravy train and invest in shedloads of smoke and mirrors. It all reminds me of a very similar state of affairs not very long ago.

Around 2006 to 2007, people gazed upon me with pity in their big doe eyes whenever I explained that I wasn't prepared to pay a quarter of a million euros in

monthly installments over the next zillion years for small flat in Malaga.

"You'll miss out if you don't get on the property ladder now!" they'd yell as they hot footed it to the bank to hand over wads of cash that they'd spent their entire working lives saving. The bank manager actually told me I was an idiot for not buying something; well, not in those exact words but that was the gist of his analysis.

"The numbers don't make sense," I would protest meekly but then he'd just chunter on about percentages and inflation and flexible mortgages and I'd slide off my chair onto the floor in a comatose heap and remain there until the cleaner found me, presumably with Mr Bank Manager still pointing at graphs and photos of golden jacuzzi taps.

As we know, a short while later it all went the shape of a French Butter pear and I was jolly glad I'd avoided a very well disguised trap.

Mass hysteria is a powerful force and if everyone except you believes something to be true, you start to doubt yourself.

"Buy a flat now for 250,000 euros and it'll be worth double that in five or ten years!" total strangers would shout at me in bars.

"No, thanks - I prefer to rent," I'd answer and then they'd tilt their head to one side and go slightly cross-eyed in a vain attempt to compute the information. When this happens on an almost daily basis as it did back then, you start to wonder if it's you who's bonkers. Luckily, I trusted my intuition and emerged unscathed.

So, if some bloke tries to sell you a Crypto kitten down the pub promising untold riches, my advice would be to say, "No thanks, I prefer to work for my money." He'll go cross eyed and possibly fall over but at least your world will be free of smoke, mirrors and cartoon cats.

## IDÍGORAS

Spare a thought for  
the homeless

TONY BRYANT

Over the next few days many of us will be dashing around the shopping centres and supermarkets buying presents for family and friends and stocking up on mince pies, Christmas crackers and all the little extra essentials we need to enjoy the festive season. Supermarket checkouts will be kept busy from morning till night and toy stores, mobile phone shops and jewellers will embrace the most financially productive time of the year.

However, while we are enjoying a little Christmas spirit and admiring the illuminations and decora-

tions, it is hard to ignore the fact that there are so many people who cannot enjoy the seasonal festivities, simply because they have no money, and in many cases, nowhere to live. Unfortunately, homelessness and poverty is a big problem in many of the towns along the Costa del Sol, especially in Torremolinos and Fuengirola, and the situation always seems to be more evident during the Christmas holidays.

Homeless people can be found begging outside supermarkets, banks, bus stations and on street corners, and yet they are most often ignored as shoppers shuffle

past them trying not to make eye contact.

Some of these people have come from Eastern Europe and Africa, while others are Spaniards whose financial situation has left them destitute and with little chance of finding their way back into a system that seems to have forgotten them. There are also those who do not want assistance because they are quite content to live on the streets.

Many of these people live in makeshift shelters situated in vacant shop doorways or derelict buildings and they spend their days wandering the streets seeking a few coins in order to survive each day. Some residents claim the homeless people are an eyesore and would prefer they were somewhere else other than in their neighbourhood; an attitude known as NIMBY, or, not in my back yard.

Thankfully, there are several associations on the Costa del Sol that are renowned for their solidarity with the needy and these are run by selfless volunteers who give their time freely.

**SUR** English

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SOCIETY SCENE

# Anniversary parties and fundraising

Fuengirola Cubs and Beavers celebrated their 20th anniversary and Collective Calling raised money for charity, among other events held recently

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

### Age Care Association Christmas lunch

Age Care Association held its annual Christmas Lunch at the Tamisa Golf Hotel. Guests were welcomed with a glass of mulled wine and hors d'oeuvres before a short speech by Lesley Berridge, the Welfare Leader at Calahonda, who thanked all the volunteers for their invaluable help. Entertainment was provided by Martin Joseph, a member of the Rat Pack. After the meal there was a raffle followed by 'Mania Performers'.

Age Care Association holds coffee mornings along the coast and is there for a coffee and a chat and to give support. The organisation is run entirely by volunteers to help the older English-speaking community on the Costa del Sol. For more information tel: 635 407 255 or email [info@agecarecosta.org](mailto:info@agecarecosta.org) / Facebook - [agecarecosta](https://www.facebook.com/agecarecosta) / [www.agecarecosta.org](http://www.agecarecosta.org)

### 1st Fuengirola Scout Group Anniversary party

Cubs and Beavers from 1st Fuengi-

rola Scout Group had a party to mark the 20th anniversary of the group. The Cubs and Beavers took part in a number of activities after which they enjoyed party food and slices of the special cakes that had been iced with the badge design from their uniforms. Badges were then awarded for the work that had been completed during the term. Next term the group will be moving to the hall at Saint Anthony's College on the Camino de Coín Road between Fuengirola and Mijas. Anyone interested in becoming a leader or who would like more information visit [www.fuengirolascouts.com](http://www.fuengirolascouts.com) or email [fuengirolacubsandbeavers@outlook.com](mailto:fuengirolacubsandbeavers@outlook.com)

### Costa del Sol 41 Club / Costa del Sol Tangent Club

#### Joint anniversary party

The Costa del Sol 41 Club and the Costa del Sol Tangent Club recently celebrated the 20th Anniversary of both clubs. The anniversary dinner was hosted by current 41 Club chair, Hartley Southerby-Smith and Tangent Club chair, Enid Southerby-Smith. It was held at El Olivio in La Cala. The clubs were started in Estepona on 29 November 1997 by founders Richard and Julie Wood. National Presidents of the 41 and Tangent clubs UK, Dave Campbell and Melodie Brooks, flew in especially for the occasion. At the ceremony, Richard and Julie Wood were presented with special 'Founder Chairman' medals.



Marbella Gospel Choir at the Collective Calling charity event in Marbella. :: SUR



The Age Care Association Christmas meal at Tamisa Golf. :: SUR



Fuengirola Cubs and Beavers celebrated their 20th anniversary. :: SUR

### Collective Calling Helping disabled children

The Marbella-based charity, Collective Calling, raised 2,008 euros at a Gala Gospel evening on 1 December for The Container of Hope project, which will go to help children with disabilities at the Nyarugusu refugee camp in Tanzania.

Mr Maph and Simone Lisa and the Marbella Gospel Choir performed in front of 70 people at the Estrella Del Mar Beach club. Guests included pastors from across the coast. In January 2018, the container will be sent from Spain to the Nyarugusu camp, which is the world's third biggest refugee camp. Collective Calling is still asking for donations and will be collecting until mid-January. In particular they are asking for children's clothes, toys and toiletry items. Drop-off points are: Shannon Murray hair salon in San Pedro (952 113 028), and Neli G's café in Benavista (952 928 576). [www.collectivecalling.org](http://www.collectivecalling.org)

### 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:

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TONY BRYANT



## WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

15 DECEMBER 1982

# Goodwill gesture reopens Gibraltar border after 13 years

Following years of negotiations between Spain's newly elected socialist party and Margaret Thatcher's conservative government, Spain finally lifted its blockade of Gibraltar on Wednesday 15 December 1982. The heavy black iron gates that separated the rock from mainland Spain were opened at midnight to a stream of tearful relatives, many of whom were looking forward to being reunited with family and friends at Christmas for the first time in 13 years.

About 1,000 people stood on each side of the border, which Franco sealed in 1969, as the Spanish civil guard unceremoniously unlocked the gates.

Spain's new socialist government decided to open the border

as a "humanitarian gesture" for those families separated by the blockade. The opening of the border brought to an end a period of isolation begun by General Francisco Franco. The British government considered the Spanish restrictions to be unjustifiable and claimed it was inconceivable that the frontier should remain closed in an enlarged European Community, describing the restrictions as an act of hostility.

Before 1969, thousands of Spanish workers made their living in Gibraltar and a lively trade existed between La Línea and the Rock. When the gate was shut almost half the population of La Línea lost their jobs and Gibraltar looked to Morocco to supplement its workforce.

The British colony was relieved



Long queues formed before the opening. :: SUR



The gates were unlocked at midnight. :: SUR

that the isolation was finally coming to an end; the Gibraltarians would no longer have to ask the Spanish authorities for permission to cross the border.

In January 1981, hopes were growing that the Spanish gov-

ernment would be able to present the case for opening the frontier in a favourable light to the Spanish public. A meeting between the prime ministers of the UK and Spain in early 1982 resulted in the reopening of the border on 15 December of that year.

However, despite the goodwill gesture by the Spanish authorities, the frontier was opened under tight restrictions, which only allowed access to Spanish citizens and inhabitants of Gibraltar. It banned any British or foreign tourists, as well as cars and commercial vehicles crossing from Gibraltar to Spain.

The government of Gibraltar reacted angrily to the restrictions and threatened to retaliate. The ruling council of ministers voted

## LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

<b>Frontera</b>	Frontier
<b>Partido</b>	Party
<b>Socialista</b>	Socialist
<b>Peñón</b>	Rock
<b>Verja</b>	Railings
<b>Medianoche</b>	Midnight
<b>Reunión</b>	Meeting
<b>Cerrar</b>	To close/lock
<b>Abrir</b>	To open/unlock
<b>Llave</b>	Key
<b>Cerrojo</b>	Bolt
<b>Lágrimas</b>	Tears
<b>Trabajo</b>	Work
<b>Población</b>	Population
<b>Permiso</b>	Permission
<b>Restricciones</b>	Restrictions
<b>Prohibición</b>	Ban
<b>Levantar</b>	To lift

not to keep the Gibraltar side of the border open 24 hours a day like the Spaniards, deciding instead to close it from 1am to 6am. However, this was overruled by the British Foreign Office.

It would take another two years of patient negotiations before restrictions were finally lifted on 5 February 1985, allowing free movement between Spain and Gibraltar.

**Bilingual crossword inside back page**

## THE NIGHT SKY

KEN CAMPBELL



Meteors or shooting stars are tiny pieces of space rock, usually no bigger than a grain of sand, which crash through the Earth's upper atmosphere at tremendous speed. The friction against the air causes the meteor to burn up and create a brief streak of light.

At certain times of the year the Earth passes through the debris left behind by a comet. The comet may be long gone but the tiny pieces from the tail still remain in space. When this happens we get to see many meteors and it becomes a meteor shower or even a meteor storm. The meteors all appear to radiate from one particular area of the sky and so are named after the closest

# Phaethon's tail

## The Geminids are a meteor shower from a huge asteroid passing Earth

constellation. The Perseids, Leonids, Orionids and Geminids are all meteor showers that can sometimes produce hundreds of meteors per hour. The Geminids are different: while most meteor showers are the product of a comet the Geminids come from an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon.

3200 Phaethon is big, about five miles wide; it orbits the Sun every 523 days. During its orbit it gets very close to the Sun, closer than any other asteroid, and then swings out further than Mars. Its path takes it across the Earth's orbit and the debris from it creates the Geminid meteor shower every year

around the middle of December. Usually we are nowhere near as the asteroid passes by, but this year the asteroid will cross the Earth's orbit tomorrow night 16 December very close to the Earth. There is no danger of it hitting us but it may up the rate of meteors from the Geminid shower to possibly hundreds of meteors per hour.

You won't be able to see the asteroid with the naked eye - it's too small and too far away - but you will be able to see the meteor shower and as the moon will be out of the way this year, it could be quite a spectacular display. As the name implies, the Geminids appear to radiate from the constellation Gemini just above

and to the left of Orion, about halfway up in the southern sky. The Geminids are a reliable shower producing some very bright shooting stars. Meteor showers don't require any special equipment to see them; just find a dark area away from streetlights and look up. Wrap up warmly and give your eyes 15 to 20 minutes to become dark-adapted and enjoy the show. It is best not to look directly at Gemini as meteors can appear anywhere in the sky. Try looking a little higher and to the sides of the constellation to see meteors with longer trails.

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## BRIT BACK

POLLY  
RODGER BROWN

## Light

## English villages fend off the dark mid-winter with defiantly bright Christmas spirit

In mid December comes our darkest hour. Here in East Anglia the wan light of wintry days creeps away in the afternoon and by five o'clock we are completely immersed in the still blackness of night.

And yet we are not. For what seems like weeks now the villages around us have been lit up each evening with Christmas lights which increase in variety, splendour and kitsch each year. Going cuckoo with the tinsel and twinkle for Christmas may have started as an American custom but it's really taken off here and, as an antidote to the grim British march through the cold months, most people love it.

It's true that nothing matches the jaw dropping cathedral of light over Calle Larios and the light-wrapped trunks of the great ficus trees on the Alameda Principal that Malaga presents throughout December. Still I find the personal and private attempts - no matter how small - to cheer up the winter in rural Suffolk as effective, almost more so.

On the nights we have recently driven through the countryside around us, our neighbouring villages - some mere hamlets and usually dormant after dark - have transformed themselves into winter wonderlands of colour and light.

One of the most photographed

villages in the area, which is just down the road, has surpassed itself this year with fairy lights strung all round the green, neon boats sailing along the wall behind the duck pond and pretty metallic baubles shining in the windows. I wonder if this is because the committee that normally organises the annual switch-on, the Cavendish Illuminators, decided to cancel the event at the last minute, galvanising the villagers into creating a Christmas display with more gusto than ever before.

Another nearby village has a completely coordinated effort with all the shops and businesses decorated with the same small Christmas trees hoisted like flags over their frontages and an unending chain of tiny flickering

lights in every tall tree lining its very long main street. It's hard to drive past without sighing with delight.

And then there is my own village, where I grew up and, even to those who love it, is an undeniably scruffy sort of place. The least attractive village in West Suffolk some might say - not that any of us care. Here there is no attempt to be classy or sophisticated, low key or discreet. We are not stylishly wintry. We are not coolly beautiful.

Instead we are crowded out with blow-up giant Santas bobbing in front gardens, sleighs and reindeer which have seen far better days riding across roofs and - new for this year - laser holograms which cover entire houses with moving multicoloured spots of light.

Best of all is the Chinese takeaway. Not content with painting its exterior bright purple in the summer, proprietor Jimmy Wong has brought a slice of Las Vegas to the Suffolk countryside. Dripping blue icicles which flash in sequence are draped along guttering, glow-in-the-dark snowflakes are arranged on the terrace, Ho Ho Ho neon letters wink out at us from the facade.

An English mid-winter may well be cold and dark. It is bright too, lit up with fierce defiance and warm Christmas spirit.



## PET CARE

PETER  
HARRISON

Poultry and rabbit bones can splinter when chewed. :: SUR

## Festive treats

As we prepare for some special meals for the festive season it is natural that we want our pets to enjoy those delights by sharing. In reality we would do them no favour. Indeed we would do them harm by this well intended gesture. No person in his or her right mind would want to cause distress to an animal, especially at Christmas.

The fact is that animals have a different digestive system to humans and what we enjoy can be harmful to our pets. The chocolate we enjoy contains a compound called Theobromine which is dangerous to dogs and cats and can be fatal. Your best plan is to buy chocolate especially created for animals from your vet or good pet shop which does not contain this substance.

"Give the dog a bone" is a line in a popular rhyme but is not sound advice for it depends on the type of bone. Poultry or rabbit bones splinter when chewed and should never be fed to animals. Marrow bones are ideal for

dogs and Fido will have a great time extracting the nutritious marrow. We have bought three for Digger to chew over the festive season, two in reserve in the fridge. I suggest you go to a reliable butcher to buy a marrow bone or maybe a few and your dog will have hours of fun,

I have heard recently of a lady owner of two Old English sheepdogs who had invited several guests to have Christmas dinner with her and in preparing the food had left a packet of raisins within range of the dogs. It resulted in an expensive visit to the vet with, fortunately, a happy outcome for the dogs. It might not have been as even a single raisin or sultana or similar dried fruit is very dangerous.

Animal food may look unappetising to us but our pets love it. They may like to eat the food we enjoy but the consequences can be very distressing, even fatal. Do take care over the festive season and feed Fido and Kitty what is good for them.

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DENISE BUSH



# GARDENING

## African hemp

**A stunning shrub with apple-green leaves and large white scented flowers which have yellow and red fluffy stamens**

African hemp, also called Cape stock rose, Cape hollyhock, House Lime and African linden, is native to South Africa. Its botanical name is *Sparmannia africana* after the Swedish botanist Dr Anders Sparmann who travelled with Captain Cook on his second voyage, but came across this plant on a separate expedition to

South Africa in around 1796.

In its native country, African hemp can reach four metres high although around two metres is more usual. The large leaves are a typical lime tree

shape (*Tilia*, not the citrus lime, hence the common names House lime and African linden - linden is another name for a lime tree). They are apple-green and covered with soft, fine hairs.

African hemp produces lots of white flowers approximately 3.5cm across in late winter or early spring.

In the centre of each flower is a powder-puff of red and yellow stamens. These stamens are haptonomic, meaning that they move quickly in response to stimuli. The movement is almost instantaneous and is believed to assist pollination. Another example of haptonomy in plants, and one which many gardeners will be familiar with, is the 'Touch-me-not' plant which closes up its leaves when touched.

In the wild, African hemp grows on the edge of forests so it is best placed in a position where it will get partial shade in the summer. It needs a rich soil and will benefit from a fortnightly feed as soon as the first buds appear.

It is not frost resistant and will need protection during the winter; in very cold inland areas it would probably be advisable to bring it indoors onto a bright windowsill. African hemp can be pruned after flowering to keep it compact.

Propagation is by tip cuttings which should root easily in water.

There is a variegated form, *S. africana variegata* and a double flowered variety called *S. africana flore-pleno*.



*Sparmannia africana* and a close up of the flowers. :: WIKIMEDIA

### READER'S PHOTO



:: ANN PENNINGTON

### BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL LIGULARIA

Ann Pennington sent in this photo of *Ligularia* which, although it is a summer flowering perennial, is still blooming in December. There are some stunning species in the genus, some with deeply serrated leaves and tall spikes of flowers and others with chocolate/burgundy coloured foliage.

### GARDENING HINTS FOR DECEMBER

#### Clearing up after the storm

The strong winds of late have brought down more dead leaves, twigs and sticks. The leaves can be raked up and used as a mulch or piled onto the compost heap. Twigs and sticks can be composted too but take much longer to rot down. They are high in carbon and if they are dug into soil with the rotted compost they may actually rob nitrogen from the soil to help their decomposition. Twigs

can be used as kindling to light an open fire but if you don't have a fire then why not turn them into plant supports? Attractive wigwams, domes and grids can be made by wiring or tying short sticks together. In late spring, when your plants start to shoot again, you can place your creations over the new growth to give it support as it grows up and through the framework.

### 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](mailto: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, or send them via Twitter @SUR\_English or Facebook @surenglish and we'll do the rest!

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## DISCOVER ANDALUCÍA



Local residents take part in the Living Nativity. :: SUR

## Christmas spirit in the Sierra Norte

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#### JAVIER ALMELLONES

**T**he Christmas celebrations in El Castillo de las Guardas are somewhat unusual. In fact, this village, which is close to the source of the Guadiamar river, in the Sierra Norte area of Seville province, has become quite famous for its 'belén viviente', or Living Nativity, which takes place in the atmospheric setting of El Torreón, the re-

mains of a Moorish castle which was built above the village.

The location, in this ancient building with its wonderful views, makes the Living Nativity in El Castillo de las Guardas something very special.

It first started 15 years ago and has taken place every Christmas since. It is an important event for the village, as most of the residents are involved in some way, including about 50 children.

The Living Nativity takes the form of a reenactment of different scenes relating to the birth of Jesus, and it is so true to life that it even includes animals loaned by local people especially for the purpose.

This year, there has been a special emphasis on the use of sustainable and environmentally friendly materials.

One of the attractions of this performance is the fact that there is interaction between those taking part and the audi-

ence. This makes it particularly interesting for visitors, who can feel truly involved in the traditional story of Christmas.

The Living Nativity in El Castillo de las Guardas is performed numerous times during the festive season. It began on 7 December, and from now on it can be seen this Saturday at 12.30pm and on Sunday at 5.30pm, and after that it will take place on 23, 25, 28, 29 and 30 December and 1, 2, 3 and 4 January (mostly afternoons).

#### Christmas in Andalucía

At this time of year there is always plenty to see and do in the whole of the region of Andalucía, and for those who are on the other side and for whom a trip to Seville would take too long, especially if they are history buffs, it is worth heading instead to the province of Jaén, where several towns and villages have organised a busy programme of activities relating to the Iberian civilisation.

From now until 5 January there will be guided tours and theatrical performances at archaeological sites such as, for example, those at Cástulo and Puente Tablas.

Further information about the events can be obtained by visiting the website [www.viajealtempodelosiberos.com](http://www.viajealtempodelosiberos.com)



El Castillo de las Guardas. :: SUR



#### QUICK GUIDE

##### What to see in El Castillo de las Guardas

###### La Reserva.

Wildlife Park covering 230 hectares.

Carretera A-476 a Riotinto, km.

6,820 - Finca Herrerías Bajas - Castillo de las Guardas. 41890 El Castillo de las Guardas

###### Church of San Juan Bautista.

The main church of the village, with a mixture of Mudejar and Renaissance styles.

Plaza Divina Pastora, s/n. 41890 El Castillo de las Guardas

###### Abrevadero Fountain.

A stone fountain which is one of the emblems of the village.

C/ Román García, s/n.

41890 El Castillo de las Guardas

###### El Torreón.

Remains of a Moorish castle, constructed in the 13th century..

C/. Rafael Mozo, s/n

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**Megaliths:** A group of funerary monuments in the nearby area.

Dehesa de Abajo, s/n. 41890 El Castillo de las Guardas



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# More than 100,000 people in Spain are unaware that they have hepatitis C

Experts are calling on the Ministry of Health and the regional governments to set up screening plans

by **ÁLVARO SOTO**

**MADRID.** Around 100,000 people with hepatitis C are not receiving treatment in Spain because they have no idea that they suffer from it. Because of this, associations have recently asked the Ministry of Health and the regional governments to draw up a protocol of screening for early detection, so that those at risk, and possibly the population in general, can be tested.

The fight against hepatitis C took a giant leap in this country in 2015, when the Ministry of Health approved a strategic plan to tackle the illness. Since then about 90,000 people have benefited from the latest treatments, which have a 98 per cent rate of cure.

"We are world leaders in this field, with a history of success, but we also have to bear in mind that people are still dying from this ill-



Spain is a leader in the treatment of hepatitis C. :: SUR

ness," says the coordinator of the Alliance for the Elimination of Viral Hepatitis in Spain (AEHVE), Javier García-Samaniego.

There is special concern about the fact that so many people, about

50 per cent of the total, have not been diagnosed, so the Alliance is calling for a screening plan to detect the approximately 100,000 patients who are unaware that they have hepatitis C, with the aim of

eradicating the illness by 2021. "If there is no screening, we can't eliminate it," says Javier García-Samaniego.

The experts and associations who signed the letter to the Min-

istry of Health agree that GPs should play a principal role in screening. They also want health centres to include patients with hepatitis C in their Special Attention Service, so they take an active part in fighting the illness.

"There should be a diagnosis guide for GPs and medical centres, and we want all the regional health authorities to produce one of these as soon as possible," says Dr José María Molero. La Rioja has become the first region of Spain to start screening patients as a matter of course.

According to epidemiological studies, between 190,000 and 220,000 people in Spain suffer from hepatitis C at present, and of these around 45 per cent (about 90,000) have already received treatment. This means that between 100,000 and 130,000 have yet to do so. Around 100,000 of them do not know that they have the illness, and the rest have not received the treatments laid down in the 2015 plan.

Experts are debating whether or not the whole population should be screened, because under the age of 35 the rate is barely 0.15 per cent. They do, however, all agree that people at risk should be given priority: prisoners, people who inject or sniff drugs, the children of mothers with hepatitis C, people who live with patients with chronic hepatitis C and men who have unsafe sex with other men. The test costs between two and three euros.

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## “Where cancer is concerned, exercise and a healthy diet are as important as medication”

Physical exercise reduces the risk of breast cancer patients getting the illness again and it improves the survival rate

∴ **ÁNGEL ESCALERA**

**MÁLAGA.** Physical exercise and a healthy diet are a way of preventing cancer. The director of the Medical Oncology units at the Carlos Haya and Clínico Universitario hospitals in Malaga, says it has been scientifically demonstrated that healthy lifestyle habits, including exercise and the Mediterranean diet, can be as effective as the best cancer drugs on the market.

Dr Alba made these comments while presenting a pioneer programme aimed at aiding recovery for women who have undergone breast cancer surgery. The programme consists of three aspects: an exercise plan to suit each woman's physical condition; healthy eating (the Mediterranean diet) and check-ups to determine the degree of cognitive alterations which may be suffered by some patients after the treatment (mainly chemotherapy). These symptoms sometimes manifest themselves in memory or speech problems.

Dr Alba warned that excess weight is the second most common cause of cancer in the world and said it is a real problem, not only in the increase of tumours but also in metabolic and cardiovascular illnesses.

The Club de Salud para Mujeres Operadas de Cáncer de Mama (Health Club for Women after Breast Cancer Surgery) was launched by the regional government's

provincial health delegate, Ana Isabel González; Dr Alba; the managers of the Carlos Haya and Clínico hospitals, Emiliano Nuevo and José Antonio Medina, respectively; the head of the project, oncologist Bella Pajares; Antonio Cuesta, a professor at the Physiotherapy department of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Malaga university; and the president of the ASAMMA association, Francisca Aguilar.

This initiative will help about 70 women a year to regain their health, and around 50 have benefited since the programme started last May. These patients are being monitored by the hospital and are given regular check-ups.

**Very useful treatment**

Professor Antonio Cuesta said that clinical tests which had been carried out had shown that physical exercise reduces the chance of getting cancer again and also reduces its negative effects on health.

Dr Pajares stressed that exer-

cise not only increases the overall survival rate of patients in general, but specifically those who had had breast cancer. She particularly recommended that women who had undergone surgery for a breast tumour should take exercise, because it is very useful that it has no side effects and it is a cheap and effective weapon. “It is a treatment which should be carried on indefinitely, because it is very valuable indeed,” she insisted.

The president of ASAMMA explained that the association had donated 5,000 euros to collaborate in setting up the club for women who had undergone surgery for breast cancer. Dr Alba confirmed that financing was in place to continue the project in 2018.

Physiotherapist Cristina Roldán explained that women, when they join the programme, are often afraid to move about too much and, thanks to the training they are given, they learn to overcome the fear and appreciate the benefits of physical exercise.

Dietary expert María José de los Ríos said that most of the patients had not been following a healthy diet, because they ate too much meat, cakes and biscuits, and sugar in general. After three months of training, they learned how to eat healthily and to follow the Mediterranean diet, she explained.

The survival rate after five years for women who have had a breast tumour is now 82 per cent. Dr Alba said that: “We are now able to say that the survival rate after breast cancer at the two big hospitals in Malaga is one of the best of those published in scientific literature. The challenge now is to improve these results as much as possible with less aggressive treatments.”

**Excess weight has become the second most common cause of tumours in the world**

**The Mediterranean diet is the best way to prevent the illness occurring again**



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Doctors and coordinators at the programme's launch at the Clínico Universitario hospital. ∴ **ÁLVARO CABRERA**

# Discovering the oldest cases of breast cancer and multiple myeloma

Investigators from Granada university are using TAC software on four mummies found in the Egyptian city of Aswan

:: V. N. J.

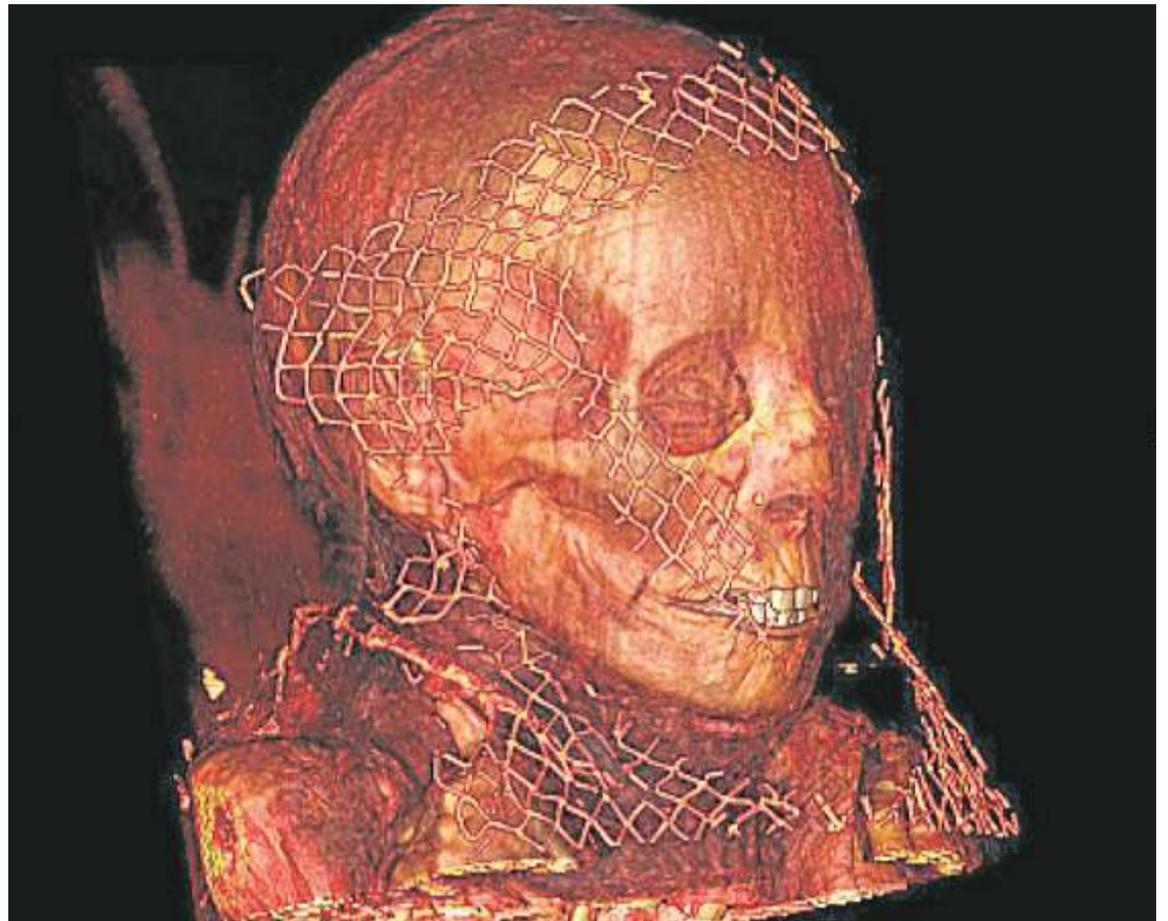
**MADRID.** A team of investigators, among them anthropologists from Granada university, has discovered the oldest cases of breast cancer and multiple myeloma, a type of bone marrow cancer, in two mummies found in Qubbet el Hawa, an ancient Egyptian cemetery in the city of Aswan.

The female mummy is estimated to have died around 2000 BC and the male around 1800 BC, of myeloma. Both were probably members of the ruling class, or at least upper class, from families of Egyptian governors in Elephantine, now known as Aswan.

The investigators used Transcriptome Analysis Console (TAC) software to obtain the best results when analysing the mummies. Traditional methods would require the partial rupture of bandages and parts of the mummy. This technique allows the team to see the smallest details of the bones and the bandages, as well as the ancient embalming methods, while still conserving the remains.

Using the same technique, keeping the bandages and burial garments intact, the team studied two whole mummies, in this case from the Roman period.

Reconstruction with special software has allowed them to investigate every detail of these mummies: one is of a nine-year-old boy, another of a teenage girl. While the older mummies affected by cancer have been reduced to bones and bandage heaps, these were intact, indicating that, over time, the ancient Egyptians changed their embalming meth-



An image of one of the analysed mummies, generated thanks to the use of a scanner. :: SUR

ods. They only began to use the methods described by Greek historian Herodoto in the Roman period, from 10 BC.

Images of the mummies were generated by the radiodiagnostic department at the Aswan University Hospital, with a scanner capa-

ble of making 124 tomographic cuts simultaneously. They worked together with scientists from the local hospital.

No signs of illness could be found in the Roman era mummies, so their most probable cause of death was an acute infection, given

that this type of illness, if uncured, goes away after death and would not leave traces on the bones.

In Ancient Egypt this was the most common cause of death, and continues to be all over the world, despite the vast medical resources available.

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# Drink less to keep the Christmas weight at bay

Humans should not consume more than 40 to 60 g of alcohol daily, but how do we work this out?

The health risks of drinking too much alcohol are well-known but very few know that one glass of wine can contain over 70 kilocalories

## || CARMEN PARRA

**MALAGA.** Nowadays, any sort of celebration involves drinking. During the festive period it is all too easy to end up drinking copious amounts of alcohol. It could be a spirit and mixer, a glass of wine, a beer or a cocktail. Social events, dinners, and parties are all linked to the consumption of alcoholic drinks. Before the party season gets under way it is good to know how much exercise you will have to do to work off the drinks.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a woman should

not consume over 20 to 40g of alcohol daily, and a man should not consume over 40 to 60g. Anything more than this is considered harmful. However, as well as the effects of excessive alcohol consumption, there are also calorific elements to consider when having a drink.

Currently, all we can do is work out the number of calories with maths, taking into account that a gramme of alcohol contains seven kilocalories (kcal). It all adds up quickly!

One gramme of alcohol contains more than the number of kilocalories in a gramme of carbohydrate or protein (4 kcal/g) but fewer than in a gramme of fat (9 kcal/g). However, there is an important difference to note, according to Ana Márquez, dietitian and nutritionist for Nutrisana: alcohol "is not a nutrient, whereas fat, protein and carbohydrates are; we use their energy for every day

functions and to maintain homeostasis", while alcohol contains calories. "They are considered 'empty' as they don't provide nutrition yet they are still fattening."

So how do we measure the calories in a drink? It is very simple and Márquez gives a clear example: "Like with a sandwich, according to its size and ingredients, it will have a higher or lower calorie content, so a glass of an alcoholic drink, according to its size and what kind of drink it is, will have a higher or lower calorie content."

## Calculating the calories

To know how much of one drink to consume you should check the alcohol percentage, which indicates how much pure alcohol there is per 100 cubic centimetres. Furthermore, the higher the alcohol percentage is, "the more calorific it is", says Ana Márquez. When you consider that most alcoholic drinks also contain sugar it can add up to a lot of calories. Here, the sandwich analogy comes in, given that a 30 ml drink will not have the same number of calories as a 200 ml glass or a 330 ml can.

Taking the example of a bottle of wine, on the label the bottle says that it has an alcohol content of 12%, which means that there is 120 ml of alcohol in a litre of wine. The first thing to work out is how many grammes of alcohol there are in this litre which can be calculated by multiplying the density of alcohol, 0.8 g/ml, with the millilitres of alcohol. So in this bottle, with 120 ml of alcohol, there are 96 grammes of alcohol in the litre. Next, this figure is multiplied by the kilocalories, remembering that 1 gram contains 7 kcal, and this reveals that in this bottle of wine there are 672 kcal. So, if you have a 100 ml glass, you are consuming around 67.5 kilocalories.

Using these calculations, it can be worked out that a can of beer contains 105 kcal and 50 ml of most spirits contains 140 kcal.

A study by the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) remarked that if a glass of wine contains 177 calories on average, this is the equivalent of eating two chocolate biscuits.

For most people to burn 100 calo-

## APPROXIMATE CALORIES IN ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

▶ A small lager (200ml). 70 kcal.

▶ A can of lager (330ml). 105 kcal.

▶ A small glass of wine (100ml). 70 kcal.

▶ A glass of vermouth (100ml). 140 kcal.

▶ Spirits (50ml). 140 kcal (not including mixer).

The calories in alcohol are considered 'empty' because they provide no nutrition but are still fattening

more than this is considered excessive drinking.

Everyone knows that drinks with a higher alcohol content contain more grammes of alcohol, however the real problem, in Márquez's opinion is that "no one knows enough about the calories in alcohol". In fact, she says that when she tells patients how many calories there are in alcohol they are shocked to discover that one gramme contains almost as much as a gramme of fat. "Even if they know this, they downplay the energy intake, they don't consider that they will have to go for a brisk half-hour walk to burn the calories in the glass of wine that they drank", adds the nutritionist.

## Harmful calories

Nevertheless, these kilocalories are not "bad" because they are fattening, but they are "harmful" because alcohol does not provide any nutrients "which means that our body is not going to put these calories to use in a positive way".

Alcohol is a toxin, when consumed 95% is metabolised in the liver to get rid of it and the rest is released by excretion, through respiration, sweat, urine, saliva, and breast milk, which is why it is forbidden to drink alcohol during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

ries, which is roughly the equivalent of a can of beer, they would have to run for ten minutes. So, if you drink three beers, you should do half an hour of intense cardio exercise to work it off. Remember that two beers



Alcohol does not provide any nutrients. || SUR

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# Fighting sun damage on the Costa

The Costa del Sol Health department's international sun protection campaign reached 12,000 Danes with the help of the Danish consulate

By NIEVES CASTRO

**MARBELLA.** The 2017 sun protection campaign has ended with positive results. Recently, representatives from the Costa del Sol Health department evaluated this year's activities specifically targeted at encouraging healthy UV protection habits, emphasising the importance of early cancer diagnoses, and reducing casualties and death.

With this international campaign, in collaboration with the Danish consulate, they have managed to reach the Scandinavian population: the Danish, Finnish, Swedish, and Norwegian residents of the Costa del Sol. According to reports, the impact of the campaign has been strong, reaching around 12,000 Danish residents. Some of the many strategies used included publishing supplements about sun protection in Danish magazines 'Liv SunHed Magazinet' and 'Solkysten', as well as holding information



There are 30,000 Danish residents on the Costa del Sol, whose fair skin is at high risk of sunburn. :: SUR

days for health professionals and patients at the Montebello Danish Clinic in Benalmádena.

The leaders of the campaign stress the importance of campaigns like this, given the high population of Scandinavian people living in the Costa del Sol. There are 30,000 people from Denmark, 25,000 from Finland, 20,000 from Norway, and

10,000 from Sweden whose skin is extremely fair and sensitive to the effects of the sun and therefore they are at risk of suffering from skin cancer. Furthermore, they highlight that, unlike with other foreign residents, Scandinavian people have different attitudes to sun protection and there is often a language barrier with these citizens which makes it difficult for

them to access information and be aware about the risks of the sun.

### At schools

The campaign also targeted international schools this year. A sun protection conference was held for the third year in the Palacio de Congresos in Marbella, bringing together 800 students and teachers from 11

schools in the Costa del Sol. Also, information sessions for teaching staff were provided, in collaboration with the Marbella-Cóin Centro del Profesorado, with a focus on the Junta de Andalucía's '6 grados de separación en fotoprotección' (6 degrees of separation in sun protection) school competition. The initiative has been circulating messages about UV protection around the world in a simple but effective way.

The competition involves students and teachers making one-minute videos, where they demonstrate how to enjoy the sun without damaging your skin and challenge other schools to do the same, and uploading them onto Instagram. These have reached, through six degrees of separation, schools in countries as far as way as possible. Final figures show that the campaign reached around 3,700 students through effective projects like this one.

Another original idea was to hold a day which incorporated food into the campaign. More than 300 health professionals and carers came to learn how a good diet can help with sun protection. On this day, 122 catering students and teachers from hospitality schools in Benalmádena and Marbella participated in these information courses too.

The campaign which has been spreading across beaches with the help of the Mijas town hall has reached 2,500 sunbathers through the distribution of informative flyers in English, Danish, German, and Spanish.

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## AROUND MALAGA

# Villages on the coast and in La Algarbía

**JAVIER ALMELLONES**

Although they are two of the most populated regions of Malaga province, the western Costa del Sol and the Guadalhorce valley are home to some particularly lovely inland villages with small populations, which retain much of the charm of their Andalusian past.

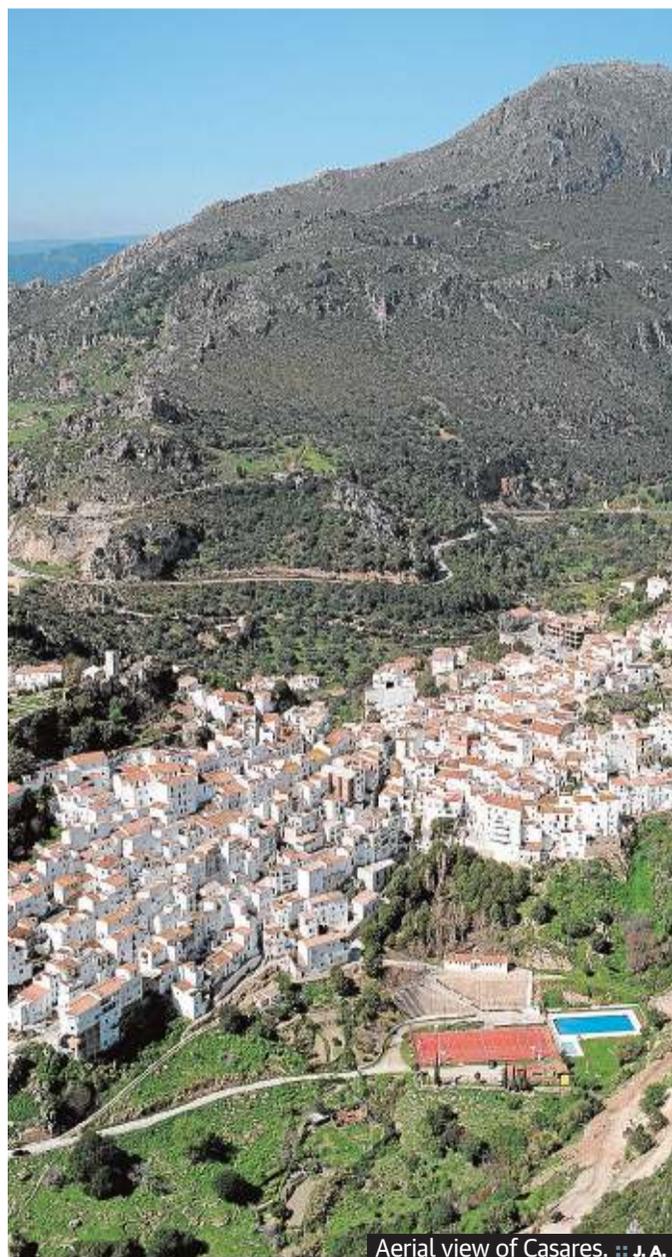
Among the picturesque villages to be found in La Algarbía, the name by which the Guadalhorce area was once known, are Pizarra, Almogía, Álora and Valle de Abdalajís.

They lie on the eastern side of the valley, between fertile plains and rugged limestone mountain ranges such as the Huma and Abdalajís.

This remarkable countryside is not only attractive in itself, but it had a strong influence on the development of these villages. They are all worth visiting, to see their interesting historical buildings and monuments.

Meanwhile, on the Costa del Sol, the three least populated villages are Benahavís, Manilva and Casares.

The latter village was the birthplace of Blas Infante, and it boasts numerous attractions including the natural park of the Sierra Crestellina, the 'Canuto de La Utrera', the historical church of La Encarnación, the Hedionda baths and the Roman remains of Lacipo, to name just a few.

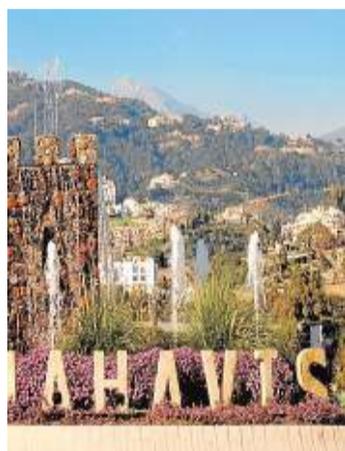


Aerial view of Casares. :: J. A.

## Benahavís

**Gastronomy.** Few villages are as closely identified with gastronomy as this one, because despite its size, it is famous for the number and variety of restaurants. In fact, it is nicknamed 'The Dining Room of the Costa del Sol'. It is also home to several hotels and golf courses. Benahavís has no coastal area, but there are numerous other attractions such as historical buildings within the village and the beauty spot of Las Angosturas, in stunning countryside nearby.

**What to see:** The Montemayor castle and Las Angosturas del Guadalmina.



## Manilva

**Vineyards.** The culture of wine production has resisted the urban development of the Costa del Sol. In fact, for years now the village of Manilva has been growing the Muscat grapes which have made its wine so famous. The village, surrounded by vines, stands on a hill slightly inland from its coastal area, Sabinillas. It is interesting to visit both parts of the municipality, as the coastal region is strongly contrasting, with an 18th century castle and modern marina.

**What to see.** The castle of La Duquesa and the Santa Ana church.



## Álora

**History.** This village boasts a Moorish castle, and one of the largest churches in Malaga province. Many of the castle walls and towers are still standing, and it contains the remains of the village's first church and a horseshoe arch which is unique in the West. There are other interesting buildings to see, but the nearby countryside also holds a wealth of attractions including the Sierra de Huma and the Desfiladero de los Gaitanes gorge.

**What to see:** The castle, La Encarnación church and La Virgen de las Flores convent.



## Valle de Abdalajís

**Adventure.** For years this has been known as the capital of air sports, and today Valle de Abdalajís is one of the most popular places for the most adventurous to visit. Apart from the air sports such as paragliding, there are facilities for climbing, mountaineering, hiking and cycling in the spectacular limestone mountains. The village also has an interesting historical legacy, including the Roman remains of Nescania.

**What to see:** La Peana, the chapel of Santo Cristo de la Sierra, the municipal museum and Roman remains.



## Pizarra

**Landscapes.** From the lookout point of El Santo there is one of the best views of the Guadalhorce valley. This natural balcony in Pizarra has become one of the symbols of this region, but it is just one of many reasons to visit this village, which lies at the foot of the Sierra de Gibralmora. A chapel partly excavated from the rock and an interesting history and folk museum are also good reasons to visit this village, at any time of year.

**What to see:** El Santo lookout point, La Raja Ancha, the municipal museum and the chapel of La Fuensanta.



## Almogía

**Tradition.** This is one of two villages which give their name to a version of 'verdiales', a traditional form of folk music, but in addition to this, Almogía is also a village with a great deal of history, as can be seen from the remains of its Moorish castle and its urban layout which is still essentially Andalusian. The churches and fountains are other attractions of this municipality, which lies between Puerto de la Torre, the Guadalhorce valley and the Antequera plain.

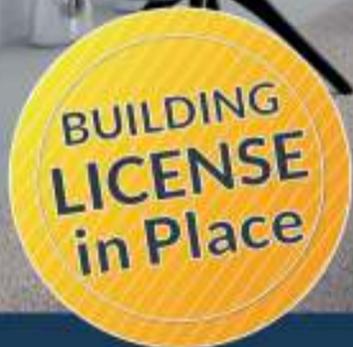
**What to see:** La Vela tower, churches and fountains.



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▲ **Grapes.** The New Year's Eve ones haven't arrived yet, but there are grapes on sale for 1.50 euros. :: S. SALAS



▲ **Prawns.** More shellfish is available at Mercamalaga in December. Right now it's easy to find fresh 'carabineros' for 40 to 50 euros a kilo, but prices will rise between now and Christmas. :: S. SALAS



▲ **Argentinian cherries.** They are flown in by plane and sell to retailers and restaurants for about 16 euros. :: S. SALAS



▲ **Monkfish.** One of the most popular fishes for family dinners, so it is always available in the market. :: S. SALAS

# Christmas means the best quality produce

## Stallholders at the Mercamalaga wholesale market source foods 'par excellence' for their customers during the festive season

Demand increases for traditional and unusual fruit, vegetables, fish and shellfish, due to company celebrations and families preparing a special meal

:: AGUSTÍN PELÁEZ

**MALAGA.** Before the people of Malaga are even awake, Mercamalaga is bustling. It is the biggest wholesale market in the province and one of the principal ones in eastern Andalucía. The fruit and vegetable stalls open for business from clients all over the region from 3am, while the fish stalls open to the public at 5am - although their products start to arrive from 2am onwards.

Mercamalaga is like a city that never sleeps. Until the end of October this year more than 650,000 vehicles had passed through, 2.44 per cent more than in the same period last year. By the end of this year, Merca-

malaga is expected to have received over 200,000 tonnes of goods.

December is not just any month at Mercamalaga. It is transformed, not only because of the festive decorations but because of the demand due to Christmas parties and company celebrations, and the excellence of the products. The market is well-known for its quality in general, but in December the stallholders offer the best of the best, premium quality and unusual products, not just from Spain but also imported.

"Mercamalaga is famous for the quality of its products, but at Christmas the standard quality is relegated to second place, because there are so many truly excellent goods on offer. You can find the best tomatoes, of all types, the best fruits, really diverse and exotic products, the freshest fish and shellfish from all over Spain. At Christmas we are like a shop window that everyone wants to look at," says Andrés Rojas, the manager of Malaga Natural, one of the main market's

biggest fruit and vegetable stalls.

With company celebrations already starting and many families preparing for their traditional Christmas Eve dinner, this is a hectic time of year for retailers and restaurants alike.

### Price increases

The increase in demand has already put up the price of some of the most popular fish and shellfish.

"In the fish market, everything changes as soon as December arrives. Although it's not like the summer, which is when we sell the most, there is more demand than usual and all the stallholders want the very best to offer their clients. The price of crayfish has already gone up by about 60 per cent, and it will continue to rise until Christmas. The prices won't drop again until after Three Kings Day on 6 January," says Antonio Díaz, who runs Marpiex.

"I have been working at Mercamalaga for 18 years, and it's always the same in December. The quality

▶ **Shellfish.** Lobster is one of the products which is always on sale in the fish section of Mercamalaga at Christmas, and the wholesale price can reach 70 euros a kilo. :: S. SALAS



is always good but at this time of year people want the very best. The biggest crayfish sell the same as they do in November; what people want now is top quality, and if the products are still alive then even better, even if it means having to pay 100 euros a kilo for them," he explains.

José Luis Roldán, the president of the Wholesale Fishmongers Association at Mercamalaga, and owner of Mar del Sol, says December is a good month for sales, although not as good as August, when there is an increased demand for fresh products. At Christmas, many customers wait until the last minute to buy.

### Mussels

"We sell more mussels than any other type of product at this time of year, but there is also more demand for hake, monkfish, prawns, crayfish, lobster and clams. The hake and monkfish come from the fishing wharves in Malaga and Cadiz, and the shellfish from Huelva, although the crayfish caught off the Malaga coast is the most expensive," says José Luis.

Last year 39,134 tonnes of fish were delivered to Mercamalaga, of which 33,570 were fresh fish, 2,047 were fresh shellfish; 2,388 tonnes of frozen fish and 1,129 of frozen shellfish.

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▲ **Fresh salmon.** The fish market offers an even wider range of products than usual at Christmas. :: S. SALAS



▲ **Pecan nuts.** They are from the Guadalhorce valley and are sold in the market for more than eight euros a kilo. :: S. SALAS



▲ **Squid.** Another of the most popular products from the stalls selling fish and shellfish at Mercamalaga. The wholesale price varies according to size, but is normally between 10 and 15 euros a kilo. :: SALVADOR SALAS



▲ **Live crayfish.** The price has already gone up by 60 per cent and can reach 100 euros a kilo. :: S. S.



In December 2016, the fish stalls sold 2,875 tonnes in total, and they hope to sell even more this month.

Rafael Jiménez Sánchez, owner of the Ravidepa Malaga fish stall, believes bad weather and the cold increase the prices of certain fish and shellfish. "It's true that there is more demand, but the summer is best. At Christmas many clients order special things, which we don't normally have, but if we are unable to get them it can lose us a client. This is a really stressful month for us, because of course we want to keep our customers happy," he says.

**Not as seasonal**

For the fruit and vegetable stalls, the

**IN FIGURES**

**1,250**

shoppers a day visit the stalls at Mercamalaga, on average.

**638**

million euros was the volume of business by companies in the market in 2016, an increase of 3.5 per cent on the previous year.

situation is similar. Quality is everything. Every stallholder searches for the very best products from Spain and abroad, at this time of year.

"Produce is not as seasonal nowadays as it used to be. You can find just about everything, all year round. That is partly because restaurants on the Costa del Sol demand select products," says Pedro Machuca, the president of the Fruit and Vegetable Stallholders Association, who owns Comercial Frutera Malagueña (Cofruma).

Málaga Natural offers about 800 different items. "If it exists and we can get it, then we will. That's our slogan. The busiest time for us in December is immediately before Christmas," says Andrés Rojas,

whose customers can buy products such as cherries which have been flown in from Chile or Argentina, and 'ethnic' produce such as Edo or Malanga, which is imported from Costa Rica. This is a tuber which resembles a potato, but has a softer texture and slightly sweeter taste.

In 2016, Mercamalaga received 3.98 per cent more fruit and vegetables than in 2015: a total of 176,857 tonnes, of which 82,607 were fruit, 82,215 vegetables and 12,035 potatoes. In December last year, the stallholders sold more than 13,180 tonnes. The market ended last year with a volume of business of 638 million euros on food products.

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A. J. LINN

## HOW TO GET A MICHELIN STAR



The annual Michelin awards are always greeted with rapture by the popular press in spite of the fact that probably only 1% of its readers have ever eaten in a Michelin-starred restaurant. This does not stop ambitious young chefs setting their sights on earning stars for their restaurant at whatever cost. But who can tell them how to go about it?

A few years ago, if we wanted to make a bomb we would have to find a friendly anarchist or ex-military guy. Today it is as simple as digging down into the dark web using Tor, and we find thousands of how-to pages. But nothing is guaranteed and if our neophyte efforts result in the bomb exploding unpredictably there is no-one to make a claim on - if indeed we are still around to do so.

In the same way there are websites telling us how to earn Michelin stars. Not exactly rocket science or brain surgery, mainly common sense, but from personal experience it often seems that many chefs are not too well endowed in that particular department. Start off with social media and make as much noise about the restaurant as possible, organise events for local groups that will appear in the printed media and radio. Eventually something will come to Mr Michelin's attention, and the res-

taurant will be put on the Guide's watch list. Some time later there will be a visit from an inspector. You probably won't even know. Could it be that man eating alone, that couple, or even those two ladies together? You may not notice the second or third visit either. The Belgian edition revealed it had visited La Paix, Brussels, 12 times, and the Sea Grill eight - in the same year.

There are no Michelin chefs, only Michelin restaurants. Roughly 50% of a star's value will be decided on the quality of the food, the remainder on the service, the surroundings, the tableware, wine list, loos, etc. So all these items have to be impeccable, as indeed should be the restaurant's website and Facebook page. There are no short cuts - and no guarantees either.



Benito Gómez Michelin 2017. :: SUR

# A classic aperitif comes back into fashion

Aromatic vermouth has a long history going back to Ancient Greece and Rome and is now becoming a fashionable drink again

:: ESPERANZA PELÁEZ

**MALAGA.** Old classics never die and vermouth, which has never really gone out of fashion in some places in Spain such as Madrid, Barcelona and the Basque Country, is making a comeback as a fashionable drink. But what is vermouth?

Well it is just a wine (traditionally from green grapes), flavoured with spices and strengthened with alcohol. Spicy wines such as this have a long history; they were drunk in ancient Greece and ancient Rome and continued to be popular right into the Middle Ages.

Their popularity was probably because wine then was not like we know it today and sweetening it with honey and added spices helped to disguise the flavour.

It was not until the late eighteenth century that a Turin resident, Antonio Benedetto Carpano, was inspired by a German medicinal wine flavoured with wormwood from which he created a recipe for a drink that would take its name from the German word for wormwood-flavoured wine, 'wermut'.

In Malaga, three wineries: Dimobe, the Antigua Casa de Guardia and Málaga Virgen, make



Making cocktails with vermouth. :: DANIEL MALDONADO

vermouths.

Unlike other places where dry wines are used, here, thanks to the tradition of making sweet wine, sweet moscatel and PX based wines are used which decreases the amount of sugar added at the end of the process. However, with the current trend for less-sweet wines sometimes no sugar is added at all. The density of the sweet Malaga

wines help to slow down the melting rate of ice so the drink retains its full flavour longer.

The Antigua Casa de Guardia has been in the Alameda Principal since 1898 and the barrel vermouth is one of its star products. Here it is served in a narrow glass with ice and lemon rind. It can accompany almost any meal and is a popular addition to cocktails.



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A demonstration of how to make chorizo. :: V. MELGAR



There were also tastings of different breads. :: v.m.

# Benaoján celebrates the festival of 'chacinas'

The town in the Serranía de Ronda with 11 factories producing cold meats held a special festival as a tribute to the industry

:: VANESSA MELGAR

**BENAOJÁN.** An old Spanish saying goes "Donde hay grasas, mejor te lo pasas" which roughly means that where there's fat you'll enjoy it more. This was reiterated by television chef Enrique Sánchez at the XV Feria de Chacina in Benaoján last weekend.

Benaoján is well known for its cold meats; in a town with just un-

der 1,500 inhabitants there are 11 factories producing pork loin, chorizo, jamón and other cured products. Some of them have been in operation for over a hundred years.

Sánchez was nominated Benaoján's ambassador and following tradition was weighed on antique scales. His weight (93 kilos) in meat products were then donated to the NGO Los Ángeles Malagueños de la Noche (Malaga Angels of the Night), which provides food for the homeless and needy. Local journalist, Eski Macías, was nominated as 'Ambassador of the Zurrapa' (zurrapa is a meaty pork paté topped with a layer of white lard).

Elías Bendodo, president of the

provincial government, Monsalud Bautista, tourism delegate for the Junta de Andalucía, and the town mayor Soraya García, attended the inauguration ceremony.

Hundreds of visitors took advantage of the two bank holidays (Día de la Constitución and Día de la Inmaculada Concepción) to fill their larders and in preparation for the upcoming Christmas break.

Besides the cooked and cured meats there were traditional cakes, sweets, honey and a variety of breads to purchase and to taste. There were also demonstrations on how to make chorizo and the best way to fry sliced pork loin.



Visitors stocked up for Christmas. :: v.m.



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EXHIBITIONS

**Victor Tristante**

**Estepona.** Until 20 December. *Patio Top Garden Furniture, Ctra A7 km. 163. Urb El Pirata.*  
An exhibition by local artist Victor Tristante. More info at [www.patio-topgarden.es](http://www.patio-topgarden.es) or [estepona@patio-topgarden.es](mailto:estepona@patio-topgarden.es)

**Museum Jorge Rando**

**Malaga.** Until 25 February. *Cruz del Molinillo, 12*  
A temporary exhibition entitled 'Nacerán Nuevas Auroras' (the Birth of Colour) is currently on display. The museum also holds poetry and musical events. [kontakt@museojorgerando.org](mailto:kontakt@museojorgerando.org)

**Female artists and surrealism**

**Malaga.** Until 28 January. *Museo Picasso.*  
Misunderstood, fighters and rebels, in some cases eclipsed or abused by their male partners, their lives and reactions to criticism and social convention were reflected in their art. The art from this group of female artists was not recognised nor accepted for far too long, they include names such as Eileen Agar, Claude Cahun, Leonora Carrington, Germaine Dulac, Leonor Fini, Valentine Hugo, Frida Kahlo, Dora Maar, Maruja Mallo, Lee Miller, Nadja, Meret Oppenheim, Kay Sage, Ángeles Santos, Dorothea Tanning, Toyen, Remedios Varo and Unica Zürn.

**JM Galería**

**Malaga.** Until 1 January. *Duquesa de Parcent 12.*  
JMshow will be inaugurated today, 1 December at 8pm. It consists of photos, paintings, drawings and sculpture by various artists. [www.galeriajm.com](http://www.galeriajm.com) or email: [galeria@galeriajm.com](mailto:galeria@galeriajm.com)



Female surrealists, Museo Picasso

# Goldies Christmas party

**TONY BRYANT**

**MIJAS.** The Cudeca Goldies will be hosting their annual Christmas dinner at the Valparaíso restaurant in Mijas on Wednesday 20 December.

The event will present a lineup of some of the coast's top entertainers, all of whom will donate their time to raise funds for the Cudeca Hospice in Benalmádena.

Those set to perform are Irish songstress Orla Tierney and Alhaurín El Grande-based singer and guitarist Alex Ashing, who will deliver his personal style of acoustic classics.

The highlight of the party will be the performance of Tina Hall, one of the most powerful rock singers on the coast. The 46-year-old singer recently participated in the popular Spanish television talent show, *La Voz*, and her performance at the Goldies Christmas bash is sure to get the party swinging.

The event, which starts at 7.30pm, will include welcome can-



Tina Hall will perform at the Goldies Christmas dinner. :: SUR

apés, a three-course dinner (including vegetarian option), as well as unlimited beer, wine and water. Tickets cost 45 euros and 10 euros from each ticket will go to Cudeca.

The Cudeca Goldies will also be giving a final push to the annual prize draw for a brand new

Renault Clio. Tickets cost ten euros and the draw will take place on 1 January.

The Goldies are expecting a full house and so early booking is advised. Reservations can be made by phoning the restaurant on 952 485 996 or Carlos White on 663 083 249.

**Pat Graham**

**Malaga.** Until 5 January. *Centro Cultural Provincial María Victoria Atencia.*  
American photographer Pat Graham is exhibiting a collection of his photos taken with a polaroid camera. The theme of 'Pasado perfecto' as the exhibition is called, is urban cultures.

**Buren at the Cube**

**Malaga.** Until 14 January. *Pompidou Centre, Malaga port.*

Daniel Buren, the artist who created the iconic design on the 'Cube' at the Pompidou Centre, is exhibiting more of his work at the museum.

**Jaime Sordo**

**Malaga.** Until 14 January. *Sala de La Coracha, Museo del Patrimonio Municipal, Pase de Reding. Free.*  
In the annex to the MUPAM is an exhibition of contemporary photographs from the collection Los Brazales belonging to businessman Jaime Sordo. The exhibition is entitled 'Escenas: acción y representación' and includes work by Pierre Gonnord, Per Berclay, Regina José Galindo and many others.

**Antonio Yesa**

**Malaga.** Until 16 January, *Galeria Alfajar opposite the gardens of Malaga Cathedral.*  
'Cualquier lugar es Bueno', is the name of the exhibition by Antonio Yesa.

**Francisco Leiro**

**Malaga.** Until 7 January. *Centro de Arte Contemporáneo.*

An exhibition of sculptures completed over the last decade by Galician artist Francisco Leira whose work reflects fragility and human vulnerability.

**Bad Taste**

**Malaga.** Until 14 January. *La Térmica, Avda de Los Guindos, 48.*  
The exhibition forms part of the Festival de Cultura Basura. 'Suburban culture' take centre stage accompanied by conferences and prose by the filmmaker and writer John Waters.

**Dance Practice**

**Malaga.** Until 8 January. *Centro de Arte Contemporáneo.*  
The video entitled Dance Practice was made in 1995 by Douglas Gordon, Jonathon Monk and Dave Allen. It shows a mix of music and dance, combining the music of the 60s with contemporary art.

**Antonio Montiel**

**Antequera.** Until 6 January. *The Town Hall.*  
An exhibition by local artist Antonio Montiel.

**Mijas Photography Group**

**Mijas Pueblo.** From 15 December until 7 January. *Casa Museo de Mijas.*  
A collection of photos taken by a group international photographers.

**Galería Krabbe**

**Frigiliana.** Until 20 January. *Galería Krabbe, C/Rosario La Joaquín.*  
The Christmas collective exhibition will feature the work of six female Danish artists: Anne Juul Christophersen, Marianne Frank, Luise Haugen, Tine Helleshøj, Caroline Krabbe and Ann-Lisbeth Sanvig. [galeriakrabbe@gmail.com](mailto:galeriakrabbe@gmail.com)



Jaime Sordo, La Coracha

**Acompalia Art**

**Motril.** Until 16 December, 7-10pm *Wed-Sat. La Fabrica de Azúcar.*  
A charity art exhibition to raise funds for Acompalia, an association in Granada and the Costa Tropical that cares for terminally ill patients. Live music on on 16 December Wazifa, a reggae funk band.

**Colores en Navidad**

**Almuñécar.** Until 7 January. *Casa de la Cultura.*  
Inauguration 15 December 7.30pm. Paintings, sculpture and prints by artists Marikilla Cascos, María Ángeles Raya, Pepe González, José Cabrera, Doris Pizarro, Paco Ariza and Sagrario Peramos. Organised by Asociación Arte-Sur.

CHARITY

**Cudeca Light a Light**

**Benalmádena.** 15 December, 6pm. *The Cudeca Cancer hospice.*  
A children's choir will sing at this annual event that is dedicated to loved ones that have passed away. Father Christmas will make an appearance and there will be a glass of 'Christmas cheer' and a piece of cake for everyone. Anyone wishing to dedicate a light can do so online at [www.lightupcudeca.org](http://www.lightupcudeca.org)

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**Christmas items collection**

**Torremolinos.** 15, 16 December, from 10am until 6pm. *Centro Cultural Pablo Ruiz Picasso.* Christmas items, which can be purchased from stalls at the market, are being collected to be redistributed among the Asociación Evangélica Manantial de Agua Viva, Comedor Social Emaús, Caritas, Lion's Club and Arte contra el Hambre charities. The items include textiles, books, lace and ceramics.



Antonio Montiel, Antequera

**FAMA Christmas party**

**Mijas.** 16 December, 7pm. *Tamisa Golf Hotel.* 40€. Three-course traditional Christmas dinner (vegetarian option), wine and beer, entertainment and raffle. Te:620354885 or email: patricia-marycoleman@gmail.com

**Carrera La Suerte**

**Benahavís.** 16 December, from 10.30am. *Avda de Andalucía.* A fun run to raise money for local charities. On the day there will be a

collection point for non-perishable food stuffs and hygiene products or take them to the Benahavís town hall during normal opening hours.

**Biker's toy run**

**Torremolinos.** 16 December, from 11am. *Plaza de la Nogalera.* The motorbike club Komando Amimoto have organised a Toy Run again this year. Around 100 bikers, dressed as Father Christmas, will be driving around the town collecting toys that will be then passed onto to underprivileged children.

**Christmas day with AID**

**Coín.** 25 December, from 1.30pm. *Los Cabales restaurant.* 39.90 euros. Full Christmas lunch with live entertainment from Geoff Jameson. No children under 13. Book in advance tel: 626942427.

**MUSIC & DANCE**

**Klara Gomboc**

**Torremolinos.** 15 December, 8pm. *Plaza Costa del Sol.* Free. Violinist Klara Gomboc will play music by some of the greatest composers such as Bach, Chopin, Beethoven and Pachelbel.

**TOPS Christmas show**

**Alhaurín el Grande.** 15, 16 December, 8pm. *Venta La Recta.* 10€ TOPS are presenting an evening of laughter, fun and Christmas spirit at their Christmas show. Tickets from Martin's and Cristina's bookshop. ➤

# 36 years of migas in Torrox

**JENNIE RHODES**

**TORROX PUEBLO.** As has been the tradition for 36 years, this Sunday Torrox Pueblo will be holding its Fiesta de las Migas. Every year, on the Sunday before Christmas, the town shares one of its traditional recipes with residents and visitors.

The local dish is essentially breadcrumbs, or 'migas' in Spanish. However, these breadcrumbs are like no other; they are fried in local olive oil and garlic and served up with a glass of local sweet wine and a typical salad.

Migas was a dish traditionally served to labourers who worked the fields as a filling meal to keep them going throughout the long day spent working in the 'campo' (countryside).

The event is recognised by the Junta de Andalucía as being of cultural and touristic importance.

The migas festival is moving with the times and this year a gluten-free alternative will also be available.

In addition to the main event, a full day of activities is being organised starting at 10am. Every year there is a market with stalls selling local produce, arts and crafts.



Visitors watch as the migas are prepared. :: E. CABEZAS

**INFORMATION**

► **When:** Sunday 17 December, from 10am.

► **Where:** Plaza de la Constitución, Torrox Pueblo.

A traditional verdiales (typical Malaga folk music) group will provide music to accompany the migas tasting at lunch time.

Later on in the day there will be live bands playing in the Plaza de la Constitución in Torrox Pueblo.



**MOVIE LISTING**  
From Friday 15th to  
Thursday 21th December

ORIGINAL VERSION SUBTITLED SPANISH



**STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI**

Director Rian Johnson  
Starring Daisy Ridley and John Boyega  
ACTION - 152 min.



Friday 15: 12:00, 17:00, 19:45, 22:00  
Saturday 16: 16:00, 19:00, 22:00  
Sunday 17: 11:45, 16:00, 19:00, 21:00, 22:00  
Monday 18: 18:30  
Tuesday 19 and Thursday 21: 18:30, 21:30  
Wednesday 20: 18:30, 20:00, 22:00



**PADDINGTON 2**

Director Paul King  
Starring Hugh Bonneville and Sally Hawkins  
COMEDY FAMILY - 104 min.



Friday 15: 18:00  
Saturday 16: 15:45, 18:15  
Sunday 17: 11:45, 15:45, 18:15  
Monday 18: 17:45  
From Tuesday 19 to Thursday 21: 17:50



**WONDER**

Director Stephen Chbosky  
Starring Julia Roberts and Owen Wilson  
DRAMA - 113 min.



From Friday 15 to Sunday 17: 17:50  
Monday 18: 17:50, 19:45  
From Tuesday 19 to Thursday 21: 17:50



**COCO**

Director Lee Unkrich and Adrian Molina  
ANIMATION - 128 min.



Friday 15: 17:00  
Saturday 16: 15:45, 18:00  
Sunday 17: 11:45, 15:45, 18:00  
Monday 18: 17:45  
Tuesday 19 and Wednesday 20: 18:00



**A BAD MOMS CHRISTMAS**

From Friday 15 to Sunday 17: 20:30  
Monday 18: 19:45  
Tuesday 19 and Thursday 21: 20:00



**MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS**

From Friday 15 to Sunday 17: 20:30  
Monday 18: 19:50  
Tuesday 19 and Thursday 21: 20:00  
Wednesday 20: 22:00



# A cheese lover's heaven

BY TONY BRYANT

**ESTEPONA.** Estepona is to host the third edition of the Feria del Queso, an artisan cheese fair that will be held in the Parque Botánico Orquidario from today, Friday, until Sunday.

The event is organised by the provincial government of Malaga, Estepona town hall and the award-winning ham cutter, José María Téllez 'Popi', who will be giving demonstrations in the art of slicing serrano ham.

Endorsed by the brand Sabor a Málaga, the fair will promote the high quality and variety of cheeses and dairy products produced by the participating companies - 80 per cent of which come from the province of Malaga.

More than 30 manufacturers will take part in the event and visitors will have the opportunity to sample a wide variety of internationally-renowned products, including fresh, cured and hard cheeses. There is a huge selection of Spanish cheeses, from the salty, dark-skinned Manchego to the mouth-tingling Cabrales blue cheese.

Although cheese will be the



Typical salty, dark-skinned Manchego cheese. :: SUR

focus of the event, the gastronomic market will include other local products such as wine, olive oil, dried fruit, pickles, olives and Iberian pork products.

Malaga enjoys a dry, temperate climate with hot summers and mild winters, so the region boasts high quality dairy and processed pork products as well as some of the best sweet wines in Spain.

## DETAILS

► **What.** Cheese and dairy produce fair.

► **Where.** Parque Botánico Orquidario, Estepona.

► **When.** Until Sunday 17 December, from midday to 9pm.

## MUSIC & DANCE

### Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

**Malaga. Teatro Cervantes 21, 22 December, 9pm.** The Christmas concerts with works by composers Händel and Mozart with soprano Isabel Monar, mezzosoprano Marta Infante, tenor Enrico Iviglia and baritone Thomas Laske. They will be accompanied by the Cármina Nova choir.

**Malaga. Auditorio Edgar Neville**

15 December, 8pm. The

Nutcracker Suite by Tchaikovsky. **Fuengirola. Palacio de la Paz 16 December, 8pm.** The Nutcracker Suite by Tchaikovsky. [www.orquestafilarmonicademalaga.com](http://www.orquestafilarmonicademalaga.com)

### The Wall Bar

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

**15 December:** Son de Oro. Neo jazz, pop, modern from de Estibaliz Guerrero, and Rafael Quesada "Foki".

**16 December:** Delirium. Blues fusion. Lourdes del Pino and Javier Esteve.



Stereo 80, Mijas Costa

### Que Bowling

**Mijas Costa. 15 December, 9.45pm.** Que Bowling, in front of Aldi. Free entry.

Stereo 80 will be playing all the best known songs from AC/DC, Guns 'n' Roses, Bon Jovi, Queen, Whitesnake, Aha, Eurythmics, Van Halen and more.

[www.costadeldisco.com](http://www.costadeldisco.com)

### Christmas Concert

**Almuñécar. 15 December, 8pm.**

**Iglesia de la Encarnación.** Traditional Christmas carols sung by the Coro Infantil Pedro Mena (Pedro Mena child choir).

### Spanish carol concert

**Estepona. 15 December, 8pm. Centro Cultural Padre Manuel. Free.**

A recital of mainly Spanish carols (villancicos) with soprano Luisa Parra and mezzosoprano Antonia Urbano with Claudio Gómez Martínez playing the piano.

### Pasión Vega

**Malaga. 15 December, 8pm. Cervantes Theatre.**

Famous Spanish singer Pasión Vega will be performing her show '40 Quilares'. Tickets 70-22€ from [www.unientradas.es](http://www.unientradas.es)

### Ecumenical carol service

**Torre del Mar. 16 December. 6pm. San Andrés church.**

Carols sung by the Spanish choir "Amigos de Lux Mundi", the German choir "Con Los Cantores" director Lisa Kropp and the TIMS English choir director Margaret Williams. Lux Mundi Torre del Mar. Tel:952 543 334 or e-mail: [luxmundi@lux-mundi.org](mailto:luxmundi@lux-mundi.org)

### Promúsica orchestra

**Malaga. 16 December, 8pm. La sala Unicaja de Conciertos María Cristina.**

The orchestra's Traditional Christmas Concert will be performing works by Corelli, Buxtehude, Rutter and Strauss as well as some Spanish carols.

### Christmas Choir Concert

**Nerja. 16 December, 9pm. Iglesia de el Salvador.**

Free entry to this concert although



Pasión Vega, Malaga

a collection will be made in the interval with funds going to buy food for children this Christmas.

### A Night of Tango

**Nerja. 16 December, 9pm. Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja. 15€.**

La Porteña Tango Trío have recently completed a tour of Russia and visited more than twenty countries. The show will include a guest appearance by Eugenia Giordano.

### Coral CoraXalia carol services

**Cómpeta. 15 December 8pm. Free.** The choir will be performing in the mortuary chapel.

**Vélez-Málaga. 16 December 8pm. Free.**

A change of venue to what was published last week, the concert will now be at the Convento de las Carmelitas Descalzas, Plaza de las Carmelitas.

**Nerja. 19 December 5pm. Free.**

A concert at the Iglesia San Miguel, Plaza Andalucía.

The concerts are sponsored by De Cotta Law to raise money for the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Residencia for the elderly. Mulled wine and mince pies after the service. Email: [eucorax@hotmail.es](mailto:eucorax@hotmail.es) or tel: 669 682 139

### A Ceremony of Carols

**Malaga. 17 December, 7pm. Iglesia de San Juan Bautista**

A Christmas concert directed by Luisa D Comacho.

### Moulin Rouge cabaret

**Estepona. 17 December, 7pm. Auditorio Felipe VI.**



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Dance company Danza Martina Tessaro and school Escuela de Danza Martina Tessaro, are performing an adaptation of Moulin Rouge by Baz Luhrmann. artistic direction and choreography are by Martina Tessaro and Lourdes Amigo is assistant choreographer. Tickets: tel: 678946115 or go to [www.auditorioestepona.com](http://www.auditorioestepona.com). They are also available from post offices.

**Christmas Choir Concert**

**Arroyo de la Miel.** 17 December, 8.30pm. *Parroquia Inmaculada Concepción.*

The Coral Polifónica de Marbella and the Coral Ciudad de Benalmádena choirs will be singing.

**TIMS Christmas concerts**

**Torre del Mar.**



Porteña Tango, Nerja

16 December, 6pm. St Andrew's the Apostle parish church.

**Malaga.**

21 January, 8pm. Malaga cathedral.

**Collegium Musicum**

**Fuengirola.** 17 December, 7pm. *Hotel IPV Palace and Spa Beatriz.* 10€ Optional tapas and drinks party after the concert 15€. Tickets: from the hotel or email: [info@colmus.org](mailto:info@colmus.org) or tel: 952775492 / 696620872

**Marbella.** 18 December, 8.30pm.

*Iglesia de la Encarnación, Marbella Old Town.*

**Coral Magnum Mysterium**

**Estepona.** 20 December 8.30pm, 22 December 8pm. *La Iglesia Santa María de los Remedios.*

Traditional Spanish and some international carols.

**FLAMENCO**

**Libres y Flamencas**

**Malaga.** 15 December, 9pm. *Auditorio of the Picasso Museum*

Flamenco music, song and dance with Mamen Ruiz and Aroa Soto (vocals); Isabel Soto, Trini Ruiz and Elena Molina (dance); Antonia Jiménez and Lola Yang (guitar) and Ana Sevilla (violin) created by Francisco Roji.

**Marina Heredia**

**Almuñécar.** 16 December, 8pm. *Auditorio Casa de la Cultura.*

A Christmas concert with Marina Heredia and special guest Curro Al-



María José Santiago, Malaga

baicín. Funds raised go to the brotherhood of the Santísimo Cristo Alado a la Columna (Cristo de los Gitanos). Tickets: [www.bra-voentradas.com](http://www.bra-voentradas.com) or tel: 722261209

**María José Santiago**

**Malaga.** 16 December, 8pm. *Teatro Cervantes.*

María José Santiago will be singing boleros and traditional Spanish flamenco with a touch of Christmas. [www.unientradas.es](http://www.unientradas.es)

**EVENTS**

**Street market**

**San Pedro de Alcántara.** 16 December. *Calles Córdoba, Marqués del Duero and Lagasca.*

Shops in the above streets have been given permission to put up stalls in the street outside their shop windows to make a Christmas

market. The streets will be closed to traffic from 10am until 8pm.

**Thespa**

**Fuengirola.** 20 December, 6.45pm. *Los Boliches, Masonic Hall.* 16€ members, 18€ guests. Includes set meal.

'Snow White and the Five Dwarves' by Jim Fenton plus 'One of the Only Ways' by unknown author and various party pieces. Reservations tel: 622 454 422 [www.theatrecoastadelsol.com](http://www.theatrecoastadelsol.com) or email: [thespabooking@gmail.com](mailto:thespabooking@gmail.com)

**Trip to see Three Kings parade**

**Fuengirola.** 5 January departing 2.25pm from bullring and 2.30pm FERIA ground. 15€ Fundación Lux Mundi Fuengirola. C/Nueva 3. Tel: 952474840

**Trip to Arcos de la Frontera**

**Fuengirola.** 5 January departing 7.55am from bullring and 8pm FERIA ground. 36€

One of Andalucía's most dramatically positioned villages, it balances on top a rocky limestone ridge. Included in the ticket price is transport, a guided tour and lunch in a local restaurant. Fundación Lux Mundi Fuengirola. C/Nueva 3. Tel: 952474840

**Trip to Murcia**

**Fuengirola.** 13, 14, 15, 16 March departing 6.55am from bullring and 7am FERIA ground.

Full details contact Fundación Lux Mundi Fuengirola, C/Nueva 3. Tel: 952474840

**CULTURAL SNIPPETS**

**La Herradura Christmas events**

**LA HERRADURA**

**J. RHODES.** Highlights of La Herradura's Christmas activities include a Christmas sweet-making workshop today, Friday 15 December, at 11am and again at 4pm in the civic centre.

On Saturday 16 a Christmas concert will be given by the Bahía de la Herradura choir at the San José church at 7.30pm.

Meanwhile, on 22 and 28 December, there is the opportunity to join in with traditional Christmas songs, accompanied by the zambomba (a traditional Andalusian musical instrument), and typical Christmas products will be on sale.

The town's live nativity play will be performed in Plaza de la Independencia on Saturday 23 December at 8.30pm and on the same day in the civic centre, a musical adaptation of Disney's Frozen will be performed.

The royal post man will be collecting letters for the Three Kings from the civic centre between 5pm and 7pm where there will be a range of children's activities and a New Year concert will take place on 4 January at 8pm at the civic centre. The Kings' Day procession will take place on 5 January from 5pm.

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## CHRISTMAS EVENTS

### Trip to Malaga Christmas lights

**Estepona.** 15 December. 12€ members, 13€ guests.

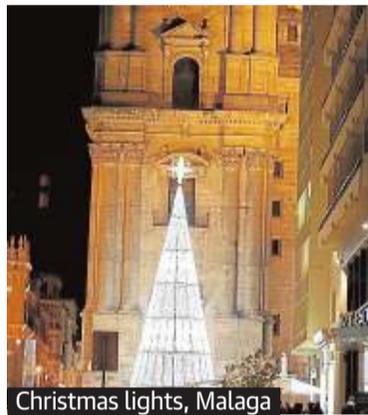
A trip to see Malaga's Christmas lights. Tel: 951318234 to reserve a place or pop into the shop in Calle Zaragoza, Estepona during shop opening hours, Monday to Friday 10.00 to 13.30. Payment will be needed by 9 December.

### RAFA Costa de Sol Christmas dinner and dance

**Mijas Costa.** 15 December 7.30m. Hotel Tamisa Golf. 35€

The Royal Air Forces Association-Costa del Sol branch is holding its annual Christmas dinner and dance. Dress smart, dinner jacket optional. Tickets from the hotel or tel: 952 567 412.

[www.rafacostadelosol.co.uk](http://www.rafacostadelosol.co.uk)



Christmas lights, Malaga

### Age Concern dinner and dance

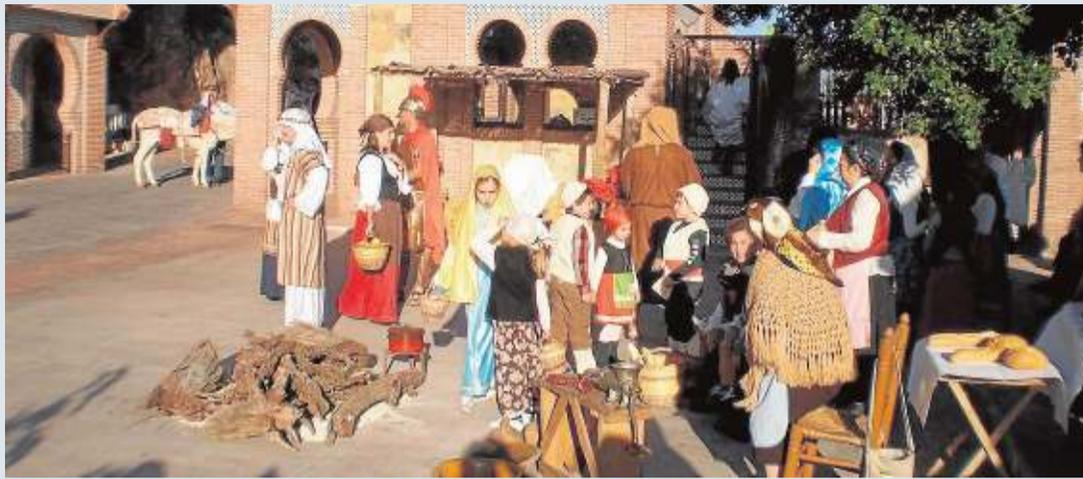
**Mijas Costa.** 22 December 7.30m. Hotel Tamisa Golf. 30€

Canapes and drinks on arrival followed by a four-course meal. Live entertainment with singer Laura Elen. Transport to and from the hotel 12€ per person with a minimum of 40 booking the coach. Tickets from the Age Concern Charity shop in Los Boliches or the Hotel Tamisa Golf Reception. Tel: 686289904

### Christmas at the Arboretum

**Marbella** 17 December, 11am-5pm. Finca El Trapiche.

Arboretum Marbella are holding a Winter Fair with stalls selling Christmas gifts and organic produce, a kids zone, food and drink, activities, live music and an introduction to their new project "Suerte de Tierra". There will be music and dance and a theatre workshop.



## Live nativity scenes

by JENNIE RHODES

**MALAGA.** While many towns and villages display nativity scenes in their town halls or other buildings (in Torre del Mar there is one in the Azucarera building, complete with live goldfish, while in Cómpeta a local father and son take over a premises on the main square to mention just two) some places go a step further and represent the story of Jesus's birth as a 'Belén viviente', or live nativity.

Residents and or actors dress

up and play the roles of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the Three Wise Men, the Angel Gabriel and other characters to depict the Christmas story. Some even include a real baby as Jesus and most have live donkeys and other animals.

La Herradura in Granada province has a popular Belén Vivente every year. It takes place on Saturday 23 December at 8.30pm in the Plaza de la Independencia.

The Comares living nativity will take place this Sunday, 17

December, starting at the Puerta de Málaga at the entrance to the town. It will start at 5pm and will be followed by a Christmas concert in the Encarnación church at 7.30pm.

Almayate in Vélez-Málaga also has a long tradition of having a live nativity scene and it is recognised as being of unique cultural importance by the Junta de Andalucía. It will take place on 29 and 30 December at 6pm in the Juan Paniagua primary school in the village.

[www.fundacionarboretum.org](http://www.fundacionarboretum.org)

### Festival of Nine Lessons

**Malaga.** 20 December, 7pm. St George's Anglican Church, Cementerio Inglés, Avd de Pries.

A traditional Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. Followed by mulled wine and mince pies and Christmas raffle.

### Christmas market

**Gibraltar** Until 23 December. Wed, Thurs noon until 8pm, Fri, Sat 10am until 10pm. Line Wall Road.

There will be craft stalls, entertainment, demonstrations, mulled wine, mince pies, face painting etc.

### Papá Noel Village

**Torremolinos** Until 4 January. Plaza Costa del Sol.

The Father Christmas village will be open every day from 11am until 2pm and 5pm until 9pm. Next to the village will be free children's activities and workshops. The

Christmas market in the Avda Palma de Mallorca is until 3 January 10am-4pm and 4.30pm-9pm.

### 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 Albéniz

C/Alcazabilla 4, Malaga. Tel: 902 36 02 95 or visit [www.cinealbeniz.com](http://www.cinealbeniz.com) or [www.unientradas.es](http://www.unientradas.es)

**You Were Never Really Here:** 16.15

**The Bookshop:** 18.05 **Wonder:** 16.15 (Mon-Thurs).

**Paddington 2:** 16.05 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

**The Sense of an Ending:** 20.10

**Anchor and Hope:** 16.00

### Cinesur El Ingenio

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

**Coco:** 17.00, 19.30 (Mon, Tues, Thurs)

**Murder on the Orient Express:** 18.30, 21.00 (Tues)

**Wonder:** 18.00, 20.15, 22.30 (Tues)

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi:** 12.10, 16.30, 19.30 (Weds, Thurs, Sat).

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi 3D:** 18.30, 21.00 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

### Cinesur Miramar

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

**Coco:** 19.30, 22.15 (Mon, Tues, Thurs)

**Murder on the Orient Express:** 19.00, 21.20 (Tues)

**Wonder:** 16.15 (Mon-Thurs).

**Paddington 2:** 16.05 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

**Suburbicon:** 12.25 (every day).

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi:** 12.30, 16.30, 19.30, 22.30.

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi 3D:** 18.00, 21.00 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

### Cines Teatro Goya

For tickets and information call 951196665. [www.cinesteatrogoya.com](http://www.cinesteatrogoya.com)

**Paddington 2:** 11.45 (Sun); 15.45, 18.15 (Sat, Sun); 17.45 (Mon), 17.50 (Tues-Thurs); 18.00.

**Murder on the Orient Express:** 19.50 (Mon); 20.00 (Tues, Thurs), 20.30 (Fri-Sun); 22.00 (Wed).

**A Bad Mom's Christmas:** 19.45 (Mon); 20.00 (Tues, Thurs); 20.30 (Fri-Sun).

**Coco:** 11.45 (Sun); 15.45 (Sat, Sun); 17.00 (Fri); 17.45 (Mon); 18.00 Sat, Sun, Tues, Wed).

**Wonder:** 17.45, 19.45 (Mon); 17.50 (Fri-Sun, Tues-Thurs).

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi:** 11.45, 21.00 (Sun); 12.00, 17.00, 19.45 (Fri); 16.00, 19.00 (Sat, Sun); 18.30 (Mon-Thurs), 20.00 (Wed); 21.30 (Tues, Thurs); 22.00 (Fri-Sun, Wed).



Papá Noel Village, Torremolinos

### Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

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

Tel: 902 902 103 or visit [www.yelmocines.es](http://www.yelmocines.es)

**Coco:** 15.00 (Sat, Sun)

**Murder on the Orient Express:** 21.00 (every day)

**Wonder:** 18.40 (every day).

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi:** 00.00, 16.30, 19.30, 22.30 (Fri), 12.15, 16.30, 19.30, 22.30 (Sat), 12.15, 15.45, 18.45, 21.45 (Sun), 15.45, 18.45, 21.45 (Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs).

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi 3D:** 00.00, 18.30, 21.30 (Fri), 12.30, 15.30, 18.30, 21.30 (Sat, Sun), 18.30, 21.30 (Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs).

**Gay, lesbian and trans film week**

Centro Cultural Pablo Ruiz Picasso, Torremolinos.

**Weekend:** 15 December, 7.30pm. Free. Weekend is a 2011 British romantic drama film directed by Andrew Haigh. It stars Tom Cullen and Chris New as two men who meet and begin a sexual relationship the week before one of them plans to leave the country.



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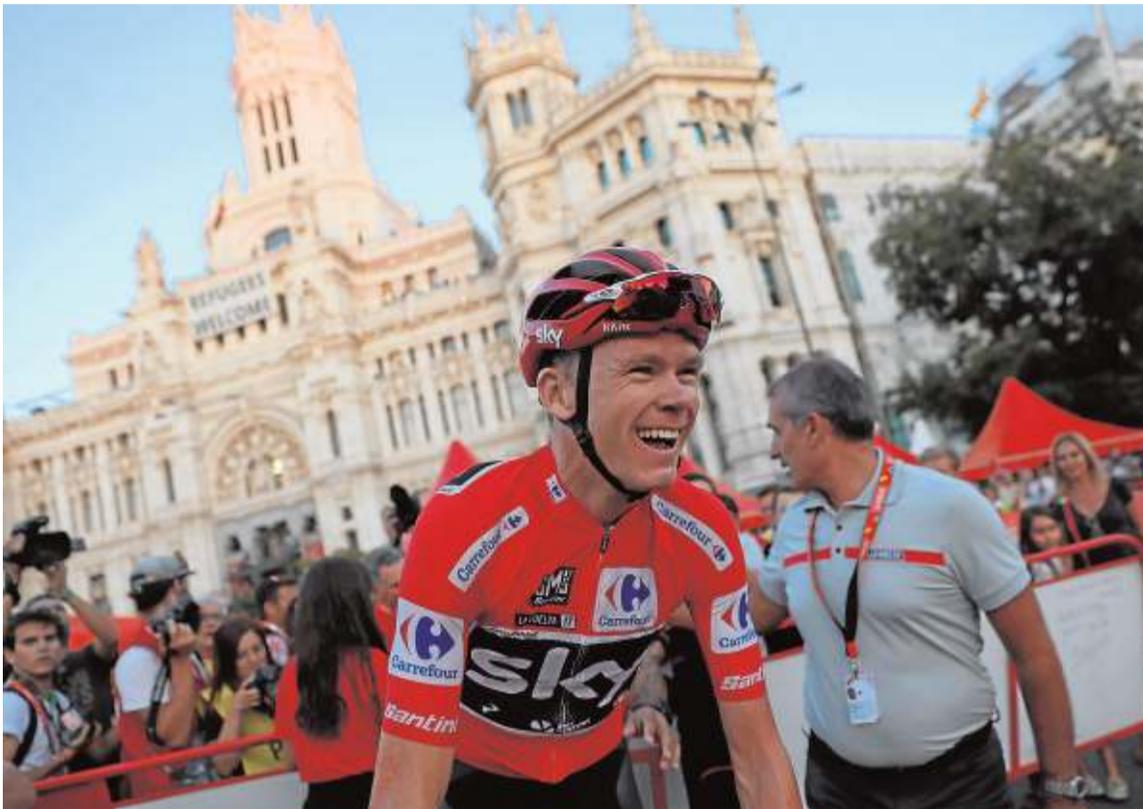
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Froome, after finishing the final stage in Madrid this September. :: REUTERS

# British cyclist Chris Froome under investigation after failed drugs test during Vuelta

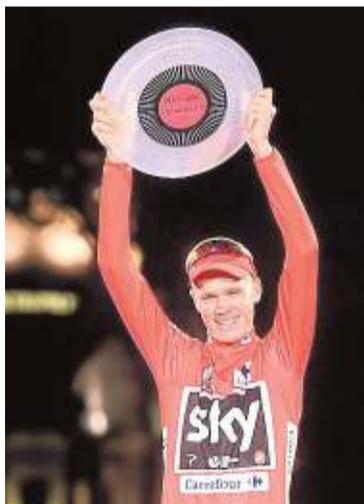
The race winner was found to have had an excessive level of an asthma drug in his urine during the final week

BY DARYL FINCH

**MALAGA.** Chris Froome is facing suspension from cycling after a routine drugs test during this year's Vuelta a España revealed twice the allowed level of asthma drug Salbutamol in his urine.

The Kenya-born Briton and four-time Tour de France winner has suffered from asthma since he was a child and was advised by his team doctor to increase his dosage when his symptoms flared up during the race.

Froome was notified of the "adverse analytical finding" on 20 September following tests on 7 September but the news only came to light on Wednesday after Team Sky is-



On the podium. :: AFP

sued a statement following the publication of a joint investigation by the Guardian and Le Monde.

The statement explained that Froome had "responded to a request for information from the UCI, the

world governing body for cycling, about his use of medication for asthma during the 2017 Vuelta a España".

It went on to state that he had experienced "acute asthma symptoms" during the final week of the Vuelta and that Froome increased his dosage of Salbutamol "still within the permissible doses".

Froome himself welcomed the investigation, saying: "I take my leadership position in my sport very seriously. The UCI is absolutely right to examine test results and, together with the team, I will provide whatever information it requires."

### A significant ban

If the test result is upheld, Froome could face a significant ban and would have to forfeit his Vuelta title under UCI rules.

However, the cyclist tweeted thanks for the messages of support from fans and said: "I am confident that we will get to the bottom of this."

# Spain's Handball World Cup dreams brought to an end by the formidable Norway

BY EFE

Spain's women's handball team couldn't upset the odds and crashed out of the Handball World Cup in Germany on Monday against hot favourites for the tournament, Norway.

The "guerreras", as they have come to be known, fell 23-31 and crashed out in the round of 16 to the reigning world and European champions despite showing the competitive spirit for which they have become known.

The team, led by Carlos Viver, made a good account for themselves in the tournament with three wins in the group stage and a notable draw against France showing that the gap to the elite has been closed considerably in recent years.

However, it was a lack of experience which seemed to cost them against Norway with the opponents taking an early lead. "We had to be more composed," admitted Viver.



Carmen Martín after the final whistle. :: EFE / FILIP SINGER

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De la Bella

Óyarzabal

Íñigo Martínez

Zurutza (Zubeldia, 46')

Rulli

Illarramendi

Llorente

Xabi Prieto

Odriozola

Willian José (Bautista, 73')

Januzaj (Juanmi, 65')

4-4-2

Keko (Ontiveros, 78')

Rosales

Borja Bastón (Mula, 86')

Recio

Hernández

Peñaranda (En-Nesyri, 53')

Adrián

Roberto

Baysse

Chory

González

**Unused substitutes:** Ramírez (GK), Carlos Martínez, Canales, Raúl Navas. **Unused substitutes:** Prieto (GK), Rolón, Miquel, Juanpi.

### STATISTICS

**BALL POSSESSION**

**67%** / **33%**

**R. SOCIEDAD** / **MALAGA**

0	Goals	2
15	Total shots	10
3	On target	8
12	Off target	2
5	Corners	0
6	Offsides	2
10	Fouls committed	12
1	Yellow cards	1
0	Red cards	0

**Goals:** 0-1 Borja Bastón (23') [pen.]; 0-2 Chory Castro (58').

**Referee:** Carlos del Cerro.

**Venue:** Anoeta (16,834 spectators).

### TABLE & FIXTURES

**MATCHDAY 15**

**LEAGUE TABLE**

★ Champions League ■ Europa League ▼ Relegation

TEAM	PT	P	W	D	L	GF	GA
★ 1. Barcelona	39	15	12	3	0	38	7
★ 2. Valencia	34	15	10	4	1	35	14
★ 3. At. Madrid	33	15	9	6	0	24	7
★ 4. Real Madrid	31	15	9	4	2	30	11
■ 5. Sevilla	28	15	9	1	5	19	19
■ 6. Villarreal	21	15	6	3	6	22	20
7. Getafe	20	15	5	5	5	20	15
8. Leganés	20	15	6	2	7	12	14
9. Girona	20	15	5	5	5	19	22
10. Real Sociedad	19	15	5	4	6	28	28
11. Celta	18	15	5	3	7	27	23
12. Betis	18	15	5	3	7	23	29
13. Eibar	18	15	5	3	7	16	27
14. Athletic	17	15	4	5	6	16	19
15. Levante	16	15	3	7	5	15	22
16. Espanyol	16	15	4	4	7	11	19
17. Deportivo	15	15	4	3	8	18	27
▼ 18. Alavés	12	15	4	0	11	12	24
▼ 19. MALAGA	11	15	3	2	10	13	28
▼ 20. Las Palmas	10	15	3	1	11	11	34

**Results**

Valencia - Celta 2-1  
Villarreal - Barcelona 0-2  
Deportivo - Leganés 1-0  
Real Madrid - Sevilla 5-0  
Levante - Athletic 1-2  
Real Sociedad - MALAGA 0-2  
Betis - At. Madrid 0-1  
Alavés - Las Palmas 2-0  
Getafe - Eibar 0-0  
Espanyol - Girona 0-1

**Fixtures**

Celta - Villarreal  
Barcelona - Deportivo  
Leganés - Real Madrid  
Sevilla - Levante  
Athletic - Real Sociedad  
MALAGA - Betis  
At. Madrid - Alavés  
Las Palmas - Espanyol  
Girona - Getafe  
Eibar - Valencia

# An unexpected boost far from home



✉ dfinch@diariosur.es

Malaga's push for safety is back on after recording their first win on the road since beating Granada eight months ago

**MALAGA.** After eight agonising months on the road with just a single point from 12 away games, Malaga finally picked up a win at what is proving to be a lucky ground for them with a 2-0 victory at Anoeta.

Despite terrible luck with officials over recent months, it was the referee who was key to Sunday's victory over a Real Sociedad

side which has hit a rut after a promising start to the campaign.

As early as the sixth minute, the Basque side's recent fortunes were typified by Mikel Oyarzabal who missed a glorious opportunity to give his side the lead after Adnan Januzaj hung up a cross to the back post only for the unmarked winger to get his header completely wrong.

At the other end, Íñigo Martínez also got his wires all crossed - this time to devastating effect. The defender was dispossessed by Keko just outside the area and the winger fed Borja Bastón, starting in the place of the injured Diego Rolán, who was felled by a clumsy challenge from keeper Gerónimo Rulli.

The same men came face-to-face for the penalty and Bastón got the better of the stopper once again who dived the wrong way.

With their advantage, Malaga allowed the hosts to continue their domination of the ball, sitting deep in two banks of four. This invited



Sociedad to attempt shots from outside the box with both Xabi Prieto and Willian José dragging their efforts wide.

The latter came a lot closer in the second half when he teed himself up just outside the six-yard box from the former's header; the effort clipped the post on the way out for a goalkick.

Adalberto Peñaranda became Malaga's latest injury casualty in the 53rd minute when he came off worst from a robust challenge from Alberto de la Bella. The Venezuelan had to be stretched off and will be a doubt for the Andalusian derby at La Rosaleda next Monday against Real Betis.

His replacement Youssef En-Nesyri was thrust straight into the action and brought about the second penalty of the game as Willian José handled the ball under his challenge.

There were several battles within the war on Sunday with Diego Llorente and Juanpi hosting their former employers but it was former Sociedad man Chory Castro, wearing orange on the day, who would make the most telling contribution. He was right on the spot to follow up when Rulli guessed right this time from Bastón, to bag Malaga's second and the game's decisive goal.

The winger didn't celebrate on his old stomping ground, but his goal could be vital in Malaga's search for survival with the gap to 16th place now closed to just four points.

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- Turkey medallions with traditional autumn fruit filling: 15€
- Christmas capon in truffle juice: 15€
- Suckling veal stuffed with mushrooms and foie: 22€

**- Sweets & Deserts -**

- Christmas trunk (chocolate or toasted yolk) 4 portions: 20€
- Turrón and Baileys cream cup: 5€
- Raspberry Ingot: 5€
- Strudel with pear, apple, dates and raisins from Málaga: 6€
- Chirimoya mousse with black chocolate: 6€
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- Lobster cream with ravioli
- Christmas capon in truffle juice
- Turrón and Baileys cream cup

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**- Menú 3 -**

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# Iturra's January return is secured, but another midfielder could follow

The initial plan was to sign one holding man, but with doubts over Esteban Rolón, the club hopes to sign two midfielders in January

## || SERGIO CORTÉS

**MALAGA.** After leaving in search of pastures new more than four years ago, Manuel Iturra, a key component of the Malaga side which reached the quarterfinals of the Champions League in 2013, is returning to La Rosaleda. Now 33, Iturra, is due in the city to sign a contract until the summer of 2019.

The holding midfielder is a free agent after his contract with Mexican side Necaxa, for whom he was an automatic starter, came to end.

Head coach Michel wants the player in as soon as possible so that he can get up to speed over the winter break and be ready for Malaga's decisive run of games in the new year when they take on fellow relegation battlers Espanyol, Getafe, Eibar and Girona.

## Further reinforcements

Iturra won't be the only new recruit in January after the club al-



Iturra after scoring against Barcelona in his first spell at the club. || REUTERS



Miquel on Monday. || EFE

tered its plans and now expects to sign a second central midfielder. With summer signing Emanuel Cecchini told to find a new club and doubts persisting over Esteban Rolón, Recio and Adrián are the only reliable options currently available to Michel with injury problems dogging Zdravko Kuzmanovic.

It is hoped that this second midfielder will be equally adept at playing as a '6' as an '8' and can give creative freedom to both Recio and Adrián further up the pitch.

## More versatility in the market

With last week's signing of defender Ignasi Miquel, who was on the bench for the match at Anoeta on Sunday but not officially unveiled until Monday, Malaga have already strengthened the positions in most desperate need.

However, with Miquel's transfer costing a mere 90,000 euros, the club have more room for manoeuvre in the transfer market than expected - thus able to afford this second midfielder.

But with the revenue generated from the possible sales of Cecchini, Cenk Gonen, Cifu and possibly Jony (over whom a decision hasn't yet been made), another forward could yet be on the radar.

However, with Diego Rolán and Adalberto Peñaranda set to return from injury in the coming weeks, this is a low priority.



ROB PALMER  
COMMENTATOR, SKY SPORTS



## PUTTING THE CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS

The usual arguments in the La Liga-Premier League debate have been turned on their head this season

If the gauge of what is the best league in Europe is who succeeds in the Champions League, we may have a problem convincing the unconverted that La Liga continues to rule.

It's an argument that is open to personal opinion, a little like the Messi/Ronaldo debate.

I've always maintained that the English Premier League is the best marketed and certainly the most organised while the best players on the planet dine at the top table of Spanish football.

Messi and Ronaldo take in turns to be crowned King of the Game; Antoine Griezmann was the top scorer at the Euros. It has long been a showcase for the world's best.

The detractors claim Spain is uncompetitive; the counter claim is that the teams from the rest of the continent don't compete as well in the European competitions.

Oddly, the traditional arguments are about to be turned upside down. Manchester City are so far ahead of the rest of the Premier League, it blows the 'competitiveness' argument out of the water. At the time of writing they are eleven points above second and an incredible 18 points ahead of fourth place. In Spain, Barcelona's advantage is a more closable five points and they sit only eight points above fourth-placed Real Madrid who nobody believes are spent just yet.

So stick those statistics in your pipe and smoke it!

The problem is the 'Spanish teams excel in Europe' argument. The draw for the knockout stages means that there is a very strong possibility that

no Liga teams will advance to the last eight of the Champions League. Neymar decided that it wasn't the ultimate league to perform in any longer and headed to Paris who are now regarded as a frightening force. Real Madrid will not be looking forward to the match-up.

A pairing with Chelsea is not what Barcelona would have wished for. At this rate, come February Antonio Conte may only be concentrating on the Champions League and he can afford to condition his team for the double header with the Catalans.

It may be down to Sevilla, currently La Liga's fifth-placed team, to spring an upset by beating Manchester United, the Premier League's second-ranking club.

As the argument about competitiveness has been reversed, so has the claim to the best collective of players. Messi is still at the peak of his powers and Ronaldo is smashing Europe but it could be contended that the next generation of superstars reside in the Premier League. The pups of Pep Guardiola at City, Liverpool's front four and of course Harry Kane.

The key is getting the superstars fit. There's a rumble that Ousmane Dembélé could be ready in time for El Clásico. He can truly take Barcelona up a notch.

Gareth Bale has been an enigma for far too long and if his body allows and he can unleash his powers, then Real Madrid can make a charge for La Liga and a case for hanging onto their European title.

So, my Spanish amigos, you have two months to get your act together!



Ousmane Dembélé could be back for El Clásico. || EFE

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UCAM's Dani Góngora trips up Corpas. :: JULIO RODRÍGUEZ

## Lack of cutting edge costs Marbella in top-of-table clash

A last-minute goal sentenced the hosts to defeat in a game marred by poor refereeing decisions

### MARBELLA 1 UCAM MURCIA 2

:: JULIO RODRÍGUEZ

**MARBELLA.** A last-gasp goal condemned Marbella to a 2-1 defeat against promotion rivals UCAM Murcia at the Municipal stadium on Sunday.

The Costa team had dominated the game but the visitors ultimately proved more effective in front of goal and enjoyed the rub of the green more than once from the referee.

Though neither side was happy with the officiating, Marbella were punished unduly: denied a clear penalty in the 15th minute when Fran Pérez took down Chus Hevia and also had a legal goal from Corpas chalked off.

The first half was punctuated by breaks in play but Marbella were by far the most purposeful in their play.

UCAM, however, came out stronger after the break and in the

50th minute, Jony scored a headed goal after a neat move.

However, less than a minute later, Marbella were level courtesy of a strike from Ferrón on his left foot.

Marbella, though, couldn't get a second with Ferrón, Corpas, and Añón all guilty of passing up clear chances.

With stoppage time approaching, Lolo Pavón was sent off after receiving his second yellow card, to the dismay of fans who considered both fouls to be soft.

The team from Murcia, at this stage without their manager who also received his marching orders for protesting, took full advantage of the space created by Lolo's absence to net the winner through Jony.

"This was one of our best matches of the season, but the lack of cutting edge is what cost us," Marbella coach Fernando Estévez remarked following the game.

The defeat leaves the Blanquillos in third place, level on points with Sunday's rivals who are in fourth place, three behind leaders, Cartagena. Marbella's next game is against Villanovense this Sunday at 5pm at the Estadio Romero Cuerda.

## ZURICH MARATÓN MÁLAGA IN PHOTOS

# A Kenyan double on the return of the Malaga marathon

With blue skies and a healthy turnout, last year's wash-out was quickly forgotten

:: FERNANDO MORGADO

**MÁLAGA.** With the disappointment of last year's event still fresh in the mind, conditions couldn't have been any better for the Zurich Maratón Málaga which took place on Sunday.

The marathon, whose route took in all of the city's major sites, brought together a total of 45 different nationalities and on this occasion it was the Kenyan athletes who stole the limelight with Mike Kiprop and Nancy Coech completing a double in the men's and women's categories, respectively.

Kiprop, who recorded a time of 2 h 13:12, came within just two seconds of the record set by his compatriot John Kipkorir in 2014, while Coech, with a time of 2 h 31:55, broke the previous Malaga marathon record by more than six minutes.



The emblematic Calle Larios formed part of the route. :: Ñ. SALAS



Runners passing the big wheel in the port. :: Ñ. S.



Kiprop, crossing the finish line. :: Á. CABRERA



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**TORROX: Spanish, Latina, superbodies. Deep French. Threesomes. Toys. Outcalls. 689057398**

**BENALMADENA:** Very attractive lady for gentlemen. Big bum. Erotic massages. Outcalls/ Hotels. 678113501

**CHRISTMAS Festive florics with Zarah, mature naughty English blonde, all services, private villa, overnight 300 euros. Let me jingle your bells. Coin 681614955**

**TORROX** Mónica 30-ish, Spanish superbrunette, big breast, massages. Opposite supermarket Dia, block 88, 1st floor, door-2. Appointments. 687118953

**ENGLISH ROSE** privately educated, well spoken, attractive, elegant and slim, looking to accompany businessmen. Lunch/ dinner optional. Discretion assured. 699859054

**FUENGIROLA** gorgeous Málaga-born brunette. Affectionate, natural French, penetration. Discrete. 693001297

**FUENGIROLA:** Lisa 45, Brazilian blonde, 120 breast, loving. Discreet. 604141920

**LATINA** girl fitness masseuse beautiful young, very sensual, all type of erotic massage, private, airconditioned apartment next to Hotel Barcelo, (Guadalmina) Whatsapp 663624237

**631923079 SAMANTHA** Beautiful, passionate, independent. 12am to 8pm. Discreet. Fuengirola

**FUENGIROLA** New. Mother and daughter (+18), complete, unforgettable blowjob, kissers. 672159565

**FUENGIROLA** French girl voluptuos, pert ass, horny, sucker, kisser. Anal massages. 627203816

**MARBELLA/ Estepona:** Andrea 25, beautiful, lovely body, playful, naughty, funny. Couples. Lesbian. Parties. Escort. 24hrs. 604109768

**Male**

**FUENGIROLA:** Male2male full body massage. Very discreet, private villa. 634004512

**JONY:** 35. Brazilian body builder. 23cms. Also couples. 602357175 Malaga

**SOUGHT** by elderly attractive submissive male, a contemporary dominant friend 50+ and having private surroundings, no fees... outrefun1@yahoo.co.uk

**AFRO** British muscular guy. Erotic massages, all fantasies, soft (Benjarafa)/ hardcore (Torremolinos). In/ Out. 604192852



**MARBELLA** center, bisexual big size for everything. 657328140

**MARBELLA** Attractive boy, super-endowed. Perfect lover, that will make you enjoy sex. 603202758

**BOY** for a good spent moment. Experiment something new or get a horny fantasy. You can't wait. 643101739

**Transvestites**

**SHEMALE MARBELLA VIP SERVICES APARTMENT PRIVATE RELAXING MASSAGE TABLE, TOYS 667032010. WHATSAPP**

**TRANSSEXUAL** Sophia, beautiful brunette, active/ passive, great bust, well hung. 662045252. Fuengirola. www.escortswow.es/sofi-abiagg

**MARBELLA:** Transvestite Karina 26, beautiful blonde, feminine, endowed. 667846464 Whatsapp

**NEW BENALMADENA** Barbarela Trans mulata, 22cms. Party girl. Drinks. 24hrs. 695973362

**MARBELLA** center stunning Thai ladyboy kissable lips, top/ bottom, in/ outcalls. 602493030

**TRANVESTITE Violeta, young(+18), endowed, horny, milky, 140 bust, very feminine, 24h. 660867374 Fuengirola**

**ESTEPONA NIKKY BLONDE TRANSVESTITE, 28yo. ACTIVE/PASSIVE, OUTCALLS, 24H. VISA. 660874904**

**Massage**

**PURE** ecstasy in Nueva Andalucia with young pretty independent masseuse. Erotic body, tantric and other completely relaxing massages in private apartment. 656350401

**MARBELLA.** Mary, great body, super titts, best happy ending. 666291699

**touch4men.com** Professional Erotic man2man massage. Incalls Torremolinos. Outcalls Costa del Sol. 628746407

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**DISCOVER** the benefits of tantric massages! Feel the pleasure in your skin...635290724

**GORGEOUS** Paola. Model's body, tantra, relaxing, B2B massage. Excellent company/Good vibes. relaxingtouch.es 602448534

**TORREMOLINOS:** Your erotic masseuse. Maximum pleasure for relaxing massage. Professional. Exquisite treatment. 633578665

**MAIH,** Fuengirola. Erotic, professional massage, body2body, happy ending. Miah, 647101046

**SENIOR CITIZEN** Full body massage by Sabrina. 658189191 Benalmadena Costa (by windmill roundabout)

**FUENGIROLA:** Madonna, Hot oil/horny massage with my boobs! Happy ending. 631281988

**40 EUROS:** Relaxing, prostatic massage. Silky hands. Happy ending. In/outcalls. Fuengirola 625912315

**VICKY. Special erotic massage hard to forget Vicky's hands on extras always remember where to cum again. Benalmadena c/ Las Naciones. Tel. 633693334**

**BEAUTIFUL** Russian masseuse: Spectacular relaxing massage and ending. Malaga 603100025

**GORGEOUS** Filipina offers RELAXING MASSAGE in the comfort of your own home 602483864

**PROFESSIONAL** masseuse: Massages till end with optional end. 666770405 Estepona

**MASSAGE Center: Tantric, erotic. Pleasure, elegance, discretion. The best of the Costa del Sol. www.tantranubha.com 649808695 Benalmadena Costa**

**MARBELLA** center, young stunning thai lady ex-model, beautiful and sexy for massage and more fun. In/outcalls. 604298371

**MARBELLA.** Young Filipina, gorgeous, slim, for your sexual desires. In/ outcalls. 604133125

**SENSUAL** exotic, deep relaxing Yoni Tantra massage for ladies. 602098606

**SENSUAL** exotic, deep relaxing Yoni Tantra massage for ladies. 602098606

**ATTRACTIVE** Asian Expert oriental massage, relieve pain and stress, unique service qualified. Discreet atmosphere, easy to find. Marbella. 604143788

**SAN PEDRO** Nueva Andalucia, Sandra. Wonderfull massages, unforgettable, tantric, young, stunning, discreet. Works alone 653411684

**MARBELLA** centre. New. Luxury center with wide selection of expert masseuse... Sensual, erotic. Nuru erotic tantra, body to body lingam and prostatic. Unique experience 4 hands, pleasant and exciting, double stimulation. Massage for couples. Open: 9:00am/9:00pm. Appointment: 952867663/ 690046233

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**SAYAN. Tantra massage for ladies, gentlemen & couples. Ultimate bliss at a very nice place. Fuengirola. 952586339 /608977260 www.masajessayan.es**

**FUENGIROLA** Visit glamorous Sasha 22, for enchanting Tantric massage with delightful finalé. Secluded luxury villa, music, drinks. Special Offer 50E 1/2h 90E hour. 602570272

**ASIAN MM** Massage Salon. A place where you can find proper good massage. Ideal for men, women, couples and have muscle problem, Clean and good atmosphere. 951482585/ 604393547

**ESTEPONA** Guadalmina: Alex brunette. Exotic masseuse. Far Eastern tantric prostatic massage. Full service. Escort. 24hrs. Outcalls. 602891749

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**MALE/ female** Viagra, kamagra jellies, cialis, delivered or mail order viagra4you19@gmail.com. 672883025

**VIAGRA (Kamagra) 100 mg, Cialis (Tadalafil) 20 mg, Jellies 100 mg. Wholesale & retail. Free delivery all areas. For the best products & service. 617740250.24 hrs.**

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Call. 952 77 60 40



THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



THE STARS

**Aquarius**  
January 21 - February 19  
Be warm and chatty to everyone this week, especially if you are out shopping. That sparkle in your eyes can be very attractive you know!

**Pisces**  
February 20th - March 20th  
Blowing hot and cold about the festivities? Accept invitations or give some yourself.

**Aries**  
March 21st - April 20th  
Open your eyes to the love around you. In an optimistic and exciting week you will get closer to a very special person.

**Taurus**  
April 21st - May 21st  
Still not in a holiday mood? Maybe that is because you have not tied up loose ends from work?

**Gemini**  
May 22nd - June 21st  
A quiet start to the week quickly gains pace as you realise how much there is to do. Don't panic! There is help around.

**Cancer**  
June 22nd - July 23rd  
Aim to bring a more light-hearted aspect to your relationships as the holiday approaches.

**Leo**  
July 24th - August 23rd  
Look ahead to boost your wellbeing, health and surroundings in the New Year.

**Virgo**  
August 24th - September 23rd  
Having gone through a very busy and somewhat fraught time you are now being told to relax.

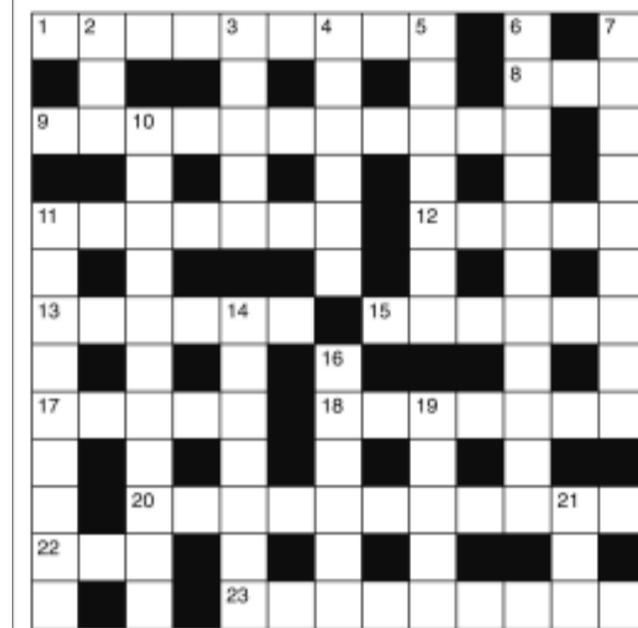
**Libra**  
September 24th - October 23rd  
Why wait until the New Year to plan a trip? Just wait until after the festivities to decide who to take with you!

**Scorpio**  
October 24th - November 22nd  
Someone who was a great source of support when you were younger now needs some attention. Is it time to repay all that kindness?

**Sagittarius**  
November 23rd - December 21st  
Keep an eye on health in both a personal sense and in finances. Let your hair down and relax!

**Capricorn**  
December 22nd - January 20th  
Is there someone who you have not seen for some time? Just a message in a card can make all the difference.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11273



Across

- 1 Kind of paper showing charge for a gun (9)
- 8 See 22 Across
- 9 Where the ring for the bride comes from (7,4)
- 11 Take no notice of the acts (7)
- 12 A bit of raiment I reduced is worn out (5)
- 13 Old oriental name for a yacht? (6)
- 15 Roy can somehow use it for colouring (6)
- 17 More than one vegetable loses water, we hear (5)
- 18 Authorise one to provide a name (7)
- 20 The client buying grog is a strange chap (3,8)
- 22 & 8 Ac The French racecourse parasite not kept in prison (3,3)
- 23 It's formal wear with a gown to match (5,4)

Down

- 2 You must follow a word of agreement (3)
- 3 Put up or bring to the ground, one hears (5)
- 4 Properly assimilate a summarised version (6)
- 5 Pick an alternative German prince (7)
- 6 A less stormy arrangement of this part of the universe (5,6)
- 7 Speed can't ruin a choreographic display (4,5)
- 10 Far from airy description of the parachutist's direction (4,2,5)
- 11 What one who drops in at a nearby pub makes? (5,4)
- 14 Put on and taken for granted (7)
- 16 Notice a dog inside out of danger (6)
- 19 In fact it used to be a book in the Bible (5)
- 21 A patriarch among the Israelites (3)

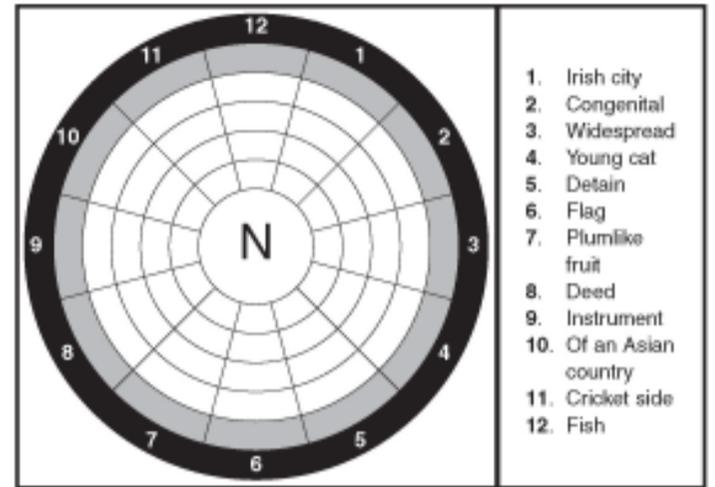
SUDOKU BY HANZO

**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

							8	
6				2		1		7
	8	7	5		4			
	1					4		5
	6		8		2		3	
	9				6			
		5	6					
			7					
3	4			9		5		8

CLOCKWORD

The solutions from 1 to 12 are all six-letter words ending with the letter N in the centre. Moving clockwise from 1, the letters in the outer circle will spell out the name of a British TV sports presenter.



- 1. Irish city
- 2. Congenial
- 3. Widespread
- 4. Young cat
- 5. Detain
- 6. Flag
- 7. Plumlike fruit
- 8. Deed
- 9. Instrument
- 10. Of an Asian country
- 11. Cricket side
- 12. Fish

THE WORDPUZZLER



CAN you identify the jobs from the clues listed below?

- 1. Burn
- 2. Showjumping obstacle
- 3. Bus
- 4. Friend
- 5. Lash
- 6. Caped Crusader
- 7. Tea container
- 8. Chop
- 9. Husband-to-be
- 10. Sheet of paper

INTERNATIONAL RADIO

**Talk Radio Europe**  
105.5 Axarquía  
91.5 Costa del Sol East  
91.9 Costa del Sol West  
98.7 Gibraltar/Sotogrande  
News, interviews, lifestyle, sport and BBC World Service.

**Global** (93.6 and 96.4FM)  
All week round the clock music and entertainment

**Radio Radio Network** (96 and 98.3 FM). Music 24 hours.

**Central FM** (98.6 FM, 103.8)  
All week, classic tracks and today's music broadcast to the Costa del Sol

**ACE FM** (106.8 FM)  
Inland radio, news and music  
The Beat fm (106 FM)  
24 hours, music and entertainment

**Spectrum** (105.5 FM, Costa Almeria/Mojácar 92.6 FM)  
24 hour music and entertainment

**Radio Mijas** (107.7 FM)  
3 p.m. News, views and music

**Radio Sol Almirajara** (99.1 FM)  
Nerja radio in English and German and night time World Radio Network

**Heartfmspain** (88.5 FM Costa, 96.1 FM inland) Music, entertainment, news

**Lick FM** (103.6 FM Marbella)  
Urban music broadcast between Gibraltar and Calahonda

**Rtv Puebla** (107.7 FM)  
Monday evenings, Rock music memories.  
7 - 9pm. email: radiopuebla.musicmemories@yahoo.com  
Fb: Radiotelevision Peubla de Cazalla

QUIZ

QUESTION 1

What Christmas carol is 'Let steeple bells be swungen' a line from?

- 1. Good King Wenceslas
- 2. Ding Dong Merrily On High
- 3. We Three Kings
- 4. Deck The Halls

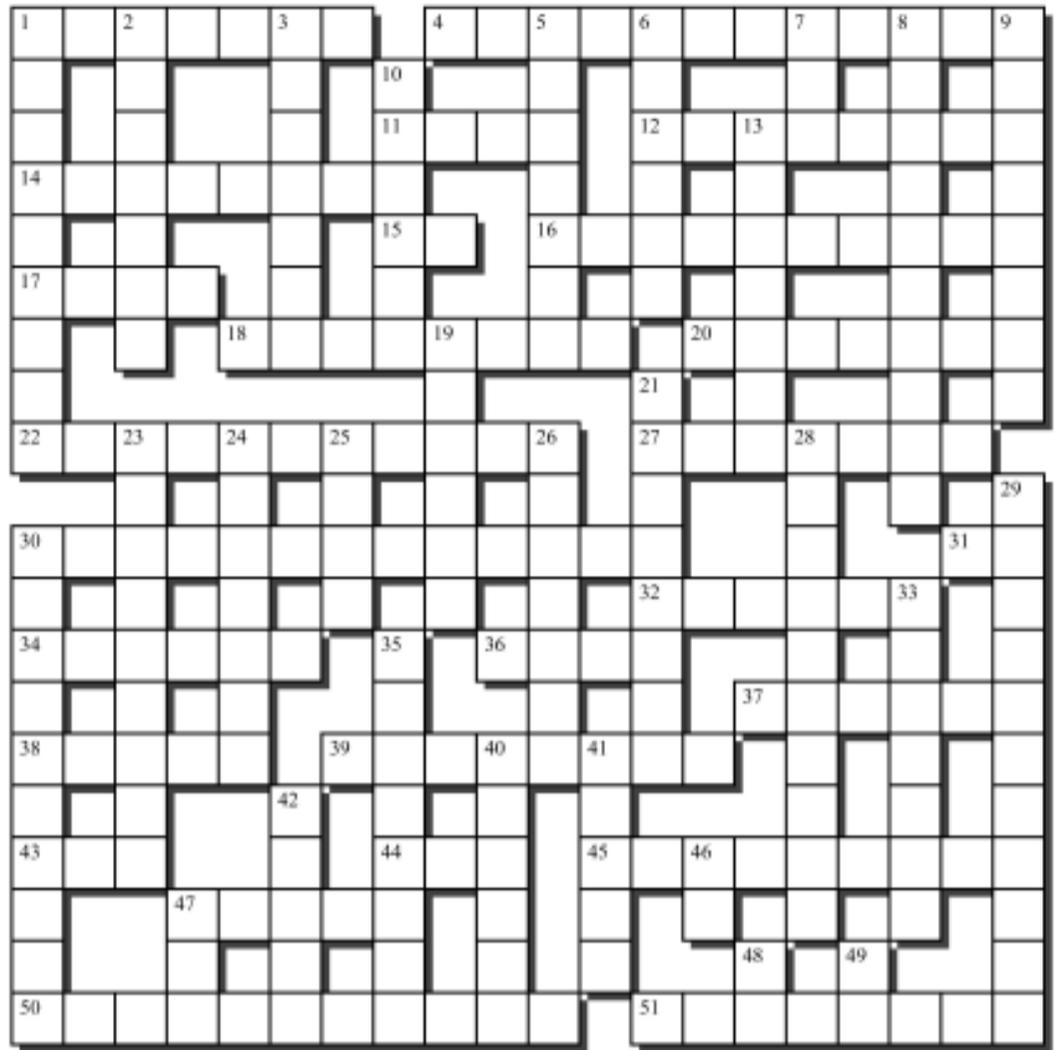
QUESTION 2

Mayor of London, Dick Whittington, was born in which century?

- 1. 17th
- 2. 16th
- 3. 15th
- 4. 14th

LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD

- |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Across</b>         | <b>Down</b>              |
| 1) Permission (7)     | 1) Population (9)        |
| 4) Goodwill (12)      | 2) Scratch (7)           |
| 11) Age (4)           | 3) Always (7)            |
| 12) To explode (8)    | 5) We swim (7)           |
| 14) Tears (8)         | 6) Seeing (6)            |
| 15) Ace (2)           | 7) That (f) (3)          |
| 16) Midnight (10)     | 8) Groups (10)           |
| 17) Small beer (4)    | 9) They opened (8)       |
| 18) Sticky (8)        | 10) Hangover (6)         |
| 20) Party (7)         | 13) Work (7)             |
| 22) Negotiation (11)  | 19) Trial (6)            |
| 27) Bargains (7)      | 21) In bed (8)           |
| 30) Restrictions (13) | 23) They would spend (9) |
| 31) I (2)             | 24) Bolt (7)             |
| 32) Tobacco (6)       | 25) Maple (4)            |
| 34) Power cut (6)     | 26) None (f) (7)         |
| 36) Moon (4)          | 28) I would lift (10)    |
| 37) It clogs (6)      | 29) Socialists (11)      |
| 38) Success (5)       | 30) Reopening (10)       |
| 39) Spokesperson (8)  | 33) Obscene (7)          |
| 43) So (3)            | 35) Frontier (8)         |
| 44) Aunt (3)          | 40) I will bring (6)     |
| 45) Meetings (9)      | 41) Railings (5)         |
| 47) Key (5)           | 42) I evaded (5)         |
| 50) Authorities (11)  | 46) A (2)                |
| 51) Tourists (8)      | 47) I read (3)           |
|                       | 48) To go (2)            |
|                       | 49) It is (2)            |



ANSWERS

Quiz answers

**Of interest:** Richard Whittingham (1923-1993) was an English merchant and politician. He is also the inspiration for the English folk tale Dick Whittington. He was four times Lord Mayor of London.  
**Answer 2:** 14th  
 dating back to 16th century and was originally in Latin.  
**Of interest:** The composer is unknown but the carol is believed to be French swungen, and to, io, io! By priest and people sungen. Gloria, Hosanna in  
**Of interest:** The full verse is: 'E'en so here below, below, let steepie bells be  
**Answer 1:** Ding Dong Merrily On High

Cryptic Crossword

**Solutions:** Across: 1 Cartridge; 8 Out; 9 Wedding belt; 11 Lawless; 12 Tired; 13 Cathy; 15 Crayon; 17 Leeks; 18 Entries; 20 Rum customer; 22 Let; 23 Dress suit; Down: 2 Aye; 3 Raise; 4 Digest; 5 Ejector; 6 Solar system; 7 Step dance; 10 Down to earth; 11 Local call; 14 Assumed; 16 Secure; 19 Titus; 21 Eli.

Clockword solution

**SOLUTION:** 1 Dublin, 2 Inborn, 3 Common, 4 Kitten, 5 Infern, 6 Ensign, 7 Darnson, 8 Action, 9 Violin, 10 Indian, 11 Eleven, 12 Salmon.  
**CELEBRITY:** Dickie Davies.

Wordpuzzler solution

1. Char  
2. Fence  
3. Couch  
4. Mate  
5. Whip  
6. Batman  
7. Caddy  
8. Hack  
9. Groom  
10. Page

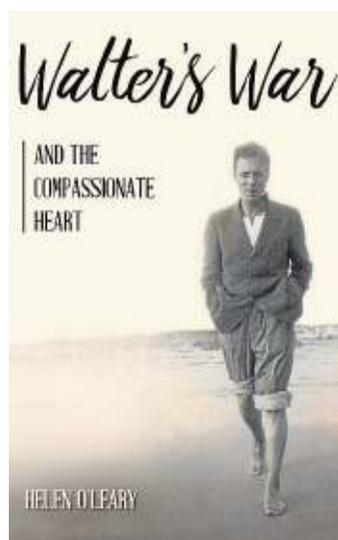
Sudoku solution

3	4	6	2	9	1	5	7	8
8	2	1	7	4	5	6	9	3
9	7	5	6	8	3	2	1	4
5	9	3	4	1	6	7	8	2
7	6	4	8	5	2	9	3	1
2	1	8	9	3	7	4	6	5
1	8	7	5	6	4	3	2	9
6	5	9	3	2	8	1	4	7
4	3	2	1	7	9	8	5	6

Language Crossword

**ACROSS:**  
1. PERMISSO 4. BENEVOLENCIA 11. LEVAD 12. ESTALIA 14. GRUPOS 15. AS 16. MEDIANOCHE 17. CARRA 18. MEDIANOCHE 19. PARTIDO 22. NEGOCIACION 27. CHOLLOS 30. RESTRICCIONES 31. YO 32. TABACO 34. MARCHON 36. LUNA 37. VASCA 38. EXITO 39. PORTAWOZ 41. TAN 44. TIA 45. REUNIONES 47. TAVE 50. AUTORIDADES 51. TURISTAS  
**DOWN:**  
1. POBLACION 2. PASAJERO 3. SIBIPRE 5. NADAMOS 6. VIENDO 7. ESA 8. COLECTIVOS 9. ABRIERON 10. RESACA 13. TABAYO 19. LUCHO 21. ACOSADO 23. GASTARON 24. CERRADO 25. ARCE 26. ININGUA 28. VENTURA 29. SOCIALISTAS 30. REAPERTURA 33. OSCURO 35. FRENTERA 40. TABERE 41. VERA 42. VADI 46. UN 47. BO 48. IR 49. ES

BOOK OF THE WEEK



Walter's War  
Helen O'Leary

From a Victorian childhood, through the early part of World War One with a cycling regiment in Devon, to subsequent adventures in India and Mesopotamia, a young soldier's progress through life is recalled by family memories, diaries and letters. The skills he acquires enable him to make his way in the world. The author, Helen O'Leary who now lives in Spain, discovered letters and diaries written by her father when he was serving in India and Mesopotamia in World War One and has woven the accounts into the narrative.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand

DR SEUSS

MALAGA PORT INFORMATION

CRUISE SHIP MOVEMENTS (SOURCE: MALAGA PORT AUTHORITY)

Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Norwegian Spirit	21/12	Funchal	Alicante	07.00	17.00
Norwegian Spirit	02/01	-	-	07.00	17.00
MSC Orchestra	06/01	Funchal	Civitavecchia	08.00	14.00
Norwegian Spirit	12/01	Funchal	Alicante	07.00	17.00





# The Costa del Sol 'snatches' the filming of an American series from Catalonia

Filming of the Sony production 'Snatch', which is based on the original film starring Brad Pitt, will take four months. There are casting sessions for extras in Malaga this weekend

## FRANCISCO GRIÑÁN

**MALAGA.** They originally intended to film in the Caribbean, but the recent hurricanes made that inadvisable so they decided on the Mediterranean instead.

The first option they considered was Barcelona as the location for the next season of the American series 'Snatch', featuring a group of young and ambitious British gangsters, but then Fresco Film, a company from Malaga, which produced Game of Thrones in Spain, suggested the Costa del Sol instead.

The destination fitted the script perfectly, because Malaga province receives more than a million British tourists a year. Why not bring them a group of hustlers? The proposal finally convinced those in charge of making the decision, and they opted for Malaga instead of Barcelona.

The political situation regarding independence for Catalonia was one of the factors they took into account, although the producer of Fresco Film, Peter Welter Soler, makes it clear that it wasn't relevant to the final decision.

"Barcelona is a major audiovisual market, so what we had to do was show that Malaga has the industry and the professionals with the ability to make an international production of this type," he said earlier this week, and he also explained that the locations on the Costa del Sol are better suited to



▲ **Series.** Rupert Grint (left), stars in 'Snatch', which is set in the underworld :: **SUR**

► **Original.** It is based on the Guy Ritchie film of the same name, starring Brad Pitt and made in 2000 :: **SUR**

the needs of the production.

"That's important because not only is the whole series going to be filmed in the province, but Malaga will also be the scenario for the plot," said Welter about this series, which will be filmed for four months from 23 January.

Heading this unusual group of criminals in 'Snatch' once again will be British actor Rupert Grint (redheaded Ron, inseparable friend of Harry Potter in the film saga), who flees with his gang to Malaga, where they continue with their frauds, robberies and other crimi-

nal activities.

From Marbella to Nerja, the whole Costa del Sol will be the setting for the new series, which will have ten episodes in total.

The series is set in the underworld and its tone could be described as halfway between a

thriller and black humour.

It is an adaptation of Guy Ritchie's cult film 'Snatch', starring Brad Pitt and Benicio del Toro. The American producer Sony turned it into one of its most popular of series, and it proved so successful that it has led to this second season, which will have a striking change of scene and bring a British ambience to the light and warmth of Andalucía.

## Casting for extras

There will be a casting for extras this weekend (Friday 15th and Saturday 16th, from 10am to 6pm) at the Polo de Contenido Digital, the digital content hub in the old tobacco factory in Malaga.

A wide variety of extras will be needed because of the number of episodes and the different scenes, but they are looking especially for "unusual faces", says the director of Modexpor Casting, Rafael Guadamuro. The age range of the aspiring extras is from 18 to 70.

They are also looking for specific types of character, such as sea fishermen, boxers, crossfit experts, young women and people of African and gypsy origin.

The extras will need to be available for the whole period of filming, from 23 January to 15 May. The series, which was created by Alex de Rakoff, can be seen on Crackle, Sony's streaming platform which is similar to Netflix and Amazon. It made its debut in the States in March, and has not yet been shown in Spain.

In the first season, 'Snatch' features a gang of young hustlers who become involved in a spiral of criminal activity after discovering a truckload of stolen gold bullion. As well as Rupert Grint, it features Luke Pasqualino ('Skins') and Ed Westwick ('Gossip Girl').



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