

# SUR

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December 7th to 13th 2018  
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News	2	Health & Beauty	41
Comment	22	Sport	48
Lifestyle	24	My Home	53
What To Do	37	Classified	56
Food & Drink	40	Time Out	62

SPORT

## The future of Malaga CF still up in the air

Sheikh Al-Thani returned to the city for the BlueBay trial, but proceedings have been postponed again **P61**



Socialist Andalusian president Susana Díaz is comforted by her deputy Manuel Jiménez Barrios on election night. **EF**

## Police solve two Costa killings with arrest of Swedish gang

Nine members of an organisation of hired killers were arrested in Malaga and Malmö

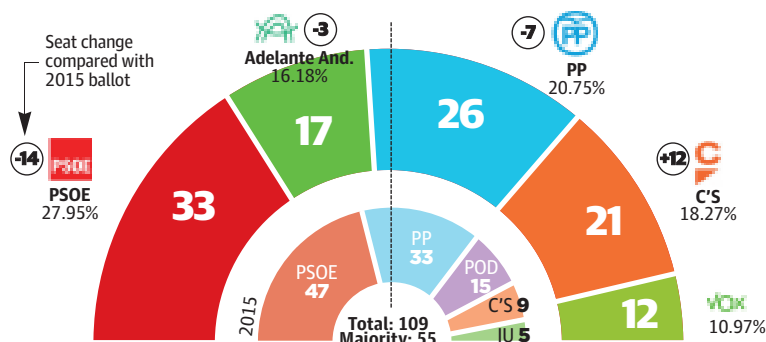
Police in Spain and Sweden have broken up a gang of hired killers with nine arrests made simultaneously last week in Malaga and Malmö. The gang is thought to be responsible for the killing of two men this year on the Costa. **P8**

**Spain marks 40th anniversary** of the birth of the country's post-Franco democratic Constitution **P6**

**Christmas spirit invades the Costa del Sol.** Festive lights went on last week in Malaga and Marbella **P14&16**

# Right-wing groups to negotiate the removal of the PSOE from the Junta

ANDALUSIAN PARLIAMENT AFTER 2018 ELECTION



The shock result of Sunday's election saw the Socialists fall and far-right rise

After 36 years of Socialist rule, voters have put Andalucía in the hands of right-wing parties. PP and C's plan to discuss a pact, but they need the support of far-right Vox. **P2-5**

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# Historic result in Andalucía vote

**Shock result sees PSOE likely to lose control of the Junta de Andalucía after 36 years, and emergence of far-right Vox with 11 per cent of the vote**

For the first time, parties on the right have the majority of seats in the regional parliament

**SEVILLE.** None of the opinion polls had predicted the historic regional election result in Andalucía last Sunday night. A sharp decline in support for the ruling PSOE Socialist party and a drop-off in votes for the left in general gave parties to the right a majority and the chance to wrest control of the Junta de Andalucía regional government from the PSOE for the first time in 36 years.

With almost 28 per cent of the

vote, Susana Díaz's Socialists are still the largest party but, with just 33 seats in the 109 regional parliament, they are a long way from an overall majority in Andalucía, seen as a traditional bastion of PSOE power.

The other main news of the night was the shock emergence of far-right party, Vox, as a parliamentary force, winning 12 seats, its first in any part of Spain, with 11 per cent of the vote. Observers said that it was the country catching up with an international trend in populism, although large demonstrations have been held against the party's policies in cities across the region this week.

Not even Adelante Andalucía, the left-wing alliance of Izquierda Unida

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and Podemos, could offer its support to the PSOE and keep Susana Díaz as president of the Junta de Andalucía government. Teresa Rodríguez's group lost three seats, down to 17 with 16% of votes.

Centre-right party, Ciudadanos (Cs), under Juan Marín, more than doubled its seats to 21, with 18 per cent of the vote, and was seen as the success story of the night, close to PP and a rival to lead the Junta.

Although the conservative Partido Popular (PP), under Juanma Moreno, lost ground, finishing on 26 seats and 20.7 per cent, its second place position immediately gave the party hope that it could lead a coalition of the right to take power from the PSOE in the region after four decades.

#### Party backs Díaz for now

Susana Díaz's future was still unclear this week, although after hesitation, her national party backed her. Díaz had called the early election after Ciudadanos withdrew its support for her minority control of the Junta de Andalucía government, which controls big-spending services such as health, education and social care. Until Sunday's result, polls had shown that she was on course to probably form a government again.

The total of MPs for the PP (26), C's (21) and Vox (12) is 59 and a sufficient majority to keep out the PSOE. But a pact needs to be negotiated ahead of a parliamentary investiture debate due by the end of December.

## PP and Cs vie for possible control of the Junta, but who would be in charge is unclear

Both parties are happy to to share power with each other but disagree which one should lead, although the support of Vox is needed to get there

#### ■ SUR

**SEVILLE.** The election night delight of the Partido Popular (PP) at the decline of the PSOE's share of vote, and the possibility of grabbing power in a region they have longed to govern, masked the decline in their own vote in favour of Ciudadanos (C's) and Vox.

Nevertheless, the PP is still the second biggest party. Standing alongside the PP campaign director, Elías Bendodo, who is the leader of the Malaga Diputación provincial authority, the PP's Andalusian regional leader, Juanma Moreno, also from Malaga, immediately announced that he would put his own name forward to be president of the Seville-based Junta de Andalucía.

The result was also a boost for the new PP national leader, Pablo Casado, who immediately started seeking an investiture alliance for Andalucía with Ciudadanos and controversially Vox. The parties'



Moreno celebrates with Elías Bendodo (r) on Sunday. ■ EP



Ciudadanos regional leader, Juan Marín (centre). ■ EFE

MPs' support would be needed to see Moreno as regional president.

Potential partners, Vox, want to abolish regional parliaments and change the constitution. Faced with criticism over possibly having to rely on their new regional MPs' support, Pablo Casado said this week, "They [Vox] will have to decide if they take a passive role and abstain, or take an active role in government for four years." He added that his redline was no to reform of the constitution."

#### Bitter-sweet delight from C's

Ciudadanos (C's), which saw a doubling of its support to bring it close to the PP, was confident enough on Sunday night to say it should lead a new Junta government instead. Both its regional leader, Juan Marín, and national leader, Albert Rivera, said that as it was the party that had grown the most and the least affected by corruption, it had the right to form a regional government.

Marín had ruled out supporting the PSOE into power again, leaving him to openly favour going into coalition with the PP, but as the senior partner. Any role for Vox in giving support to this plan was debated this week, amid fears that accepting far-right support could alienate C's' centrist base of voters.

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# Dejected Díaz vows to fight on to try to keep power and stop the rise of the far-right

With little self-criticism, the current Junta leader pleads for "constitutional parties" to work together, pointing out that the PSOE is still the biggest party in the region

:: SUR

**SEVILLE.** Susana Díaz, regional PSOE leader and current acting president of the Junta de Andalucía, was clearly shocked by the election result on Sunday night.

Speaking to supporters at her party's campaign base in Seville, she claimed little personal responsibility for the fall-off in its share of vote, to its lowest levels ever in the region, affected in part by a low turnout in PSOE strongholds. Her main fire was directed at the rise of the far-right Vox and she vowed to do everything to resist that party's progress.

Díaz pleaded with the other parties to "act responsibly" and not to let Vox, an anti-constitutional party, be the kingmaker in a coalition to oust the PSOE, but instead to join her in defending the "democratic values of the Constitution". She stressed that she was still leader of



Susana Díaz and supporters show serious faces in Seville on Sunday night. :: EFE

the largest party in Andalucía and had the right to try to form the next regional government.

The poor PSOE result was also a blow to the central government of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, as it was the first test of his perform-

ance since the PSOE took control in Madrid earlier this year.

Earlier this week, national party bosses were lukewarm in giving support for Díaz, suggesting that factors unique to Andalucía had played a part in the election.

However, later they were quick to clarify their position, saying that Díaz continued to enjoy the support of Pedro Sánchez. National secretary, José Luis Ábalos, said that, "it doesn't make sense to open an internal [battle] front at the moment."

## Podemos and IU electoral alliance fails to deliver growth

:: SUR

**SEVILLE.** The new, joint electoral platform of left-wing parties including Podemos and Izquierda Unida failed to improve on both their individual performances in the last regional elections in March 2015.

While encouraging street protests against the rise of Vox this week, Podemos's national leader, Pablo Iglesias, urged Adelante Andalucía leaders, Teresa Rodríguez and Antonio Maíllo, to woo Ciudadanos towards supporting the left in an investiture.



Maíllo and Rodríguez. :: EFE

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# Electoral breakthrough for far-right Vox

**Analysts link its shock rise to worldwide trends in populism and protests against the traditional political parties**

:: SUR

**SEVILLE.** The founder of Vox, Santiago Abascal, said this week that his party was “growing thanks to the insults” of other political parties. That in part explains the stunning increase in support for his party, qualified by some as far-right and by others as just right wing. France’s far-right leader Marie Le Pen congratulated Vox on its achievement in Andalucía after Sunday’s vote.

The regional leader, Francisco Serrano, is a judge from Seville well known for a tough stance in favour of fathers in domestic cases. Without any opinion poll predicting it, he managed to secure 11 per cent of the vote in last weekend’s election.

With the 12 seats of Serrano holding the key, the right-wing parties have a majority to remove the PSOE from power for the first time. Abascal said this week that he was pre-



Abascal and Serrano celebrate in front of supporters on Sunday. :: EFE

pared to work with either the PP or Ciudadanos party regardless. He said that he had no wish to form part of the regional government but has laid down conditions for his members’ support in an investiture vote.

One of these would be the closure of the regional broadcasting company RTVA, which has nearly 1,500 employees and runs the TV station Canal Sur.

Vox’s policies include the abolition of regional autonomies and a

return to a centralised state. They want to repeal gender equality legislation, criticising the strength of the feminist movement, and repeal ‘historical memory’ laws that seek to investigate events under Franco’s regime. They are conservative on abortion and pro-family. Some of Vox’s more radical ideas have been filtered out of its manifesto since it was founded in early 2014. Other than a few councillors, until last Sunday, it has never had serious po-

litical representation.

While left-wing parties and many members of the public called for protests and a fight back, claiming the party are “fachas” or fascists, analysts have been rushing to explain where the support came from last Sunday.

Most point to Spain catching up with many other countries in having a home-grown version of far-right populism. They agree that its rise is down to discontent with the traditional parties, that have been mired in corruption scandals in recent years.

Immigration has played a part, say some. Vox wants to expel illegal immigrants from Spain and build a stronger barrier in Spain’s North African towns of Ceuta and Melilla. The highest vote for Vox last Sunday was 30 per cent in the town of El Ejido, Almería, with a high immigrant population working in the fruit industry.

A reaction to Catalan separatism has also been cited by observers, where many feel the PSOE government nationally has been too generous to those involved in the illegal independence movement. Analysis shows that moderate votes from both the left and right wing have been attracted for this reason.

## Results in Malaga province reflect the regional trend as 11% of voters turned to Vox

:: ANTONIO M. ROMERO

**MALAGA.** The results in Malaga threw up a three-party tie. The province, which includes the western and eastern Costa del Sol, the city and inland areas, has a total of 17 seats in the regional parliament. On Sunday Malaga voters gave the three parties PSOE, PP and C’s four seats each, with three going to Adelante Andalucía and a surprise two to far-right Vox.

As in the region as a whole the Socialists won the most votes (24.2%), followed closely by the PP (22.6%) and C’s (19.8%). The left-wing alliance Adelante Andalucía gained 15.6% and Vox 11.5%.

The PSOE won the most votes in 69 of the 103 municipalities in Malaga province (down from 82 in 2015), although the PP won the election in the main Costa towns, with the exception of Marbella, where the PSOE won 500 votes more than the PP, and Malaga city where the Socialists gained the most votes, followed by Ciudadanos, relegating the PP to third place. Ciudadanos won more votes than any other party in four towns, Rincón, Alhaurín de la Torre, Manilva and Benalmádena.

Far-right newcomers Vox gained 72,455 votes in the province of Malaga, their best result in percentage terms being in Benahavis, with nearly 20% of the total number of votes.

## FAR-RIGHT RESULT SPARKS ANTIFASCIST PROTESTS

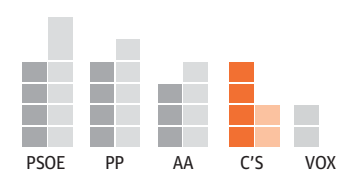
Following the surprise breakthrough for far-right group Vox in Sunday’s Andalusian election, around 2,000 people joined an antifascist protest in Malaga city centre on Monday. Similar demonstrations took place in Granada and Seville as protesters, the majority of them young people, attacked the far-right policies of Vox. “Andalucía is no place for fascism” was one of the slogans chanted, as the crowds extended their criticism to the PP and even to the PSOE government who they blamed for allowing the growth of Vox.



:: SALVADOR SALAS

### MALAGA

Turnout: 56.6%



2018				2015			
	Seats	% vote		Seats	% vote		
PSOE	4	24.20	6	30.11			
PP	4	22.60	5	28.32			
C'S	4	19.80	2	11.77			
AA*	3	15.64	4	22.48			
VOX	2	11.51	0	0.35			
PACMA	0	2.51	0	1.06			

\*In 2015 Podemos and IU combined.

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# Spain marks 40th anniversary of referendum that approved the post-Franco democratic constitution

King emeritus, Juan Carlos, has been given a central role in a week when both constitutional successes and challenges have been at the fore

## ■ SUR

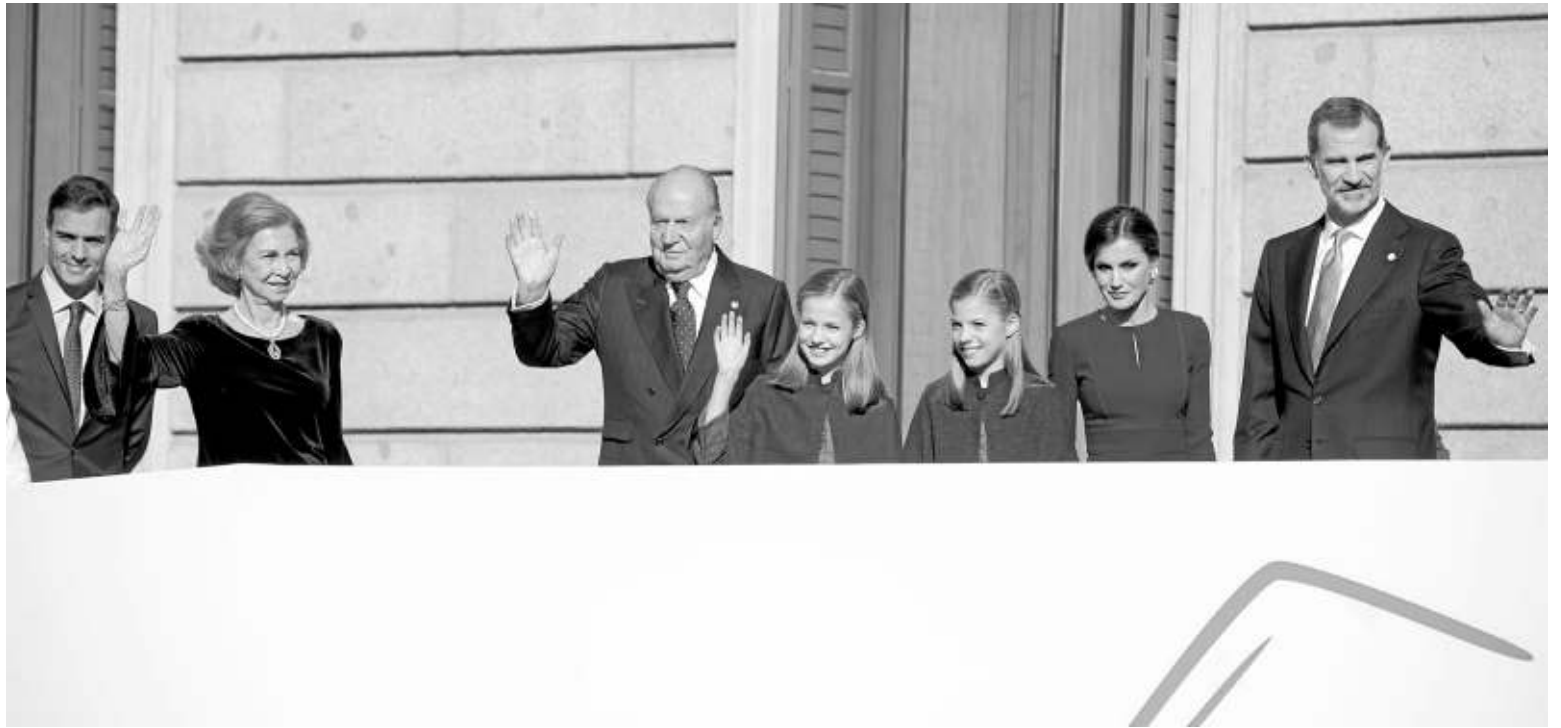
**MADRID.** The Constitution Day public holiday yesterday, 6 December, took on special significance as the country marked the 40th anniversary of the referendum that approved the shape of democracy in Spain after General Franco's dictatorship.

On 6 December 1978, three years after Franco's death, Spain voted 92 per cent in favour of its new constitution, a document with 169 articles that, among many other things, enshrined the monarch as head of state and ushered in the system of devolved regional governments.

This year's annual commemoration has seen additional events and ceremonies taking place across the country. On Tuesday in Madrid, the king emeritus, King Juan Carlos, and Queen Sofia, opened a special exhibition dedicated to the Constitution. Juan Carlos, 80, who abdicated in 2014, was central to the transition to democracy. There was relief from some parts that he was being given a central role in the celebrations, after he had controversially been left out of last year's ceremony marking 40 years since the first post-Franco parliamentary election.

Speaking about his father this week, Felipe VI said the retired monarch was "witness and direct participant" in the "deep and decisive transformation" since 1978 in Spain.

Yesterday (Thursday) politicians



Prime minister Pedro Sánchez, Queen Sofía, King Juan Carlos, Princess Leonor, Infanta Sofía, Queen Letizia and King Felipe on Thursday. ■ AFP



Events were held for children. ■ EFE



The opening of the exhibition in Madrid on Tuesday. ■ EFE

and dignitaries, including the royal family, attended a ceremony in parliament. In his speech, King Felipe said that the Constitution was the "living soul of democracy" and the "great pact of coexistence" among the people of Spain.

## Challenges

Observers have also commented this week on the increased challenges to the constitutional status quo, including the Catalan separatist question and the irony of the anniversary falling in the week that the anti-constitutional Vox party, which seeks to abolish regional autonomy, made its first political breakthrough in Andalucía.

## Early success for strict new congestion scheme in Madrid

### ■ SUR

**MADRID.** People in Madrid have been getting used to strict new restrictions on traffic entering the centre of the capital this week.

In an echo of other schemes in large cities to control vehicles and pollution, the scheme, called Madrid Central, kicked off last Friday and immediately created traffic chaos as drivers got used to the new rules.

Under the city-hall-run scheme, only residents and authorised guests'



New road markings. ■ AFP

vehicles can enter a large central area unless they are electric or hybrid. Until 2020 diesel and petrol cars can enter the zone providing they are going to a public car park. Public transport, taxis, motorcycles and delivery companies can also still enter.

After a first day of chaos on Friday, traffic flow was smoother by Monday this week with council officials tentatively reporting a decrease in vehicles entering the centre and only a slight increase on outer roads, including the busy MA-30 inner ring motorway.

Increased air pollution, caused by high pressure, has forced a reduction in speed limits on Madrid's main access motorways this week as well.

## IN BRIEF

### 'La Manada' sexual abuse sentence upheld

#### PAMPLONA

■ **SUR.** A senior court in Pamplona has upheld a controversial judgment against five men from Seville who were found guilty of the group sexual abuse of a young woman during the San Fermín bull-running festival in 2016.

The on-going case of the five friends, who nicknamed themselves 'La Manada', (the pack), has been high-profile nationally, not only for the graphic details published, but also for the fine legal distinction between sexual aggression and the lesser charge of sexual abuse.

The panel of judges reviewing the first verdict confirmed the nine-year sentence, but two of the five supported 14 years for aggression. The new ruling will be appealed by both sides in the Supreme Court.

The government has said it will clarify the law for the future.

### Mountain tragedy in the Sierra Nevada

#### GRANADA

■ **EFE.** A 38-year-old man from Darro, in Granada province, died last Saturday after falling some 200 metres while mountaineering in the area of the Sierra Nevada mountains known as El Corral del Veleta. Guardia Civil and emergency services were alerted by other mountaineers in the area.

The dead man was abseiling on a slope that was reportedly covered in a layer of ice. The Guardia Civil's mountain rescue team, Sereim, was immediately summoned as well as medical services via helicopter, removing the man's body to Granada city.

Staff at the Sierra Nevada mountain park had warned of the dangerous conditions because of ice in the upper reaches of the mountains.

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# Switzerland shares information on two million financial accounts

By Chris McCann, Partner, Blevins Franks

The era of financial privacy is well and truly over. Switzerland, once the bastion of banking secrecy, has begun automatically exchanging information on financial accounts owned by non-residents.

This was a landmark moment in the history of international banking and cross-border tax planning. Although we have known this was going to happen for a few years, it still feels a little unbelievable considering it does not seem that long ago that Switzerland was insisting it would not give up its prized secrecy laws.

In October 2018, the Swiss Federal Tax Administration (FTA) confirmed that it had handed over details on accounts held at 7,000 Swiss banks, trusts, insurers and other financial institutions.

The information was passed on to tax authorities in EU countries as well as Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man, Iceland, Norway, Australia, Canada, Japan and South Korea.

In a statement, the Swiss tax administration said:

"Identification, account and

financial information is exchanged, including name, address, state of residence and tax identification number, as well as information concerning the reporting financial institution, account balance and capital income."

It added:

"The exchanged information allows the [local] tax authorities to verify whether taxpayers have correctly declared their financial accounts abroad in their tax returns."

It did not provide information on the value of the accounts concerned.

This exchange of information takes place under the Common Reporting Standard, which applies Automatic Exchange of Information around the world.

The data exchange occurred at the end of September, with financial information relating to 2017.

This will be repeated on an annual basis. It expands next year to around 80 partner states. In all, over a hundred jurisdictions have committed to automatic exchange of information so far, with another 42

developing countries in the pipeline.

Switzerland was under international pressure for years to stop allowing people to use its banks to hide funds away from the tax authorities. It slowly made various concessions, but stopped short of automatic disclosure.

Until now, Switzerland would only provide data on request, from countries it had signed double tax treaties with. But it would not allow "fishing expeditions", and the requesting authority had to provide evidence that a specific account holder was most likely evading tax.

In 2013 US prosecutors began attacking Swiss banks for helping American clients evade US taxes. It opened a programme where banks could avoid harsher penalties by agreeing to pay a fine. Credit Suisse Group AG alone paid \$2.6 billion. Wegelin & Co., a 272-year old Swiss bank, was forced to close as a result.

Then in February 2014, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), working with the G20, presented its new standard on

automatic exchange of information – the Common Reporting Standard was born.

A couple of months later, in May 2014, all OECD countries signed a declaration committing to automatic exchange of information between jurisdictions – a breakthrough moment – and Switzerland was one of the signatories. And it has now made its first exchange.

This is not the total end of Swiss banking secrecy. It remains in place for Swiss taxpayers – the Federal Tax Administration does not automatically receive any information on accounts owned by its Swiss citizens. But for everyone else, we are now in a very different era.

We can expect the tax authorities here in Spain use the information they receive from not only Switzerland, but the many jurisdictions around the world collecting data under the Automatic Exchange of Information agreement, to their advantage. They can compare it to the information the taxpayer has provided on their income and wealth tax returns. The Spanish authorities will also

compare it to residents' Modelo 720 declarations.

Any resulting tax investigations, however innocently the omissions may have occurred, could prove very costly by the time the back tax, interest and any penalties are paid, not to mention very stressful.

So, if you have not already done so, you need to carefully review your tax planning, the way you hold your assets and what you declare and where, to make sure you are paying tax in the right country and the arrangements you use to hold assets are fully compliant. When you are resident in one country and have assets and/or earn income in another, you have to follow the relevant double tax treaty carefully to establish where you should be declaring the income and where you should be paying tax.

Tax planning remains alive and well. You can often use tax-complaint arrangements in Spain and the UK to lower tax liabilities, particularly on your capital investments. Take personalised, specialist advice.

## With so many options for your UK pension funds, what are the best solutions for expatriates living in Spain?

Deciding what to do with your pensions is one of the most important financial decisions you make. Take regulated advice to understand how all the options and opportunities affect you and the tax implications in Spain.

With our pension, tax and investment expertise, Blevins Franks provides bespoke advice based on your situation and aims. We get to know your unique situation before reviewing how the pension options would work for you, from a tax and financial security point of view.

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# Swedish gang responsible for two Costa murders is brought down

Nine have been arrested in connection with the murder of 'El Maradona' and another person shot dead in Estepona

:: ÁLVARO FRÍAS / JUAN CANO

**MÁLAGA.** The National Police, in collaboration with police in Sweden, have brought down a Swedish gang of hired killers linked to two murders on the Costa del Sol.

Nine people aged between 24 and 64 - four in Sweden and five in Málaga - were arrested last week as part of 'Operación Rueda', which started after a gym in San Pedro Alcántara and a beach bar in Estepona were set on fire.

The seven men and two women are suspected of murder, belonging to an organised crime group and falsifying documents.

They are considered to be responsible for the killing on 12 May of 'El Maradona', who was linked to the aforementioned gym and beach bar. He was shot as he left a church in San Pedro Alcántara following his son's communion and the killer fled the scene in a car.

The second killing was on 20 August in the El Campanario area of



Police carry out one of the arrests. :: SUR

Estepona. 'Zocato' was shot dead as he arrived back home in the early hours of the morning by an individual who fled the scene on a bicycle.

From the beginning, investigators considered that both killings were related to the settling of scores, linked to the world of drug trafficking. Investigations then found that the same gang of hitmen was behind both attacks.

This gang, they found, was led by two pairs of brothers, aged between

21 and 26, and consisted mainly of Swedes and Danes. They came to the Costa del Sol from the Malmö area of Sweden, attracted by the increasing demand for such services.

Though they specialise in score-settling, the gang also dealt in debt collection, extortion and drug trafficking.

Raids on nine properties also took place as part of the operation and three luxury watches were seized - one was worth a quarter of a million euros.

# Mother sent to prison after her one-year-old baby is found dead in her apartment

:: Á. FRÍAS / J. CANO

**MÁLAGA.** A 20-year-old woman of north African origin has been remanded in custody after her one-and-a-half-year-old baby was found dead in her apartment.

Police were called to the scene in Málaga city centre last Friday in response to complaints about two women arguing in the street. When they arrived, just one woman was there and she showed them where the other, her sister, was living.

On entering the apartment, officers found the body of the baby who appeared to have died days ear-

lier. The woman's sister, the mother of the child, was located by police hours later. She is being held in prison while police await the final conclusions of the autopsy to establish whether an injury on the baby's body was the cause of death.

The mother is known to police because, as a victim of gender violence, she had been placed under special protection. Officers had not been able to locate her for several months, however.

According to friends, the mother had told them that her baby was in the care of a professional.

# Two die in collision with a lorry after driving the wrong way on the A-92

:: FERNANDO TORRES / EFE

**ARCHIDONA.** Two people died after their vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a lorry on Tuesday. The car had been travelling in the wrong direction down the A-92 in the Archidona area.

The accident occurred at around 4.15pm by the plaster factory at km5

on the Granada-bound carriageway.

A large convoy of emergency services vehicles was dispatched to the scene, causing a tailback of a kilometre and a half for several hours.

According to sources, the victims were an elderly couple who had been driving the wrong way for around three kilometres.

In the early hours of Sunday morning another driver was stopped after travelling more than ten kilometres in the wrong direction on the AP-7 between La Cala de Mijas and Churriana. The driver was arrested and fortunately there were no accidents as a result.

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# Arroyo de la Miel athletics track and football pitch to reopen in the new year

The refurbishment has cost a total of 1.2 million euros and has seen the turf replaced by an artificial surface and the Tartan restored

:: IVÁN GELIBTER

**BENALMÁDENA.** The athletics track and the football pitch at the Arroyo de la Miel municipal sports centre will reopen to the public at the start of 2019. This is according to Benalmádena mayor Víctor Navas who on Monday visited the site alongside Sports councillor, Joaquín Villazón.

Navas said that the works were at an advanced stage, with the "state-of-the-art" artificial turf already installed and the improvements to the athletics track surface nearing completion.

The football pitch's grass is being replaced by synthetic turf in order to allow for the town's teams to train on it for longer and also to cut down on maintenance and water costs.

The athletics track, installed in 1984, has reached the end of its lifespan and requires a complete overhaul. The new track will have 12mm rubber base with a 4mm polyurethane top layer, double the thickness of the existing one.

The layout of the athletics area will also be altered, moving the jumping areas to a different part of the complex to allow for a warm-up area.

These improvements are costing 1.2 million euros, of which one million will be paid by Benalmádena town hall and the remain 200,000 by the Junta de Andalucía regional government. The works have an es-



Work on the pitch is complete. :: I. GELIBTER

timated completion time of four months so it is expected that they will be ready to use early in the new year. However, according to Villazón, the intention is to "improve other tracks that also need work".

The Sports councillor said that "excellent work" was being done and that despite spending limitations being imposed, "the council has been able to develop a spending plan which has allowed us to renovate our sporting installations for the first time in three decades".

Works have already been carried out at the Ramón Rico and Retamar sports facilities, the councillor pointed out. "We will continue working to ensure that Benalmádena continues to be a benchmark for sport in the province."



The mayor (third right) and volunteers from ABAD on Monday. :: SUR

## Campaign for new care centre for those with disabilities

:: TONY BRYANT

**BENALMÁDENA.** The Asociación Benalmádena Atención Discapacidad (ABAD) participated in the International Day of Disabled Persons on Monday. The local charity installed an information table in Arroyo de La Miel to raise sponsorship for a new care centre.

The stand was visited by the

town's mayor, Víctor Navas, whose council has supported the project.

Vice president of ABAD, Teresa Muñoz, endorsed the importance of the project by saying, "We need more help and resources to provide adequate attention to people with disabilities. To do this, we want to launch a comprehensive disability care centre in Benalmádena."

## Market to raise funds to give children a second chance

The Nuevo Futuro market opened in the Malaga congress centre on Thursday and runs until Sunday

:: ANA PÉREZ BRYAN

**MÁLAGA.** Malaga's Palacio de Congresos y Ferias is playing host this holiday weekend to the Nuevo Futuro market, a fundraiser for the around 50 children deprived of a family life across eight homes in the provincial capital.

Entrance to the congress centre costs two euros and visitors will be able to browse the around 30 stalls offering clothing, handicrafts or Christmas presents.

There will also be a number of special events taking place each day including food tastings, con-



A previous event. :: F. SILVA

certs and shows and there will be an array of food options available.

Proceeds from the event will go to the Nuevo Futuro association whose mission is to ensure that all children have a roof over their heads and access to education.

Doors open daily until Sunday from 11am to 9pm.

### HERE AND THERE

#### Informative talk for Torremolinos expats

**TORREMOLINOS**

:: T. B. The Foreigners Department of Torremolinos town hall is to host an informative talk in the Pablo Ruiz Picasso cultural centre on Wednesday 12 December at 7pm.

The meeting, chaired by councillor for Foreign Residents, Aida Blanes, will focus on the benefits of registering on the electoral census and obtaining residency.

Staff from the office for foreign residents will be on hand to answer questions in Spanish and English during a wine reception after the talk.



The mayor (l) at the event. :: SUR

#### Developers celebrate phase two of project

**MIJAS**

:: SUR IN ENGLISH. The mayor of Mijas, Juan Carlos Maldonado, was among more than 100 guests at the recent Buena Vista Hills Christmas party which coincided with the start of the second phase of the development.

Buena Vista Hills, one of the many collaborators at Expo Costa del Sol, is a turnkey villa project located in a private community by the name of Urbanización Buena Vista in Mijas, with panoramic sea and mountain views.

"Thank you very much for the interest and energy you invest in Mijas," the mayor told the developers at the event. "We are proud of this invitation as it really means a lot to us, because you are in line with what we want for Mijas: an ideal place to live where there is sustainable urban planning."

#### Torremolinos lights up for Christmas

**TORREMOLINOS**

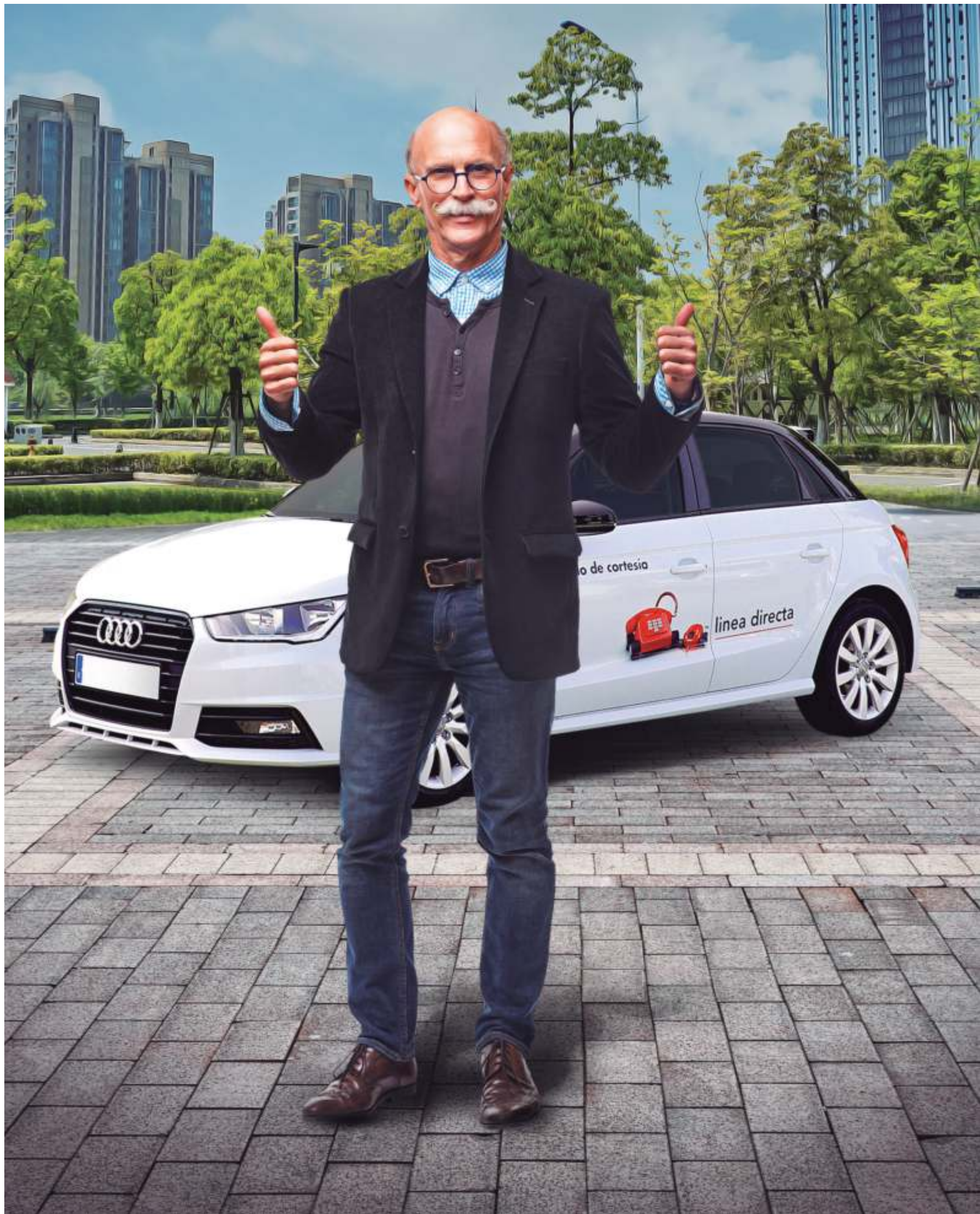
:: T. B. Torremolinos will switch on its Christmas lights in the Plaza Costa del Sol tonight (Friday).

The festivities will begin at 5pm, when several musical shows will be staged in the square. The town's mayor, José Ortiz, will perform the switch-on ceremony at 8pm.

This will be followed by a concert by Nalaya Brown, a former participant of La Voz, the popular television talent show.

The inauguration of the new boulevard, planned for this week, will now take place in January.







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## HERE AND THERE

**Lux Mundi appeals for Christmas donations****TORRE DEL MAR**

✪ **J. R.** Lux Mundi Torre del Mar has sent out an appeal to raise money for sleeping bags to give to homeless people in the area as well as for bags of Christmas goods for families in need, through the Málaga Acoge association.

The centre's aim is to raise 700 euros to buy 35 sleeping bags which

volunteers plan to give to people attending a special Christmas lunch on 3 January. The lunch is being funded by the local Lions Club.

Lux Mundi has also said that they are hoping to raise a further 400 euros for the Málaga Acoge Christmas goods bags, which normally include sweets and a small toy for children.

Donations can be given to reception at both Torre del Mar and Fuen-girola. For further information visit [www.lux-mundi.org](http://www.lux-mundi.org)



The rock has been removed. ✪ SUR

**N-340 reopens two weeks after landslide****TORROX**

✪ **E. C.** The section of the N-340 coastal road which was closed two weeks ago, following a landslide, re-opened on Wednesday.

Emergency work to secure the rockface and install a safety fence in the area started immediately after the landslide, which resulted in a large rock falling onto the road near the Calaceite area to the east of Torrox Costa in November.

**Town hall aims to raise money through land sale****VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA**

✪ **E. C.** Vélez-Málaga town hall has announced plans to auction 31 plots of land in the town. Earlier this year it sold off two of the original 33 plots. The land in question can be used for residential or industrial purposes. Values are between 13,000 and 700,000 euros and sizes range from 100 to 7,000 square metres. The council hopes to raise 4.6 million euros through the sale.

**Wild boar keeps local police and hunters occupied for two hours in town-centre chase****✪ E. CABEZAS**

**TORROX.** Local police, hunters and other officers spent almost two hours on Wednesday morning trying to capture a young wild boar in Torrox town centre. The animal, which according to sources was around three years old, was first spotted by residents in the El Pontil and La Cebadilla areas of the old town. Once caught, it was released in an area of countryside outside the town centre. According to sources, wild boar are a common sight around the Torrox river but they rarely enter populated areas.



The wild boar in Torrox. ✪ SUR

**The Axarquía's dry stone walls added to Unesco heritage list**

A further eight Spanish regions and seven other European countries have also been recognised for continuing to use the centuries-old technique

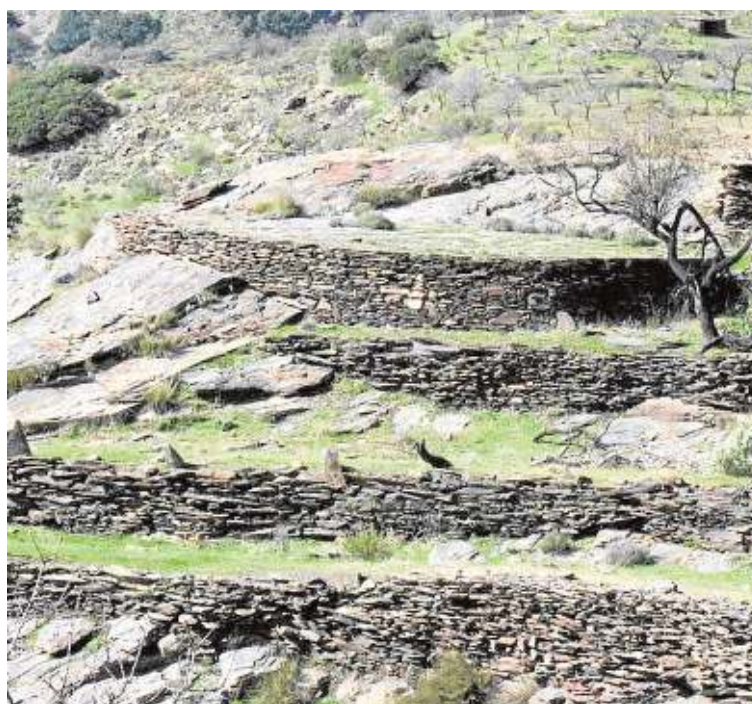
**✪ EUGENIO CABEZAS**

**AXARQUÍA.** The United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation, Unesco, has added the Axarquía's dry stone walls onto its list of the world's intangible heritage of humanity, under the title, "Art of dry stone walling, knowledge and techniques".

A further eight Spanish regions have also been added to the same list: Aragón, Asturias, Balearics, Canaries, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia and Valencia, as well as seven other European countries (Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland).

The UN cultural organisation said in a statement that the art had been included on the list because "these structures don't harm the environment and are an example of harmony between human beings and nature".

The centuries-old tradition of dry-



Traditional dry stone walls in the Axarquía. ✪ SUR

stone walling is still used in the Axarquía to prevent erosion and landslides on hillsides used for the cultivation of traditional crops, including olives, grapes and cereals, but is, according to environmental association, Gena-Ecologistas en Ac-

ción, a dying tradition.

The subtropical fruit growing sector does not use dry stone walls, which, according to the environmentalists, collect rainwater more effectively and provide a natural irrigation system.

**Torrox cleaning company strike set to be cancelled after town hall agrees to pay rise****✪ E. CABEZAS**

**TORROX.** The strike planned by Torrox's street cleaning company, to coincide with the annual Día de las Migas celebrations on 16 December, looks likely to be cancelled, thanks to an agreement between the town hall and unions representing the company.

The initial agreement was reached during a meeting last Friday at which the town hall said it would meet employees' demands of a six per cent pay rise this year and a further 2.5 per cent rise in 2019. Councilors also agreed to a two-day weekend for cleaning staff, instead of the current one day.

The company has said that it will not officially cancel the strike until it has the agreement in writing, which Torrox mayor, Óscar Medina, has said will come after a final meeting which is due to take place on Monday.

The salary increase and extra day off a week means that the town hall will have to find an additional 20 per cent in its annual budget to finance the agreement.

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## MARBELLA LIGHTS IN PICTURES



The giant bauble in San Pedro Alcántara. :: JOSELE-LANZA



The street parade on Ricardo Soriano, Marbella. :: J-LANZA



Snow in Marbella's old town on Wednesday. :: JOSELE-LANZA

## Lighting up the Costa

Christmas lights went on in Marbella and San Pedro Alcántara last Friday night in a festive atmosphere that included colourful street parades. The

giant bauble in the Marqués del Duero (San Pedro) comes to life every day at 6.30pm and 8.30pm for a music and light show, alongside vertical fea-

tures that create an illuminated "forest". On Wednesday it snowed, with the help of cannons, in Marbella's old town to welcome Santa Claus.


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### Corruption boss's farm valued at 5m euros as town hall asks to take over

A separate heliport in Marbella and another farm, also once belonging to Juan Antonio Roca, were valued at 2.7 million

:: HÉCTOR BARBOTA

**MARBELLA.** The large property once belonging to the mastermind of Marbella council's huge corruption scandal over ten years ago has been revalued at five million euros.

Finca La Caridad, in El Potril, near San Pedro, is a 20-acre (81,500 square-metre) farm that was home to Juan Antonio Roca, former town-planning head who was sentenced in the Operación Malaya trials.

Up to now the property has been on sale for eight million euros on a website set up by the court to sell off Roca's assets and recover the civil damages he needs to pay back



The farm is located outside San Pedro Alcántara. :: JOSELE-LANZA

to the town hall. However the farm has not sold, and now the council wants to take it over directly and use it for sports and leisure purposes.

The valuation has dropped due to ongoing planning complications

with the town's PGOU master town plan. Some outbuildings were also illegally built.

A separate heliport in Marbella and another farm, both once Roca's, have been valued at 2.7 million euros.

### Costa Galera roads spruced up using developer's money

:: CHARO MÁRQUEZ

**ESTEPONA.** Resurfacing roads, landscaping and upgrading street lighting is among work recently carried out by Estepona council in the Costa Galera area in the west of the municipality.

The work was carried out at no cost to local residents or the town hall, as the council used the money

from the original developer's bank guarantee, set up if it failed to fulfill its obligations to properly finish the new area and cashed by the town hall a long time ago.

Announcing that the work in Costa Galera is now complete, the town hall said it would make sure all developers kept their promises when building new areas.



The landscaped area at Costa Galera. :: C.M.



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## MALAGA LIGHTS IN PICTURES



The lights on Calle Larios.

:: MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Thousands turned out for the big switch-on. :: ÑITO SALAS



Inside the tree in Plaza de la Constitución. :: M. FERNÁNDEZ

# Christmas magic

The city's festive display was switched on last Friday

Thousands packed into Malaga city centre last Friday evening to witness the festive switching-on of the Christmas lights. The "tun-

nel" in Calle Larios now comes to life every evening at 6.30, 8 and 9pm as its lights dance to music by Café Quijano, Ronda Venez-

ano and Raúl Charlo. The show continues until 6 January. The municipal "Belén" (nativity scene) is now open in the City Hall.



The Christmas tree outside the cathedral. :: ÑITO SALAS



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# International clean-up squad tackles Duquesa port

Volunteers are improving the look of the area by removing tonnes of rubbish from public areas

by ASH BOLTON

**MANILVA.** A team of foreign residents are celebrating after clearing 560 kilos of rubbish from around Duquesa Port last Saturday, 1 December.

The 11 volunteers spent several hours picking up everything from plastic bottles and mattresses to rubber dinghies and oil drums.

Now the group are asking for more volunteers to join them on their weekly clean-up of the popular tourist resort.

The latest event saw Brits, Danes, and Norwegian locals tackling neglected areas including the port's car park and recycling area, where over 350 kilos of rubbish was removed.

Stephen Amore, 52, who organises the weekly event, told SUR in English that since he started the group in August they have picked up more than six tonnes of rubbish.

He said: "It's amazing the amount of rubbish that's out there and I'm absolutely astounded by the good will of the local people in picking it up."

"People love getting involved and it's good exercise in the sun too."



The international rubbish collectors in Duquesa. :: SUR

Stephen, who moved to Spain 12 years ago and is originally from Surrey, said that it all began last July when he was fed up of seeing rubbish on the seafront while walking his dogs.

He explained: "It was awful. There was rubbish everywhere. I set myself a target of picking up 1,000 bits of litter a week while walking from Duquesa Port to Castillo and back - and I managed it easily."

Like-minded locals started joining Stephen on his weekly litter picking expeditions and numbers quickly swelled - so he started a Face-

book group, which now has almost 400 members.

Stephen, who is a social media manager, added that local businesses in the port have been supporting them by paying for their bin bags, gloves and equipment.

And following their efforts last Saturday the international team were rewarded with beers from the Dolphin Café Bar.

The Brit added: "Come join us and make a difference."

For more information on when the next clean-up is taking place, visit "Acorn" on Facebook.

# Gran Recogida exceeds collection goals

The Malaga foodbank received a total of 602,500 kilos of food last weekend, 52,500 more than in 2017

by AGUSTÍN PELÁEZ

**MALAGA.** This year the Gran Recogida foodbank campaign collected 602,500 kilos of food for Malaga's most needy. With 343 supermarkets and shopping centres all over the province supporting the cause, the collection for local foodbank Bancosol surpassed its initial goal of 600,000 kilos.

The first day of the campaign, last Friday, saw 213,500 kilos collected. However, on Saturday this amount was doubled taking this year's total 52,500 kilos ahead of the result of the 2017 campaign.

Silvia Valenzuela and Gema Ruiz, both students at the University of Malaga, volunteered at La Rosaleda shopping centre. They agreed that Saturday was by far the most successful day for collection. "Some people came with cars full of food donations," remarked Valenzuela. "It was very touching to see young children coming with their parents, with donations they had bought with their pocket money," added Gema Ruiz.

Alongside the 4,000 volunteers throughout the province, the 501st Legion also made an appearance at some supermarkets, dressed in their Star Wars costumes. Meanwhile Daniel Torres, Mister Mundo España 2018, was busy as a volunteer in Marbella.

The next step for Bancosol is to sort all the food and distribute it, via charities, among the needy.



Members of the 501st Legion help with the Gran Recogida. :: A.P.

# Reforestation project in Cártama funded by domestic appliance outlet

The project was announced on World Environment Day, when the company initiated a recycling policy for old appliances

by TONY BRYANT

**CÁRTAMA.** An initiative aimed at the reforestation of areas in Cártama that have been affected by drought, floods or fires has been

launched by the Worten domestic appliance outlet. The company has initiated a programme under the banner of Bosque Worten, which will include the planting of more than 400 trees in the Hacienda de Mellado ecological reserve, an area badly damaged by drought.

The project was announced on World Environment Day last June, when the company initiated a recycling policy for old appliances that had been returned to secure a reduction on a new purchase.

The Mayor of Cártama, Jorge Gallardo, met with the Worten executive director of services and after sales, José Faria, in Cártama last week, to discuss the next stages of the project.

"Malaga is a very important area for us and for this reason we have contributed to the reforestation of areas that have suffered greatly because of the numerous droughts," Faria said during the meeting.

The company will also launch a similar project in Portugal.



José Faria (2nd right), the mayor and volunteers in Cártama. :: SUR

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# WORLD LEADER IN MOBILE BANKING ACCORDING TO FORRESTER

The independent market research company has focused on functionality and user experience, with BBVA standing out among the nine best apps in the world

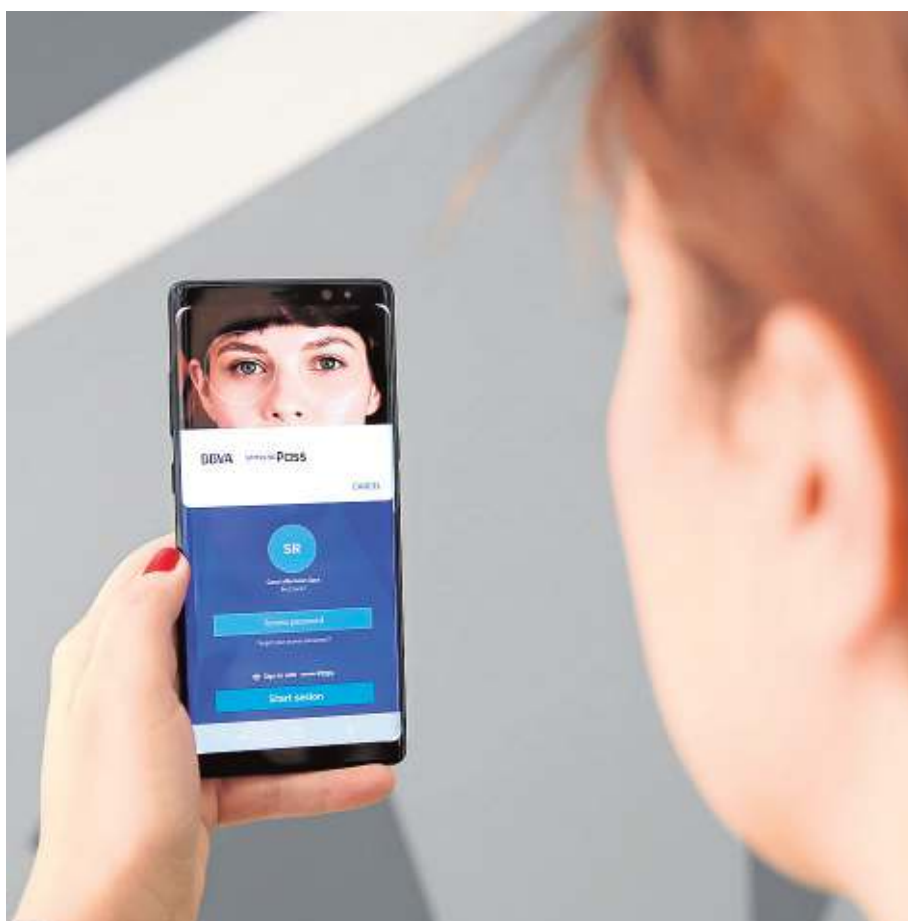
BBVA remains at the head of the mobile banking sector at a worldwide level for the second year in a row. Independent market research company Forrester Research has published its report 'The Forrester Banking Wave: Global Mobile Apps Summary, 2018,' which names BBVA as the very best of the world's top nine banks with mobile banking 'apps'. This recognition comes just months after the firm allotted BBVA the maximum number of points for mobile banking in Europe. BBVA had already been placed in the top spot in the world ranking in 2017, according to Forrester Research's '2017 Global Mobile Banking Benchmark' study.

**This recognition for BBVA's App, received for the second consecutive year, comes after it managed to obtain first place in digital banking at a European level**

This year, BBVA stands out from the other banks for the 'magnificent balance' it achieves between a 'wide range of very useful functions' and an 'excellent user experience'. BBVA clients can carry out a large amount of operations via the app, with 'next generation' functionality, Forrester Research explains in the report.

**BBVA clients can carry out many operations via the app, which has 'next generation' functionality**

The international market research company has analysed 42 banks' apps in 11 countries all over the world. The analysis focused on functionality and client experience, and has selected nine banks as the world leaders, with BBVA and Garanti in first and second place respectively.



The tool employs the latest digital technologies to make procedures easier for its clients. ■ BBVA

As the report explains, banking apps have become the first choice for millions of users in the world when it comes to managing their finances. Banks therefore have to build new experiences in the mobile banking environment, put the client at the centre of their activity and place tools in their hands that provide them with more independence.

Moreover, the Citi's 2018 Mobile Banking Study carried out by Citigroup brings to light that 91% of mobile banking users prefer using these tools to having to visit a bank branch in person, and almost half of them state they have increased their use of their banking app over the last year.

BBVA currently has 25.1 million digital clients (26% more than a year ago), of which 20.7 million are mobile clients. In Spain the number of digital clients comes to a total of 4.6 million, 3.6 million of which are

**BBVA's App has 4.6 million digital users in Spain, of which a total of 3.6 million are mobile clients**

mobile clients.

"Obtaining the highest place on the ranking for the second consecutive year shows that we manage to continuously deliver new products to our clients that help them to make decisions, surprise them and increase their loyalty and we do so transparently while preserving security, always keeping that aspect in mind and working from a base of flexible, agile internal organisation along with specific tools and digital talent," explains



## BBVA APP FEATURED SERVICES

- 1** In January, after the PSD regulation came into force, BBVA launched a new account and card aggregation service that allows clients to see information on financial products they have contracted with other banks via the same app.
- 2** BBVA Economy, a tool allowing clients to check their financial health, optimise expenditure, improve their saving capacity or see details of their income.
- 3** The Immediate Opening service, which BBVA launched at the end of 2016 to allow clients to use a selfie to open an account in just a few minutes.

Sofia Rodríguez-Sahagún, director of Digital Transformation at BBVA Spain.

With all these reasons in mind it's hardly surprising that BBVA's App is considered at a global level to be a pioneering tool which is in constant growth to provide its clients with the best service. Not in vain it has been the first mobile application on the Spanish market to incorporate the new technologies to provide users with an integral experience in house-hunting, as well as many other innovative products.



# SUR recognises Malaga's brightest and best

Alberto Díaz, Vanesa Martín, César Ramírez, Maskom and Muelle Uno were all recognised at the Malagueños del Año awards ceremony

## :: DARYL FINCH

**MALAGA.** More than a thousand people packed into the Palacio de Congresos y Ferias in Malaga on Tuesday for the 19th edition of the SUR Malagueños del Año awards.

The event, organised by SUR with the collaboration of Unicaja Banco, recognised the achievements of some of the province's own, whether individuals, organisations or businesses.

For the Sports prize, the first to go up to the podium was Unicaja basketball player Alberto Díaz who at 24 is already one of the mainstays in the national team. Díaz was followed onto the stage by Dr César Ramírez, winner in Society category. He received the award in recognition of his career as a surgeon, as well as his chari-



Prize winners (left to right) Díaz, Ramírez, Cuberos, Martín and Rodríguez Porras, flanked by Manuel Azuaga, Unicaja Banco president (far left), and Manuel Castillo (right), SUR editor-in-chief. :: SALVADOR SALAS

table work in heading up expeditions to various developing countries where he has helped more than a 1,000 patients.

In the Economy and Business sec-

tion, local supermarket chain Maskom, which grew out of a small deli counter in Malaga and now directly employs 720 people, won the award and the trophy was picked up

by Sergio Cuberos, its founder.

The Muelle Uno leisure and shopping area won the Tourism prize for its role in the transformation of the city's port area. President Miguel Ro-

dríguez Porras collected the trophy.

The final winner was singer Vanesa Martín, currently one of the most popular singers and songwriters Spanish-speaking world. Despite a busy tour schedule, Martín said that she always relishes returning to her home town as it is "open, cosmopolitan, at the forefront of culture, warm and welcoming".

Guests, who included leading figures in Malaga's political, business and social circles, as well as Malaga CF president Sheikh Abdullah Al-Thani, were welcomed to the event by SUR editor-in-chief Manuel Castillo, who in turn introduced the prize-winners.

Provincial government head Elías Bendodo and central government delegate for Malaga, María Gámez also spoke, before a closing speech by city mayor Francisco de la Torre. He passed on his best wishes to the PP candidate to lead the Junta regional government, Juanma Moreno, also among the audience, whom he described as the "Malagueño of the week".

## PLENTY OF FESTIVE SPIRIT TO GO ROUND AT AGE CARE LUNCH

More than 125 clients, carers and guests attended the Age Care Christmas lunch on Wednesday at the Tamisa Golf Hotel. President Syd Weldon thanked all the welfare and shop volunteers for their invaluable help, before a traditional Christmas lunch was served. Entertainment was provided by Martin Joseph of The Rat Pack and Mania Performers, a local group of singers and dancers.



## Cudeca hospice to light up for Christmas in memory of lost loved ones

### :: TONY BRYANT

**BENALMÁDENA.** The Cudeca Foundation has announced that the traditional Christmas Light a Light memorial celebration will take place on Friday 14 December from 6pm.

The annual switch-on of the lights that decorate the Cudeca Hospice in Benalmádena will be carried out by its founder, Joan Hunt OBE.

Joan will be assisted by Medical Director Marisa Martín, together with more than 200 volunteers,

friends and employees.

The decorative Christmas lights of the hospice are a personal tribute and, as in previous years, they will continue to shine until 6 January.

The event will include a performance by the Sunny View College Choir, who will sing a selection of festive classics.

There will also be a prize raffle, home-cooked Christmas delicacies, children's activities, carol singing and a chance to take part in the special Christmas lottery.

A dedication to a loved one, which costs ten euros, can be made on the night of the event, or online ([www.lightupcudeca.org](http://www.lightupcudeca.org)).

The dedication will figure in the Light a Light book, which will be displayed in the reception of the Cudeca Hospice.

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# Lee Spencer, 'The Rowing Marine', sets off on an epic challenge

The former serviceman, who lost a leg in an accident, plans to row single-handed and unsupported across the Atlantic to South America

DEBBIE BARTLETT

**GIBRALTAR.** Lee Spencer, known as 'The Rowing Marine', is back in Gibraltar to prepare for his latest challenge. On Wednesday 12 December this former Royal Marine plans to set off from the Rock and row 3,800 nautical miles, solo and unsupported, to South America.

He aims to become the first physically disabled person in the world to row the Atlantic, east to west, and beat the current able-bodied record which is held by Stein Hoff of 96 days, 12 hours and 45 minutes. Lee hopes to be able to complete the feat in 60 to 70 days, but is taking supplies for 90 days just in case.

Lee, who was in the Royal Marines for 24 years and served in Afghanistan, lost a leg when he was off duty and went to help a motorist on the M3 in 2014. On this epic journey of extraordinary physical and mental endurance, he will battle 30-foot waves, sleep deprivation, extreme



Lee Spencer is preparing for his epic challenge. OCEAN VILLAGE GIBRALTAR

fatigue, fear and solitude, but he will be keeping wounded servicemen and women in people's hearts and minds and raising money for the Royal Marines Charity and the Endeavour Fund at the same time.

He is looking forward to Wednesday: "I just want to get in the boat now! I've done this before, when I rowed across the Atlantic with a team in 2015, so I know what's ahead of me. But I still can't think about the whole thing, I am just going to take

it day by day and be in the moment. I'm looking forward to reaching the other side, seeing my wife and showing people that we're all capable of achieving anything we put our minds to. Nobody should be defined by disability," he says.

Further information can be obtained from Lee's website [www.lee-spencer.co.uk](http://www.lee-spencer.co.uk)

To donate to his cause, visit: [uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LeeJSpencer](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LeeJSpencer)

## Gib prepares for its Winter Party in Town next weekend

D. BARTLETT

**GIBRALTAR.** Anyone who wants to get into the festive party spirit can do so in Casemates Square next Saturday, 15 December, when this year's Winter Party in Town event takes place.

The celebrations begin at 4pm, and are aimed at all the family. The theme is 'remembering the 90s', and there will be live music and dance, headlined by internationally renowned top 90s original act Corona, otherwise known as the 'Queen of Dance', supported by one of Europe's best Michael Jackson tribute acts.

Other performances include lo-

cal upcoming four-piece band 24 Seven and local DJs Anthony Byrne and No Limit Entertainment, dancing from the Yalta Dance Studio and Danza Academy, and, to enhance the Christmas ambience, the Gibraltar Sea Scouts Pipe Band will also play Christmas carols.

Santa will be there, in his Grotto from 4.30pm, and the younger members of the family, can also enjoy face-painting, bouncy castles and special appearances by various Disney and Marvel/DC characters.

Food and drink stands will be available while the party takes place.

## Year-round Easyjet flights are now operating between Gibraltar and London Luton

D. B.

**GIBRALTAR.** Easyjet has begun its twice-weekly service between Luton and Gibraltar. The flights run on Tuesdays and Saturdays and will continue year-round.

This is the airline's fourth destination from Gibraltar, after London Gatwick, Bristol and Manchester.

Ali Gayward, Easyjet's UK manager, said this week that the affordable fares and flight time of just over two and a half hours, make these services popular with business and leisure travellers.

After the arrival of the first Easyjet flight from Luton on Tuesday, Tourism Minister Gilbert Licudi, said the new service for travellers from the north London region and beyond is "warmly welcome".

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# Chinese visitors are driving luxury goods sales, says industry report

The analysis by Spanish trade association, Círculo Fortuny, predicts a doubling of top-end demand by 2025, mostly from foreign tourists

**SUR**  
**MADRID.** Sales of top-brand goods, expensive cars and high-end fashion and jewellery rose last year, according to data just released. The luxury goods market in Spain sold 9.2 billion euros in 2017, a 9% increase on a year earlier and almost double the 5% increase worldwide. The increase is being explained on a surge in foreign tourists visiting the country specifically for cultural or retail tourism and especially the Chinese. Around 80% of purchases of these types of goods in Spain was down to visitors from other countries, says the survey, and over a third of this amount was made up of tourists from China. At the moment, only 4% of Chinese visitors to Europe come to Spain, according to the analysis from Círculo Fortuny, an association of providers of luxury goods and services. The Chinese market is therefore viewed as



Luxury goods are mostly sold in Madrid and Barcelona. **REUTERS**

having huge potential for the future, it says.  
**Strong start in 2018**  
Círculo Fortuny also reported that in the first three months of this year the luxury market grew between 2% and 4%, depending on the type of product. The profile of purchaser is also getting younger. The association is predicting that the luxury goods and services sector in Spain will be worth 21 bil-

lion euros by 2025, more than doubling. National consumers will continue making up just 15-20%, with their interest focused on beauty products and jewellery. Some 80% of luxury sales are in Madrid and Barcelona, the data reveals. A further study by consultants EY, also published this week, shows that the luxury and cosmetic industry sold 435 billion euros in 2017, with China and other emerging markets driving increased demand.

# Costa car sales down last month amid diesel uncertainty

**IGNACIO LILLO**  
**MALAGA.** Sales of new cars in Malaga province, including the Costa, dropped significantly in November. Over the month, 1,895 were sold, a drop of 16% on the same month in 2017, and 2,590 were registered, a drop of 11%. The reason for the fall is being explained by two factors. Firstly, there were abnormally high figures in August, when sales were brought forward as new European standards came in. And, secondly, hesitancy caused by central government's statements about the future of diesel cars. "It's caused uncertainty and

some people have held off the buying decision, even though we're seeing unbeatable prices and terms at the moment," said Carlos Oliva, president of the trade association for the car industry in Malaga province.  
**Rental car sales increase**  
The uncertainty has been felt most in company car sales as well as vehicles for industrial use. But there is good news from the car rental sector, which bought more than in November last year. Local car dealerships still expect to see an overall year-on-year rise of 7.8% in 2018.

# Carrefour Los Patios shopping centre unveils new look after 17 million euros investment

**FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ**  
**MALAGA.** The Los Patios shopping centre, on the outskirts of Malaga by the main road from Torremolinos, has unveiled its new look after a 17-million-euro re-

vamp. The well-known shopping plaza adjoining the Carrefour store, which is the second oldest hypermarket in Spain, has been rebuilt and modernised, say owners Carrefour Property and Carmila. There are now 50 retail units, up from 39, and shop sizes are bigger overall. New operators have been attracted to the redeveloped site, including Mayoral, Parfois, a veterinary clinic, a pharmacy, beauty shops, a law firm and technology repairers. The developers have paid special attention to sustainability and reduced mobility access.

**T**he success of far-right Vox and centre-right Ciudadanos in the Andalusian elections on Sunday has given Spanish prime minister Pedro Sánchez an idea. Although his party, the Socialist PSOE, has lost control of a region it has dominated for decades, Sánchez has nevertheless spotted an opportunity, saying on Tuesday that he'll present his 2019 budget to parliament for a vote in January. It'll be absurdly late by then, but you can see the strategy behind his decision. Sort of. The PSOE leader is hoping that the gains made by Vox and Ciudadanos, both of which are firmly opposed to Catalan secession, will make Catalan separatist parties more willing to compromise, and thus to vote for his spending

## THE EURO ZONE MARK NAYLER

### WHAT IF?



plan. Without their support - hitherto withheld because of his refusal to concede anything to Catalonia's secessionists - Sánchez's economic proposals for 2019 will be stalled. It's quite a gamble, one that also tells us that the prime minister has no intention of calling early national elections. One party that certainly wouldn't back the Socialist's budget, if they had seats in the na-

tional parliament (which they may well have before long), is Vox. The far right group, founded in 2014 by former members of the Conservative Popular Party, has announced a 100-point plan for Spain featuring economic policies diametrically opposed to the PSOE's. For example: Sánchez is for higher taxes, especially on corporations, whereas Vox's stance on tax is "the lower, the better".

The latter party proposes a blanket income tax rate of 21%, lower corporation and property taxes, and the eradication of estate, inheritance and capital gains taxes. This is classic right-wing economic policy - anathema, in other words, to Spain's leftist parties and their voters. Yet there won't be many of the younger generation of Spaniards - those who have propelled Ciudadanos and their left wing counterpart, Podemos, to power - that wouldn't agree with Vox's proposals on how to deal with corrupt, profligate politicians. The far-right newcomer wants to "cut back on wasteful spending" among ministers by including it as an offence in the criminal code. It also proposes tougher measures on corruption among

the political class and the banning of government pardons. The small print of such policies is still fuzzy, with "wasteful spending" yet to be defined; but it's precisely such proposals that account for some of Vox's success in Andalucía on Sunday. Spaniards are sick and tired of politicians squandering taxpayers' money, and Vox is tapping that vein of discontent. Whether or not the party's recent success will push Catalan separatists into the arms of the Socialists come January remains to be seen. But between now and then, Sánchez also has to think about what will happen if this far-right upstart becomes a presence in the national parliament. If (or, most likely, when) it does, leftist spending plans will face their staunchest opponents to date.



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## Open letter from the ambassador to British nationals living in Spain

I wanted to update you on the recent developments on our exit from the EU. As many of you are no doubt aware, on Sunday 25 November, there was a special European Council on Brexit. EU leaders agreed the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on the future relationship between the UK and EU.

Citizens' rights is a key part of the agreement, so this represents a big step forward in providing certainty for UK nationals living in Spain. As the PM said following the European Council, "If you are one of the over three million EU citizens who has come and built your life in the UK - come to be our colleagues, our neighbours and our friends - you need a deal that guarantees your rights. If you are one of the almost one million UK nationals living elsewhere in the EU, you need the same. This deal delivers for you all."

The next stage is for the UK Parliament to vote on the deal the Government has negotiated, which is expected on 11 December. The European Parliament will also vote on the agreement.

If approved, the Withdrawal Agreement will secure the rights of one million UK nationals living in the EU. It means that the 300,000 British people who have chosen to make Spain their home have a legal guarantee that they will be allowed to stay here after the UK leaves the EU on 29 March 2019.

The Agreement also defines the Implementation Period as running from 30 March 2019 and until 31 December 2020. All UK nationals lawfully residing in Spain on 31 December 2020 will be covered by the Withdrawal Agreement. Under the current rules, UK nationals living in Spain must register with the Spanish authorities (at the Oficina de Extranjeros or at a designated local police station) to be legally resident here. Therefore, I and the team strongly recom-

mend you ensure you are correctly registered as a resident, as is your current obligation. For detailed advice on registering, please see [gov.uk/living-in-spain](http://gov.uk/living-in-spain). We will, of course, update our advice if the Spanish authorities announce any changes to the registration requirements linked to Brexit.

During the Implementation Period, you will be able to visit, live and work in the EU broadly as you do now. If you want to move to a different Member State, you will be able to do so during the Implementation Period.

UK nationals and their families covered by the Agreement will continue to have broadly the same access to healthcare, pensions and other benefits as they currently do. And you will be able to leave Spain for up to five years without losing your right to return if you have acquired the relevant residency status. If you have any questions about who is covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, please see the UK nationals living in the EU pages on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

Next steps: Make sure you are correctly registered with Extranjería here in Spain (please see [gov.uk/living-in-spain](http://gov.uk/living-in-spain))

Sign up for email alerts to stay up to date and find out about our outreach events, by visiting the Living in Spain guide on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

Follow our "Brits in Spain" social media channels, including on facebook.

Both the Embassy and our network of consulates will continue with outreach events across Spain to answer your questions about your rights and Brexit, with three events planned before Christmas and more planned for the new year.

And we will continue to update you with key information in the months ahead. In the meantime, I would like to wish all British nationals living in Spain, a very merry Christmas.

**SIMON MANLEY**  
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO SPAIN

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## Slipper sliding away

**PETER EDGERTON**  
MUSIC MAKER [WWW.E-PETER.COM](http://WWW.E-PETER.COM)

It's possible that I may have had some about fifty years ago but I really can't be sure. Certainly, as an adult, I've never been able to countenance the idea. Maybe it's the memory of various uncles slumped in armchairs watching Saturday afternoon wrestling but, whatever the reason, the associations are almost always rather gloomy.

Still, needs must where the devil drives (whatever that means) and so it was that I found myself stepping out purposefully into the pale December evening with only one thing on my mind - to buy myself a pair of slippers.

Slippers! Who'd ever have thought it? Part of me was thinking, "It's all over, mate - one snugly foot in the grave from here on in," etc. while the other part was well aware that padding around on freezing tile floors in bare feet had caused me to come

within a whisker of falling quite ill a just few days before. The pragmatic solution, then, was the only realistic one on the table.

To be fair, there were some fantastic comedy Homer Simpson beer ones on sale in the shop I'd hastily chosen for this reckless foray into old age (top tip: never go to more than one shop when buying anything. What you might save in price by walking around for hours and hours is entirely mitigated by all that time you'll never get back in order to be able to indulge in far more interesting and productive pursuits). Anyway, the Homer option was very tempting but, in the end, I decided to go the whole hog and seek out the most horrible-looking pair I could find which, cunningly, would allow me to take refuge behind a defensive mask of knowing irony if anyone ever saw me in them.

After scanning the shelves for a good fifteen seconds or so, my ever more desperate gaze eventually fell upon just what I was looking for - a pair in a brown and beige chequered pattern. I took them to the counter forthwith, refusing to try them on for many and various reasons and hurried home excitedly for a test drive.

When I say 'test drive', I don't mean for comfort - come on, they're slippers - but rather for their most important function: sliding across the floor tiles, like an annoying child at wedding. Or Bruce Springsteen. Sure enough, my new acquisition was well up to the task - job done.

It's early days, but I'm growing rather fond of my yucky beige and brown slippers and starting to wonder why I'd avoided taking the plunge for so long.

By the way, anyone know what time the wrestling starts?



## The right change?

**RACHEL HAYNES**

A read of the literature sent by post to every voter by the main political parties before the Andalusian election last weekend made you want to vote for them all. All four were going to do away with corruption, cut down hospital waiting lists, improve the economy, education etc. Of course the leaflets they use to canvass votes don't tell you how they're going to do it, but all these smiling candidates wanted to make our lives and our region better.

One message that all the groups but one were able to offer was change. When asked before the election in a poll the majority of Andalusians questioned said they

thought a change would be good, as having the same party in power for more than 40 years was really too much. The interviewees then went on to say they thought the Socialists would stay in power. A change would be good, said the people, but they weren't sure who they wanted as an alternative.

Meanwhile though, one party that didn't send shiny propaganda to every household was emitting signals and symbols that caught the attention of some of those undecided change-seekers.

Vox, described as very right wing at the best and fascist at the worst, managed to touch nerves that brought them a success that even they had never imagined.

As a colleague pointed out this week, there are not suddenly 72,000 (the votes gained by Vox) fascists who miss the Franco regime in the province of Malaga.

But there are people who feel passionate about the unity of Spain (ie. disgusted by any signs of tolerance of Catalan secessionists on the part of the Socialist government) and concerned about immigration. Vox had meanwhile adopted the Spanish flag - the one that belongs to everyone - as its own symbol and made noises about building walls, controlling the country from within and making Spain great again.

Sound familiar? Wasn't it talk like that that got us in the Brexit mess we're in and allowed Trump into the White House?

In the end the people are likely to see their change. Those who chose to give the right-wing groups (from centre to far) a chance will be waiting for promises to be kept.

Those who remained undecided and stayed at home probably wish they hadn't.

**SUR** in English

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## IN THE FRAME

# A talent for singing recently discovered

Finally managed to catch up with Julie Abedin this month, two years after I first heard her, and Comares-based band Mentally Ska'd, play at an Axarquía Animal Rescue fundraiser in the area.

This time she was performing just with the band's drummer, Jerry Griffith, and guitarist, Andy Walker, as Jazzy Jools at La Vaquería in Benamargosa for one of the venue's Sunday lunch and live music sessions.

Julie, 59, only discovered that she could sing four years ago when she started having guitar lessons in the mountain-top village she and husband, Ferry, have called home for 16 years. "I'd always wanted to learn how to play the guitar and there are loads of really talented musicians in Comares. There's always something going on," says Julie.

Just a few months later, Davey Hughes, a saxophonist also living in Comares who attended the weekly jam sessions which had come out of the guitar lessons, was asked to perform at the village's annual Foreigners' Day. He accepted but informed the mayor that he would be playing with his band and that Julie was the lead singer.

"I was terrified. I lost two stone with the anxiety," admits Julie. The jam sessions, which had started as "the highlight" of her week where about to shoot her to local fame.

Recalling that first concert, Julie who is originally from South Shields and hasn't lost any of the accent, says, "I was really nervous but once I started I found it easy."

## A new love of music

The other band members had played a lot of Ska and were keen to put a group together that would allow them to continue to play the genre. Julie and Ferry both admit that they knew nothing about Ska and hadn't been particularly musical before Julie got involved with the band.

"Can you believe I had never even been to a music festival?" Julie exclaims, adding, "I had to learn not only about the genre but also how to sing it."

The couple both say that they soon really started to like it and that Julie belonging to the band "transformed" their social life.

The band plays mainly Ska and Reggae, which, despite only dis-

covering them four years ago, Julie performs as if she's been doing it forever. Meanwhile her solo work allows her to perform mainly jazz numbers and reproduce hits by fe-

male artists; which, she says, is what her "Nana used to listen to" and has therefore always played an important part in her life.

Julie includes Amy Winehouse,

Peggy Lee and the Pussycat Dolls in her repertoire, to name just a few.

Six years ago, and quite by coincidence, Julie decided that she wanted to have dreadlocks. "I'd al-

ways wanted to have them and I decided that if I didn't do it then I would never do it," she laughs. The long blonde dreads, which have different coloured threads woven into them, add to the assumption that Julie was possibly born singing!

Julie and Ferry, who is originally from Iran, but moved to the UK in 1975, came to live in Spain 16 years ago, having run a successful Bed & Breakfast in the North East of England. "We wanted to do what we were already doing but somewhere else," explains Julie.

## Family

They still run a rural tourism business in Comares, so the singing is a "fab hobby" that keeps both of them busy. Ferry boasts that he hasn't missed a concert yet and says that he is happy to see Julie doing something that "makes her happy". They have been married for 38 years and have a son and daughter who also both live in Spain. Last year the couple became grandparents for the first time when

**"Can you believe that I'd never even been to a musical festival before?"**

their son and his wife had a baby.

Mentally Ska'd, which is made up of Davey Hughes (sax), Matt Richards (bass), Jerry Griffith (drums) and Ryan Sibley and Andy Shepherd (both guitar), have played along the Costa del Sol, at Artesanal in Malaga's Muelle Uno and even as far away as Gibraltar.

The band has had a break since September and will be back on 9 December for Comares's Christmas market at the village's campsite bar, complete with the second song that they have written themselves, Set Me Free, which Julie reveals is more Reggae than Ska.

Julie is clearly relishing her new-found hobby and indeed talent. The many fans they have in their home village, and those they have picked up along the coast, will be delighted to hear of Mentally Ska'd's comeback and that Julie has plans to keep singing for many years to come, both with the band and as Jazzy Jools.



Julie Abedin with Andy Walker and Jerry Griffith. :: JENNIE RHODES

**Julie Abedin only discovered she could sing four years ago and it was thanks to a plucky fellow musician who told the local mayor that he was in a band with her that she made her debut. Since then they have performed all along the coast**

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# British artist wins National Print Award

**Roderic Stokes, who has been living in Spain for many years, is the 2018 winner of the Pilar Banús Foundation Prize**

**DEBBIE BARTLETT**

✉ debbieb.editorial@gmail.com



**MALAGA.** The National Print Awards ceremony has just taken place at the Marbella Print Museum (MGEC), where the winning works are now on display, and there was especially enthusiastic praise from the judges for British artist Roderic Stokes. His creative genius won him the Pilar Banús Foundation award for his work 'Viendo James Turrell en la tele' (Watching James Turrell on TV).

Roderic impressed the panel with a digital print combined with a relief produced in a manual press. The unusual and colourful image not only won him the 4,000-euro prize, but is also being used as the image for this year's edition of the National Awards.

This is not the first time Roderic Stokes has won one of these awards, but then he can boast a long and successful career, which has taken him from the UK to Germany and, many years ago, brought him to Spain.

He now lives and works in a converted mill house by the Hozgarganta river in Jímena de la Frontera, Cadiz province, which is where I went to visit him. The property is in the Alcornocales Natural Park, a vast area of unspoiled, protected countryside. His light and airy studio has large windows looking out upon leafy trees. It seems an idyllic place to work. Is nature and greenery important to him?



◀▲ Top, the awards ceremony at the MGEC. Above, Roderic Stokes' winning entry. Left, the artist at work. :: JOSELE-LANZA / SUR

"Nature is very important. I have spent hours and hours at a time in the natural park, drawing, and some of my work is a reflection of what is around me. My transparent works, for example, can be associated with

the water in rivers," he says.

The immediate impact of Roderic Stokes' work, though, is its precision. There is nothing slapdash about it. Perhaps this is something inherited or handed down from his father, who

owned a small pattern-making company in the Midlands. He had hoped that Roderic would take the company over but instead he left school early, at the age of 15, and went to Coventry College of Art, where he

studied Painting and Sculpture.

"We were taught to observe," he says. "Nudes, plants, we were sent out to the market in freezing weather to hone our powers of observation. We had to do 12-hour studies, looking at things with an analytical perspective." That is another factor which could have influenced the precision in his works.

Roderic moved to London when he left art school, and worked in commercial design, theatre costume, book illustration and fairground art, while continuing to experiment with painting and sculpture. In 1969, he co-founded the Electric Colour Company with three fellow artists, Andrew Greaves, Jeffrey Pine and David Smith. The company worked on the border of fine art and contemporary

three-dimensional design, and won the Italian Grand Prix for Design in 1971 for work on Piper aircraft customising. In 1974 Roderic began travelling in Spain and Morocco, and eventually settled in Andalucía, where he taught until 1990. He spent most of the next decade working in Cologne, Germany, and in 1994 he was commissioned to create a large-scale architectural illustration for the permanent collection of the Romisches Germanisches Museum.

He still works every day, "a bit less now that I'm older". He focuses on individual projects for a few months at a time: drawing, painting, prints and sculpture.

He says the subjects have to stimulate him, and indeed, the results certainly stimulate all those lucky enough to see them.

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## SOCIETY SCENE

# Many reasons to be cheerful on the Costa

While ICE and TIMS both celebrated their 30th birthdays, the brand-new Phoenix College held its inauguration ceremony

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

## TIMS choir Anniversary concert

The International Music Society mixed choir recently held a concert to celebrate 30 years of choral singing on the Costa del Sol. The performance took place at the Avanto Restaurant in La Cala de Mijas.

The choir was accompanied by Ricky Lavazza and Juliet Williams, both well known singers on the Costa, who sang Broadway hits such as Miss Saigon and Last Night of the World.

After the interval, the Luna Llena Duo; Simona Mango, a well-known Italian mezzo-soprano; and guitarist Bruce Reynold performed, followed by Juliet and Ricky with songs from Chicago, Aspects of Love and Les Misérables.

## Phoenix College Opening celebrations

Students and teachers came together in Malaga recently to celebrate the opening of Phoenix College. The centre is the first sixth form college of its kind on Spanish mainland and provides A-Level classes in subjects such as Applied Maths, Physics, Geography and Politics for students with a high level of English. Many of the students aspire to attend Cambridge, Oxford or other British universities when they finish school and the college is an official UCAS centre for the application process.

## La Cala de Mijas Lions Christmas fair

La Cala de Mijas Lions recently held a Christmas fair in order to raise funds for underprivileged families in the community. The Stagecoach Performing Arts group, Costa Soul singers and A Touch of Class entertained the public. Stalls, Father Christmas, a fashion show, raffles, and a tombola helped to raise 3,440 euros. At the end of the day, cheques were presented to PAWS and The Royal



Phoenix College celebrates opening in Malaga city centre. :: SUR



La Cala de Mijas Lions raised 3,440 euros. :: SUR



ICE turned 30 with a party. :: SUR

British Legion.

## ICE ICE turns 30

Members of ICE (International Club of Estepona) celebrated 30 years at a special party held at Finca

Monesterio in San Martín del Tesorillo. One of the highlights of the event was the production of It'll All Be Over By Christmas in commemoration of WWI, where members showcased their talents in performance. To find out about

## 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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## Carlos  lvarez delivers in the role of Simon Boccanegra at the Royal Opera House

The baritone from M laga, who will be seeing the year out in London, wants audiences to see performers who "don't hold back on energy"

  REGINA SOTORR O / EFE

When the audience are in their seats, he wants them to see someone on stage "who delivers, who doesn't hold back on energy or effort and who has attitude". At the moment M laga's most famous baritone, Carlos  lvarez, is once again giving all of himself to a character: until 10 December he is playing Simon Boccanegra at the Royal Opera House in London. This is not the first time that he has given voice to the corsair who became the Doge of Genoa, nor is it his first time on the iconic London stage, but there is something new about it: he has never played this role in this theatre before.

The baritone is starring in this Verdi opera in a production which has a Renaissance air, directed by Elijah Moshinsky.  lvarez says it is an "absolutely honest" version of what the score and the libretto say.



Carlos  lvarez and soprano Hrachuhi Bassenz.   CLIVE BARDA / ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Although it was first performed in Venice in 1857, it was the revised version of 1881 which made this a repertory opera after its debut at La Scala in Milan, and that is the one which is now being per-

formed in London.

 lvarez insists that sticking to tradition doesn't mean being stale or outdated. He believes in "serving this profession from the point of view of tradition" and not up-

setting the public. In his view, the innovations in readings of classic operas, most of the time, have more to do with "personal situations of the directors who want to put some of their own conflicts on

stage to try to seduce younger audiences". He, however, believes the way to attract new generations is to offer them quality performances and reasonable ticket prices. In that sense, he says 'Simon Boccanegra' is a "very suitable" work with which to continue to enthuse the public about opera.

The conductor on this occasion is Hungarian Henrik N n si, who knows the Royal Opera House well as he has conducted productions such as Salom , The Barber of Seville and Turandot. Playing opposite Carlos  lvarez is Armenian soprano Hrachuhi Bassenz in the role of Boccanegra's daughter; she made her successful debut at the Royal Opera House two seasons ago. The cast is completed by the Italian tenor Francesco Meli, Italian bass Ferruccio Furlanetto, American baritone Mark Rucker and South African bass Simon Shibambu.

 lvarez will be saying goodbye to the present year in London before facing a 2019 which is already filled with commitments all over the world, including M laga. He is undaunted at the prospect, convinced that his is not a profession to make a living, but "so that people can change their state of mind and feel better".

That is a philosophy that he maintains on stage and in his personal life: "I nearly always take a positive view of what is happening around me, and if things are bad then I try to learn something from them," he says.

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**Hästens**

## Nerja Arts Society invites members of the public to join 25th anniversary celebrations

by J. RHODES

**NERJA.** The Nerja branch of the Arts Society will be holding a full day of celebrations on Tuesday 11 December to mark its 25th anniversary and members will be joined by the organisation's chief executive, Florian Schweize, as well as founding member, Roberta Kettel.

A 10-kilometre run will start off the events at 11am at the Balcón de Europa and anyone interested in taking part is welcome to do so. Mr Schweize will be doing the run, as well as other runs with the Costa del Sol branch in Fuengirola on Monday 10 December, and with the Gibraltar branch on Wednesday 12. All of the runs are charity events and the money raised in Nerja will go to the Unesco-funded Children's Villages project, which has a base in El Palo and helps children without a family home.

At 5pm on Tuesday a sculpture created by Cómputa-based artist and Arts Society member, Lieuwke Loth, and based on her work 'Infinity', will be inaugurated at the town's Casa de la Cultura in Calle Granada and anyone is welcome to attend the opening. The sculpture is a gift from the Arts Society to the town and will be on permanent exhibition in the centre's foyer.

The inauguration will be followed by December's lecture, which will explore 'The Power and Passion of Al Andalus' and will be followed by an anniversary dinner with live music, at the Mirador in Nerja. Both the lecture and dinner are for members only.



Malika Mafidoul puts the finishing touches to her house. by C. MÁRQUEZ

## The most desirable property on the western Costa del Sol

by CHARO MÁRQUEZ / SUR

**ESTEPONA.** A two-metre high gingerbread house was one of the highlights enjoyed by the more than 500 visitors who attended the Christmas market at the Hotel Kempinski in Estepona last weekend.

Pastry chef Malika Mafidoul had the challenge of producing this giant sweet construction that decorated the hotel's entrance hall. It took her two and a half days to bake the gingerbread and another three days to put the house together.

The ingredients included 60 ki-

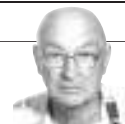
los of flour, 50 kilos of icing sugar, 30 kilos of honey, 10 kilos of butter, six litres of egg and a kilo and a half of cinnamon, ginger and cardamom. Malika explained how the gingerbread bricks were placed on a wooden structure and mortared together with meringue.

While guests were unable to eat the house itself, biscuits made using the same recipe were available.

Visitors were also able to enjoy craft stalls and live music provided by Choir Andaluz, the choir from Colegio San José in Estepona and soloists from Sotogrande International School.

## WILDLIFE

PETER HARRISON



## Interesting behaviour

Animal behaviour is interesting to read about, but more interesting if you witness it first hand and draw your own conclusions.

When you live in a very old farmhouse, as we do, there are many cracks and nooks where wildlife chooses to hide away. When we moved to our present home and replaced the windows, the new panes fitted into the spaces but needed some filling with an edge of mortar and over time the mortar cracked leaving spaces for wildlife. To our surprise we heard chirping, not just an odd chirp but an orchestra. Further investigation showed the chirping to come from geckos which, from time to time, emerged from their cosy home and ran up the outside walls with remarkable agility. They have pads and hairs on their feet which enables them to do this and indeed scientists have studied their feet to develop strong adhesives.

Geckos are cold-blooded so do not suffer cold but in winter they go torpid and only emerge from their homes occasionally.

One night, to our surprise, out came the geckos and ran up and down our window glass. At first we thought they were attracted by the light, but geckos are happiest in dark places like cracks in walls. Maybe they liked the heat from the lounge window and the wood-burning stove nearby. We were fascinated by the actions of these beautiful creatures. They in-

habit countries with a warm climate so maybe it was heat they sought.

Careful study revealed the answer: they were after food. Insects are their main diet and insects are attracted by light. The geckos found a real feast on our windows.

I remember a few years ago when we were in New Zealand concern was expressed about the annual increase of insects which were coming from the uninhabited island of Crusoe. Apparently a cargo ship went aground on the island in 1949 with a load of fruit and vegetables which was offloaded to refloat the vessel and left lying on the island. Insects arrived to enjoy the rotting food and stayed there and spread their hunting ground.

A scientist called Mike Lee came up with a solution and captured thirty geckos which relished the harvest of insects. That was in 2010 and when we were in New Zealand recently the insect problem had been resolved.

Some people in Spain keep pet geckos to keep insects down. One householder told me he was worried because one of his geckos had lost its tail. No need to worry. If a predator makes an attack on a gecko its first reaction is to freeze. A further escape movement is to forfeit its tail, an action called autotomy. Another tail soon grows.

Yes, animal behaviour is indeed fascinating.



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## WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

7 DECEMBER 1974

# Star shot-putter Manolo Martínez is born in León

**The Spaniard won bronze in the 2004 Athens Olympics and has also been the World and European Indoor Champion**

**D**escribed as a “gentle giant”, Manuel Martínez Gutiérrez, better known as Manolo Martínez, is an ex-world champion at shot put.

Born in León, Spain, on December 7th 1974, he dominated Spanish shot put throughout the entirety of his career.

By the tender age of seventeen he had established himself as a junior athlete on an international level.

Winning a silver medal at the

World Junior Championships in South Korea in 1992, he then went on to become the European Junior Champion the following year.

Martínez Gutiérrez had many successes throughout his time as a professional athlete.

His main career highlights came in the form of his win in the 2002 European Indoor Championships and then going on to take the gold medal at the 2003 World Indoor Championships.

Every professional athlete dreams of competing in the Olympic Games. This



Manuel Martínez Gutiérrez at a photo shoot on the beach. :: SUR

came true for Martínez in Athens in 2004. However, not only did he compete, but he was also awarded the bronze

medal position following an IAAF

drug test which disqualified the first placed participant.

He represented Spain at the Olympics four times consecutively from 1996 to 2008, and also com-

peted in five consecutive European Athletics Championships.

He participated in the shot put in every World Championship in Athletics from 1993 to 2009, with the only one exception being the 1999 event.

The star athlete was trained at CD Universidad León Atletismo club by Carlos Burón.

With his international career spanning 19 years, he was selected to represent his country 84 times, which is more than any other Spanish athlete.

The Gentle Giant has also been seen to improve Spanish national records in competition on 31 occasions throughout his career, which is an impressive feat for



Martínez as Goliath in 2011. :: SUR

## LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Atleta	Athlete
Juegos Olímpicos	Olympics
Campeonato	Championship
Oro	Gold
Bronce	Bronze
Medalla	Medal
Entrenamiento	Training
Gigante	Giant
Película	Film
Logro	Achievement
Trayectoria	Career
Ganador	Winner
Impresionante	Impressive
Talento	Talent
Deporte	Sport
Drogas	Drugs
Descalificado	Disqualified

any professional athlete.

Outside of shot put, the Spanish athlete is a keen artist and actor, starring in the film Stigmata, directed by Adán Aliaga, and the 2011 film Capitán Trueno y el Santo Grial where he played the character Goliath.

A man of many talents, Manuel Martínez Gutiérrez has achieved much in the professional sporting world, as well as trying his hand in some more creative fields.

**Bilingual crossword inside back page**

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#### REF. L. A. T.

I am the owner of an apartment and rented it a few months ago to a group of four friends. I knew one of them, and I knew that he had a job and that he was reliable, so I had no problem signing the rental contract, although I did ask for the payment of two months in advance and the corresponding deposit.

They all signed the contract, and until now they have been paying promptly. However, I have found out that the guy I know intends to leave the flat to live with his partner. In this situation, should I modify the contract? I do not know the others very well and do not know anything about their economic situation, so ideally I'd like to keep it as it is so that the one who is going is responsible in case of non-payment.

In principle, the contract should be modified, although everything will depend on what you decide. All those who signed the contract are bound by the same terms, even if one of them leaves, unless the contract is modified. If you think that due to the solvency of that person, it is advisable that he be bound by the contract until the end of the contract, you are not obliged to accept an early termination.

#### REF. S. Y. R.

Two weeks ago it was my nephew's birthday, and I went to a toy store to buy him a present. However, it turned out that my brother had already bought him the same thing, so without having opened it, I took it back to the store to return it. However, to my surprise, even though the box is unopened and I have the purchase ticket, I have been told that no returns are allowed. The shop assistant also pointed out a sign where they indicated it, which I had not seen. In any case, can they legally refuse to reimburse the amount of the toy?

No establishment is obliged to return the price of a product, unless it has a defect. It is true that most stores offer their customers this possibility under certain terms and conditions, but as a service, as they have no legal obligation to do so.

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## GARDENING

# The cat's whiskers

**Billowing blue flower spikes on sprawling stems of grey-green leaves from spring until the end of the summer**

Nepeta is a genus of more than 250 species of plant native to Europe, Asia and Africa. It is a member of the mint family (Lamiaceae) and there are many hybrids available. The spikes of

flowers can be white, pink or lavender-blue and there is even a yellow form, *Nepeta govaniana* from Kashmir, although unlike the other species it prefers cool, damp soil.

Nepeta blooms repeatedly throughout the season and shearing back after each flowering will keep the plant compact and promote even more flowers.

It generally has a sprawling habit and makes a fantastic addition to a cottage-style garden layout or to soften the edge of a path.

Some of the species available are spectacular; *N. X 'Six Hills Giant'* grows tall and upright and has deep blue spikes of flowers.

More compact is *N. nerviosa 'Felix'* which has vivid blue flowers but only reaches about 30cm high.

Some species of Nepeta, named for the ancient Etruscan city Nepete, contain nepetalactone which is extremely attractive to cats. *Nepeta cataria* is especially rich in this chemical and is sold as catnip. Either fresh or dried, it drives cats wild, producing a temporary euphoria when inhaled. Although cats adore it, it is probably the least attractive of the genus with pale pink or white flowers.

*N. subsessilis 'Sweet Dreams'* has attractive pink flowers with burgundy bracts but needs regular irrigation. The majority of Nepeta species are drought-resistant, need full sun and poor, dry soils; basically they thrive best with neglect. Rich soils and regular watering will result in fewer flowers and long thin growth which will be less aromatic. Newer varieties are usually sterile but the older ones may self seed. Propagation is by cuttings or by division in spring.



Nepeta forms a sprawling shrub. Close up of bloom (Inset). :: WIKIMEDIA

## READER'S PHOTO



:: CAROLINE SELLERS

## FEEDING THE BIRDS

This photo was sent in by Caroline Sellers. It appears to be of a *Pyracantha* bush, loaded with berries and some lethal thorns, but no doubt loved by the birds at this time of year.

## GARDENING HINTS FOR DECEMBER

### Climbing or rambling?

Tidy up your climbing roses by cutting out any dead or diseased stems and tying any long whippy growth to the support.

When tying in the branches, keep them as horizontal as possible as this will encourage new growth to form lower down. If you're not sure if

your rose is a climber or a rambler, think back to when it flowered. If it flowered around June then it's a rambler. If you cannot remember when it stopped flowering exactly (it may even have flowers on it now) then it's probably a climber. Ramblers are usually pruned in late summer.

## 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 Málaga, with a caption and a few words of explanation. Alternatively, you can send them to us via Facebook ([@surenglish](https://www.facebook.com/surenglish)) or Twitter ([@SUR\\_English](https://twitter.com/SUR_English))

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# A sleep nightmare



Henry Nicholls, scientific journalist and the author of 'Sleepyhead', at a hotel in Madrid :: VIRGINIA CARRASCO

**Henry Nicholls is narcoleptic. He sometimes falls asleep with no warning during the day, or just collapses. "And at night we sleep very badly," he says**

**:: ANTONIO PANIAGUA**

**H**enry Nicholls discovered that he was narcoleptic at the worst time. It happened when this zoologist was 22 and in the Kalahari desert in South Africa, scanning the horizon to watch for lions. He suddenly fell asleep with no warning, and then woke up with a start, not totally sure

that he hadn't been attacked by the animals. He had been sleeping very deeply, he realised when he saw the mark of the jeep's steering wheel on his forehead.

From then on he began to search for information about his illness and other sleep disorders, to the point that today he is one of the greatest scientific experts on this condition,

which in his case is not very serious.

Nicholls, a scientific journalist specialising in evolution and history of science, lives in London with his wife and two children and was in Spain recently to launch his book 'Sleepyhead' (Blackie Books).

There is a wide belief that narcoleptics are lucky people who can snooze when they feel like it, but this is something he quickly corrects. "At night the sleep is very fragmented. Narcoleptics sleep very badly," he stresses, and they suffer "terrible hallucinations". In the end, narcolepsy and insomnia are links in the same chain. In fact, narcoleptics are often prescribed strong sleeping pills in an attempt to alleviate their problems.

Henry Nicholls points out that, insomnia can have serious consequences on people's health. If it is repetitive and someone doesn't get enough sleep for weeks on end, hallucinatory dreams can occur and their physical and mental health is affected. "If we were able to sleep better, we would reduce our risk of suffering obesity, cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular accidents," he says. Narcolepsy is like a bad dream: there is no cure.

Nicholls, who writes for the BBC and prestigious scientific magazines such as 'Science' and 'Nature', sometimes suffers episodes of cataplexy, as do three-quarters of all narcoleptics. Strong emotion can cause him to lose muscle control so he collapses and remains inert like a rag doll.

Once, on a chairlift up a mountain with his friend Kate, he spotted a marmot below. When he opened his mouth to tell his companion, he fell forward, head on chest, and collapsed. "If my ski poles hadn't been in the way, my body would have slipped off the cushioned seat and the poles and I would have fallen onto the muddy ground from a height of ten metres," he wrote in one essay.

Because little research has been done into this condition, there are still numerous mysteries around cataplexy. The times when Henry



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Nicholls has collapsed have nearly always been when he was enjoying himself and in good company.

The sudden collapse comes "at times of emotion, euphoria or laughter," he explains. Boredom and monotony set off his narcolepsy, happiness and excitement his cataplexy. If he is sitting in front of the TV, enjoying the wit of a comedian, he will smile and laugh out loud, but if he is with friends, the same joke can literally make him fall flat on his face. Curiously, he is more likely to collapse if he is telling a joke than listening to one.

"Don't worry, it's not going to happen right now because I don't know you," he says ironically to us, the journalist and the photographer. "At first it can seem quite a pleasant state to be in because you don't lose consciousness, but the laughter can turn

## "If we could sleep better, we would reduce our risk of obesity, cancer, diabetes and heart attacks"

to an unfathomable terror. Because it can happen frequently, it is incapacitating for many people".

### Genetic base

Plenty of tests have shown that autoimmune attacks are the most common cause of narcolepsy. The immune system misinterprets an infection in the upper respiratory tubes and mistakenly suppresses the 30,000 neurones which are estimated to exist in the centre of the brain. In a body with more than 100 billion cells, such a loss might seem negligible, but the problem is that these are not ordinary cells. They are found in the hypothalamus, which helps

to regulate many of the body's basic operations, such as the daily transition from wakefulness to sleep. These neurotransmitters are hypocretins, also known as orexins. Narcolepsy is quite common in certain breeds of dog, which suggests that it has a genetic base.

The illness is not as uncommon as one might think. It affects one in every 2,500 people. Drooling in class while trying to take notes because you have fallen asleep might seem funny, but it happened to Henry Nicholls and he says there is nothing comical about it.

"Nobody mocks someone who is missing a limb, but unfortunately people do laugh at anyone with narcolepsy. I can put up with it, but the psychological effects on children who have not been diagnosed are very serious," he says.

### NARCOLEPSY

#### Prevalence

Narcolepsy affects one in every 2,500 people and produces frequent episodes of uncontrollable insomnia.

#### Etiology

The most common cause of the

illness is an attack on the auto immune system. The human immune system misinterprets and infection in the upper respiratory tubes and mistakenly suppresses 30,000 neurones. These neurones are the ones that regulate sleep.

#### Medications

There are medications that im-

prove symptoms of the illness, but none of them are able to repair the underlying brain damage. Narcoleptics suffer from numerous interruptions to their sleep patterns and end up with insomnia. Strong sleeping pills are often prescribed. Three quarters of narcoleptics also suffer from cataplexy, a complete loss of consciousness.



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César Ramírez, José Ángel Gómez Pascual and Manuel Baca Cots. :: SUR

## Three local doctors named among 100 best in country

:: E. P.

**MÁLAGA.** Three doctors based in Malaga province have been included in Forbes magazine's list of the top 100 doctors in Spain.

César Pablo Ramírez Plaza, head of General Surgery and Digestive Surgery at the Quirónsalud hospitals in Málaga and Marbella; José Ángel Gómez Pascual, head of the

Urology Service and the Urodynamics Unit at the Hospital Quirónsalud in Malaga; and Manuel Baca Cots, head of the Uncibay Paediatrics group and specialist at the Hospital Quirónsalud in Malaga; were among the prestigious group of doctors, the majority of whom are based in Madrid or Barcelona.

César Ramírez was also recog-

nised this week by SUR in the newspaper's Malagueños del Año awards (see page 20).

Manuel Baca Cots was head of Paediatrics at the Hospital Gálvez in Malaga before moving to the Hospital Internacional Xanit in Benalmádena and later the Hospital Quirónsalud Málaga.

Urology specialist José Ángel Gómez Pascual has worked at the Hospital Infanta Elena in Huelva and at the Hospital Regional Carlos Haya in Malaga before moving to the Hospital Quirónsalud Málaga.

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:: JOSELE-LANZA

## RUNNING FOR HEALTH IN MARBELLA

More than 400 people took part last weekend in the Carrera por la Promoción de la Salud, a fun run organised in Marbella by staff at the Costa del Sol Hospital to promote healthy living. This was just one of the events organised to mark the 25th anniversary of the hospital. Juan Carlos Cabello, Andrés Ávila and José Antonio Urbaneja were the first three men and the women's category was won by Janine Lima, Rocío Sibajas and Miriam Lirola.

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## School makes donation to Malaga children's oncology association

The youngsters raised funds for AVOI as part of a project on the global impact of illnesses

by JENNIE RHODES

**MALAGA.** Five Year 11 students from Almuñécar International School, along with their teacher, Manuel Galiana, travelled to Malaga's Materno children's hospital earlier this week to donate 300 euros to the hospital's Asociación de Voluntarios de Oncología Infantil (AVOI, or child oncology volunteer association), which helps children with cancer as well as their families.

Alex, Eva, Carmen, Christine and María raised the money through a

series of activities which formed part of a project for their Global Perspectives class.

The aim of the two-month project was to raise awareness of the global impact of different illnesses as well as raise money for AVOI, their chosen charity.

The girls said that they were "very pleased" with what they had learned through the project, which is to be evaluated by the University of Cambridge, as well as with the money raised.

Mr Galiana thanked Tomás Valero, a taxi driver from Almuñécar, who drove the pupils and teacher to the hospital for free.

Last year the school donated money to the same association after raising funds by organising a Christmas market as well as other events.




Almuñécar International School pupils with teacher Manuel Galiana and an AVOI volunteer. :: SUR

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# Chronobiology: how meal times can affect body weight

Every day there are variations in hormonal cycles which determine your propensity to get fatter or become ill

## AMIL LÓPEZ VIÉITEZ

The term 'chronobiology' comes from the Greek 'kronos' (time), 'bios' (life) and 'logos' (study). It is the science that studies the circadian rhythms (from the Latin circa diem, meaning approximately one day).

During the 24 hours of a day, your body passes through different phases of hormonal secretion, physical coordination and sleep. Depending on the time of day, your hormones metabolise certain nutrients better, and that is very interesting in terms of the success of diets.

In mammals, there is a biological clock in the hypothalamus which is synchronised with the stimuli of light and darkness. There are also clocks in peripheral tissues which can be modulated by the central clock and by food.

In the morning, the central clock alarm sounds and cortisone, the

waking-up hormone, is activated; it travels through the blood to set the time schedule for tissues and organs.

In the afternoon, the body temperature rises slightly and then drops at night. This is a sign for the body clock to prepare itself for rest.

The adipose tissue shows a circadian rhythm. Its clock genes are able to regulate the rhythmic expression of the hormones which determine appetite and weight, such as adiponectin, leptin and resistin.

The degree of DNA methylation of these clock genes increases with obesity and if you eat quickly or snack between meals. These genes do not express themselves well and that also produces sleep alterations and a greater accumulation of fat around the waist. The good thing is that this methylation is reversible if you change your eating habits and you can lose kilos until you reach a healthy weight.



Eating earlier in the day benefits weight loss. :: SUR

Chronodisruption is an alteration of the circadian rhythms which favour obesity and diabetes. It occurs frequently with age, jet lag, shift work, when you sleep with a light on or without closing the curtains, when you take your mobile phone or tablet to bed, or

when you eat without taking into account hormonal rhythms.

## How to take advantage of chronobiology

If for a time you stop snacking between meals, don't eat when you're bored and eat a bit more slowly,

you will 'demethylate' the clock gene, which will help you to become slimmer, sleep better and be healthier.

First thing in the morning it is essential to eat foods which increase the production of tyrosine, because this enables us to be more active physically and also intellectually. The foods which can help with this are dried fruits and nuts, cereals, fish and pulses. It is best to eat carbohydrates at lunchtime (bread, pasta, rice, potatoes) and have protein with a vegetable garnish in the evening.

If you eat your main meal of the day after 3pm, you will find it harder to lose weight. According to a study published in the International Journal of Obesity, 420 overweight people followed a Mediterranean diet for 20 weeks (they ate the same, rested the same, took the same exercise, but half of them ate their main meal of the day before 3pm) and those who ate later only lost an average of eight kilos, while the others lost 12.

Eating an evening meal after 9.30pm favours chronodisruption. Working shifts or at night alters the circadian rhythms of the appetite hormones (leptin and ghrelin) and increases total calorie consumption.

Ghrelin gives a feeling of hunger and peaks three times: 8am, 12 noon and 8pm, which is why the daily meals should be eaten around these times, when the pancreas and liver are more active.



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In Beas the 'live' Nativity is part of Christmas tradition . :: SUR

## DISCOVER ANDALUCÍA

# A growing Christmas tradition in Andalucía

JAVIER  
ALMELLONES

The Nativity scene is part of seasonal traditions throughout the region; in many

places locals dress up to reenact the Christmas story



**HISTORY.** The 'Belén Viviente' de Beas is considered the oldest in Andalucía.

**SWEET.** Among the most original scenes, is in Rute (Córdoba) and is made of chocolate.

**MUSEUM.** In the town of Mollina you can visit and collections of more than 60 nativity scenes.

**DATES.** Until 1 January.

## The route of the Nativity

Beas, Mazagón, Torrecampo, Almayate, Sanlúcar la Mayor, Rute and Mollina are some of the Andalusian towns that host the most unique Nativity scenes

### Where to eat

**Sierrezuela.** In this restaurant, situated just a step away from the celebrations in Almayate, you can find traditional dishes.  
*Ctra. MA-175, s/n. Almayate (Vélez-Málaga). Telephone 951 387 995.*

### Where to stay

**Mirador de Rute.** Nice hotel to stay at when visiting the famous Chocolate Nativity in Rute.  
*Ctra. Rute - Encinas Reales, Km. 0,200. Rute (Córdoba) Tel. 957 539 404. www.miradorrute.com*

Among the most deep-rooted Andalusian Christmas traditions is the recreation of the Nativity scene. Known as 'Belenes', (Belén is Spanish for Bethlehem), Nativity scenes are an essential part of the region's Christmas spirit. However, alongside the more traditional scenes, throughout Andalucía locals get involved in 'Belenes Vivientes'. In these "live" Nativity scenes, residents of towns and villages get dressed up and recreate the Christmas story.

In the village of Beas, in the province of Huelva, a "live" Nativity has been part of the festivities for almost half a century. Well acquainted with the tradition, the adults and children of the village create a very realistic Nativity, dressing up and using live animals and other props.

In what is the oldest 'live nativity' in Andalucía, performed since 1970, the village showcases a variety of traditional biblical scenes. The characters also depict traditional trades and way of life from the village's past, using old tools and other items.

As in previous years, other activities are organised at the same time as the Nativity, for example, tours of the village, hiking, live music, flamenco and street markets.

Other "live" Nativity scenes to be enjoyed over the coming days in the province of Huelva can be found in Puerto Moral, Mazagón, Corrales and Galaroza.

The latter, like that of Beas, is one of the most prestigious scenes in this western province of Andalucía. Every year the people of Galaroza perform their own Nativity near the Santa Brígida shrine where the stable scene delights tourists and locals



alike.

In the small village of Pe-layo near Algeciras another live recreation of the birth of Jesus has become one of the most important in Andalucía. More than 300 locals are recruited to participate in this iconic scene, creating a festive spirit for locals of the town and visitors alike.

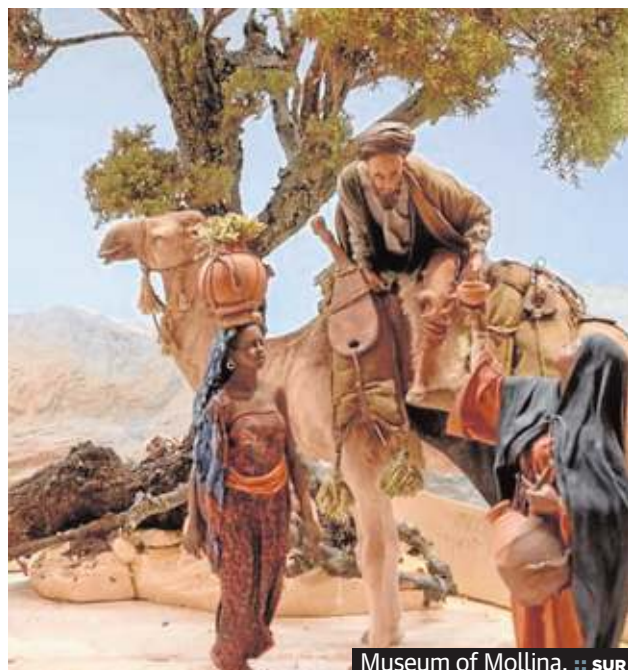
In the Cordoba town of Torrecampo a traditional Nativity will be performed on 29 and 30 December, near the church. Despite being one of the most recent representations of the Nativity it has already attracted many visitors over the years.

In the Malaga village of Almayate the Nativity is a spectacular display of human and technical resources. This scene can be seen at the Juan Paniagua school.

Throughout Andalucía there are many places to enjoy this tradition in the run-up to Christmas and during the festive period.

Towns such as Guaro and Álora, in Malaga; Constantina and Sanlúcar la Mayor, in Seville; and Pozo Alcón, in Jaén will all play host to their own Nativity scenes.

However, "live" Nativities are not the only festive tradition found in Anda-



Museum of Molina. :: SUR

lucía. In every city and town visitors will find scenes made with figures depicting the Christmas story. Among others those worth a mention are in Jerez de la Frontera, Seville, Úbeda and the botanical garden in Cordoba.

One of the most unique and impressive scenes can be found in the Cordoba town of Rute. The figures of this nativity scene are made from a thousand kilos of melted chocolate.

In Molina the permanent Nativity Museum,

Museo de Belenes, was opened to visitors last year. It houses around 60 artistic representations of the Nativity with different details, showing churches in Malaga province, for example, the famous Court of the Lions in the Alhambra, or even the famous 'favelas' of Rio de Janeiro.

There are over 1,000 unique nativity figures, covering more than 5,000 square metres. The museum also includes an exhibition of customs with old farm tools.

## MORE IDEAS

### Festival of the Virgin of the Rondeles

#### Casarabonela

##### Sierra de las Nieves.

One of the most intriguing celebrations in December is the Festival of the Virgin of the Rondeles on 12 December in Casarabonela.

The Divina Pastora (an image of the Virgin Mary) is carried in a procession that weaves through the town's streets to give thanks for the olive harvest. The procession is lit by the flames from torches, made from old esparto mats, dipped in olive oil.

The unusual feature of this festival is that a pagan element, fire, is used in a religious celebration of thanksgiving. The Christmas touch is given by the carol singers, who accompany the Virgin during the procession, singing joyful Christmas songs.

The procession ends with chocolate, cakes and bread with oil in the main square of the town, outside the church of Santiago.



Fire is fundamental in the celebrations. :: SUR

This popular religious festival which pays homage to the Virgin of the Rondeles giving thanks the year's good olive harvest is a tradition that has been in place since the eighteenth century.

In recent years the festival has been complemented by a variety of other activities in the days

before the main event.

From today, Friday, visitors can follow a tapas route showcasing the most traditional dishes of the town. There will also be a traditional olive miller's breakfast, and a Christmas market.

*The evening of 12 December in the streets of Casarabonela.*



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## EXHIBITIONS

### Design Academy Winter Expo Monda. 14 December, Design Academy.

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<https://www.facebook.com/event/306880500155836/>



Picasso's aquatints, Malaga.

### Picasso's Aquatints

**Malaga.** Until 3 February. Picasso Museo Casa Natal (birth house). Similar to the process for making prints, Picasso made aquatints with acid on metal plaques from which he then printed off his image.

### Hernan Bas

**Malaga.** Until 9 December Centro de Arte Contemporáneo 'A Brief Intermission' is the title of the exhibition at the CAC in

Malaga. It is the first time that American artist Hernan Blas has exhibited in Spain. Thirty six paintings are on display of varying formats.

### El Viaje del Guernica

**Malaga.** Until 8 December, Plaza de la Marina. Free.

The Obra Social La Caixa has organised an exhibition with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía to demonstrate the history and the journey of Picasso's famous painting, Guernica.

### Amor y Deseo

**Vélez-Málaga.** Until 8 December.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. The exhibition consists of 51 works by Pablo Ruiz Picasso and celebrates the fifth anniversary of the centre.

### Invierno Ardiente

**Orgiva.** Until 15 December. The old town hall of Órgiva.

The Artist's Network Alpujarra are holding a joint exhibition.  
[www.artistsnetworkalpujarra.com](http://www.artistsnetworkalpujarra.com)

### Nativity

**Malaga.** Until 5 January, Sala Minorance, Archivo Municipal, Alameda Principal 23.

A hand-crafted 'Belén' has been set up in one of the rooms in the Archivo Municipal. It has been made by José María Mesa a teacher from the Canary Islands.

### Nativity scene

**Torremolinos.** Until 6 January.

### Lower floor of the town hall.

The municipal town hall Nativity scene is open for visitors 9am-1.30pm and 5.30-7.30pm week days and 10am-2pm, 5.30-7.30pm Saturdays and Sundays.

### Nativity exhibition

**Malaga.** Until 6 January. Malaga Cathedral.

The Asociación Belenista de Málaga La Alcazaba is exhibiting its Nativity scene in the cathedral from 10am-4pm and 5-8.30pm. Closed 24-31 December and 5 January.

## CHARITY

### Masquerade Ball for Cudeca

**Mijas.** 21 December, 7.30pm. Restaurante Valparaíso. 30€.

Entertainment by Simone and Mr Maph. Masks on sale or bring your own. A full menu with welcome drinks and canapes on arrival. Reservations: restaurant Valparaíso 952485996 or call Suzy: 619444184.

### Light A Light for Cudeca

**Benalmádena.** 16 December, from 6pm. Cudeca Cancer Hospice

Founder Joan hunt OBE will be turning on the lights at this annual event. Father Christmas will also put in an appearance and there is face painting, Christmas cake and sweets, the Sunny View College choir and a raffle. There will also be stalls selling gifts and Christmas cards. More information at [www.lightupcudeca.org](http://www.lightupcudeca.org)



Nativity scene, Malaga

### FAMA Christmas Party

**Mijas Costa.** 15 December, 7pm.

Tamisa Golf Hotel, Camino Viejo de Coín. 40€.

Welcome drink and hot mulled wine, three-course-dinner (vegetarian option), wine and beer until 11pm. Raising funds for the Foundation for Abandoned and Mistreated Animals. Bookings: call 620354885 or email: [patriciamary-coleman@gmail.com](mailto:patriciamary-coleman@gmail.com)

### Charity fun walk

**Estepona.** 16 December, from 10am. Los Reales. 10€.

An 8km circular walk to include Christmas trees in their natural habitat, mince pies, mulled wine and panoramic views. The funds will go to Heart animal rescue in Estepona who want to build a 1,500 metre enclosure for podencos. Email: [fundandfund@outlook.com](mailto:fundandfund@outlook.com)

look.com

### Quiz Night for ADANA

**Manilva.** 18 December, 8pm. Rose and Thistle, Puerto de Duquesa. 3€.

Arrive early to get a seat. To book: 952155850

### Charity market

**Benajáraf.** 20 December, from 10am until 6pm. Puerto Niza Restaurant.

A market to raise money for the construction of a new classroom for the GAIA ECO-learning community of Torre del Mar. There will be a healing area, live music, workshops, baby chill-out area and activities for everyone.  
[www.semillamontealegre.org](http://www.semillamontealegre.org)

## MUSIC & DANCE

### CoraXalia Christmas concerts

**Alcaucín** 7 December, 8pm. Arts Centre.

**Periana** 8 December, 8pm. Iglesia de San Isidro Labrador.

The choir CoraXalia are performing two free Christmas concerts. Email: [eucorax@hotmail.es](mailto:eucorax@hotmail.es) or tel: 689111352.

### Pianist in the street

**Torremolinos.** 7 December, from 5pm. Plaza Costa Del Sol

Pupils of the Municipal Music School will be playing. Anyone who can play the piano is also encouraged to participate. Classical and Christmas music.



## MOVIE LISTING From Wednesday 5th to Thursday 13th December

ORIGINAL VERSION SUBTITLED SPANISH



### THE GRINCH

Director Yarrow Cheney and Scott Mosier  
Voices Benedict Cumberbatch, Cameron Seely, Rashida Jones  
ANIMATION - 86 min.  
Language: English

Wednesday 5: 18:30, 20:30  
From Thursday 6 to Saturday 8: 16:00, 18:30, 20:30  
Sunday 9: 12:00, 16:00, 18:30, 20:30  
Monday 10 and Tuesday 11: 17:45  
Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13: 17:50



### WIDOWS

Director Steve McQueen  
Starring Viola Davis, Michelle Rodriguez, Elizabeth Debicki  
THRILLER - 99 min.  
Language: English, Spanish, Polish

Four women with nothing in common, take fate into their own hands, and conspire to forge a future on their own terms.

From Wednesday 5 to Sunday 9: 18:00  
Monday 10: 22:15  
Tuesday 11: 17:30, 22:15  
Wednesday 12: 17:30, 19:45, 22:15



### RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET

Director Phil Johnston and Rich Moore  
Voices John C. Reilly, Sarah Silverman, Gai Gadot  
ANIMATION - 112 min.  
Language: English

Wednesday 5: 18:00, 20:00  
From Thursday 6 to Saturday 8: 15:45, 18:10, 20:00  
Sunday 9: 11:45, 15:45, 18:10, 20:00  
Monday 10 and Tuesday 11: 17:30  
Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13: 17:50, 19:45



### BEN IS BACK

Director Peter Hedges  
Starring Julia Roberts, Lucas Hedges, Courtney B. Vance  
DRAMA - 103 min.  
Language: English

Wednesday 5: 18:30  
From Thursday 6 to Sunday 9: 16:30, 18:30  
Monday 10 and Tuesday 11: 18:00, 20:00  
Wednesday 12: 17:50, 20:00  
Thursday 13: 20:00



### FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE CRIMES OF GRINDELWALD

From Wednesday 5 to Sunday 9: 22:15  
Monday 10 and Tuesday 11: 22:00  
Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13: 22:15



### BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

Wednesday 5: 22:45  
From Thursday 6 to Sunday 9: 15:30, 22:45  
Monday 10 and Tuesday 11: 19:45, 22:15  
Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13: 20:00, 22:00



**Costa Soul Singers**

**Calahonda** 11 December, 11am. *Calahonda International Baptist Church. Free.*

The Costa Soul Singers will be in concert for a funky, soulful Christmas concert. Red, gold and green are the preferred colours for clothing for this event which will offer mince pies and coffee.

**Provincial Youth Orchestra**

**Malaga** 11 December, 8pm. *Centro Cultural María Victoria Atencia.* The orchestra will play a Christmas themed repertoire of music during the concert. Conducted by Albert Skuratov and with piano soloist María Márquez.



TAPAS choir, Mijas

**The Wall Bar**

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

**8 December.** Delirium Blues Fusion. Lourdes del Pino and Javier Esteve. Blues fusion.

**15 December.** Dana and Gianni. International songs, jazz fusion and blues.

**Carol service**

**Alhaurín el Grande.** 14 December, 6pm. *Cemetery Chapel.*

Traditional Christmas carols organised by the St Andrew's Chaplaincy Costa del Sol East.

**Casa de la Cultura events**

**Almuñécar.**

**15 December, 7pm.** Orquesta de Cámara Mediterránea (Mediterranean Chamber Orchestra) play traditional Christmas music by Handel, Vivaldi, Corelli and Manfredini.

**16 December, 6pm.** The Great Kiev Ballet perform The Nutcracker suite'.

**The Nutcracker Suite**

**Nerja** 17 December, 8pm. *Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja. 25€.*

Le Manager Ballet will be performing the ballet from one of Tchaikovsky's most famous works, the Nutcracker Suite and based on the story by E. T. A. Hoffman.

**Ricky Lavazzo's Christmas Cracker**

**Benalmádena.** 8 December, *Moonlight Lounge, Sunset Beach Hotel. 12.50€.*

Ricky Lavazza will be performing with Karen Jane Danzig and the TAPAS choir. Tickets from the hotel or [www.lava-productions.rocks](http://www.lava-productions.rocks)

**T. I. M. S 30 year anniversary concerts**

**La Cala de Mijas.** 11 December, 6pm. *La Cala de Mijas town hall.*

**Torre del Mar.** 15 December, 6pm. *San Andrés de Apóstol church* [www.timschoir.org](http://www.timschoir.org).

**El Molino De Cajiz**

**Cajiz.** 9 December, 6.30pm.

Aurea Marston (soprano) and Cornelia Lenzin (piano) will be performing works by Fauré, Ravel and Ullmann etc. <https://elmolinodecajiz.com/>

**Malaga String Symphony Orchestra**

**Estepona.** 9 December, 1pm. *Iglesia Sta María de los Remedios. Free.*

After mass the orchestra will play works by Corelli, Vivaldi, Bach, Handel and Caccini. Conducted by Arturo Bosovich.

**TAPAS Christmas Concerts**

**Benalmádena.** 8 December, *Moonlight Lounge, Sunset Beach Hotel.*

**Mijas Pueblo.** 13 December, 6pm. *Mijas town hall.*

The TAPAS (The Andalusia Performing Arts Society) choir. Reservations: [frd@mijas.es](mailto:frd@mijas.es)

**Romeo and Juliet ballet**

**Malaga.** 12 December, 8pm. *Teatro Cervantes.*

The Imperial Russian Ballet will be performing Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet. Tickets from 15-45 euros: [www.unientradas.es/janto/main.php?Nivel=Evento&idEvento=1819ROMEOJULI-ETA](http://www.unientradas.es/janto/main.php?Nivel=Evento&idEvento=1819ROMEOJULI-ETA)

**Judith Jáuregui**

**Malaga** 13 December, 8pm. *Sala María Cristina.*

The famous pianist, Judith Jáuregui, who has worked with many national and international orchestras, will be offering a recital of pieces by composers Falla, Liszt, Debussy, Ravel and Chopin.

**Concerts at the Jorge Rando Museum**

**Pablo Alcázar.** 14 December, 6.30pm.

Guitarist and composer Pablo Alcázar will be in concert.

**Christmas Carol service**

**Torre del Mar.** 15 December, 6pm. *San Andrés church.*

Lux Mundi are holding an ecumenical Christmas carol service with the Spanish Amigos de Lux Mundi choir, the German Con Los Cantores choir and the T.I.M.S. British choir.

**Collegium Musicum**

**Fuengirola.** 16 December, 7pm. *Hotel IPV Palace and Spa. 10€.*

Choir and Orchestra Collegium Musicum Costa del Sol will be holding two special Christmas concerts. Tickets: the hotel, Nicholson's Jewellers, from members of Collegium Musicum and on sale from 6pm on the door. Call: 952 775492 / 686 277 272 or e-mail: [info@colmus.org](mailto:info@colmus.org).

**The best of Keith James**

**Cómpeta.** 16 December, 5pm. *Gal-ería Luz de la Vida. 10€.*

Singer/songwriter Keith James will be in concert. Book in advance: [info@lieuwkeloth.nl](mailto:info@lieuwkeloth.nl)

**Christmas Karaoke**

**Mijas.** 22 December, 7.30pm. *Hotel Tamisa Golf. 25€.*

DJ Lee Jay will be hosting the karaoke. Tickets include mulled wine, two-course dinner and half a bottle of wine per person. Booking essential: call 722 336 978 or email [reservas@hoteltamisa-golf.com](mailto:reservas@hoteltamisa-golf.com)

**FLAMENCO**

**Flamenco in the Museum**

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

**8 December.** Tania Santiago and flamenco group. For information and bookings call 687 607 526 or email: [info@flamenka.com](mailto:info@flamenka.com)

**Peña Flamenca**

**Estepona.** 7 December, 9.30pm.

*Plaza Fuerzas Armadas.*

Doors open at 8pm. Marina Aranda, Antonio Trujillo (dancers), Bonelo Hijo (vocals) and José Fernández (guitar). Reservations: 952803183/683141136

**Navidad Flamenca**

**Almuñécar.** 11 December, 9pm.

*Casa de la Cultura.*

María Gómez 'La Cañastera' and 'Niño Carmelo' present a special Christmas flamenco show.

**Zambomba Flamenco**

**La Herradura.** 14 December, 7.30pm.

A typical Christmas instrument, the zambomba is a type of drum with a stick through the middle. It will be accompanying the La Salinera and Son Mediterráneo choirs who will be singing Spanish carols.

**LECTURES**



Monet's gardens - lecture.

**The Arts Society de la Frontera**

**San Roque.** 12 December, 11am. *San Roque Golf and Country Club.*

Visitors 12€

**'Monet and his Gardens'**

An illustrated talk by Brian Healey [delafrontera@theartsociety.org](mailto:delafrontera@theartsociety.org)

**Lux Mundi Art Appreciation**

**Torre del Mar.** 17 December, 10.30am. *Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre. 2€*

Andrew Graham-Dixon from the TV series History of Art, shows how Spain's turbulent history has shaped its artists, from Francisco Goya and Pablo Picasso through to Joan Miró and Salvador Dalí.



A photo of last year's Xmas Crackers at the festival. :: SUR

# Christmas traditions around the world

**TONY BRYANT**

Benalmádena hosts the tenth edition of the Festival of Christmas Traditions on Saturday, 8 December. The festival, which is held in the Plaza Mezquita in Arroyo de la Miel, is organised by the town hall's Foreign Residents Department and various local expat associations.

It celebrates traditional Christmas festivities of more than a dozen countries, including Morocco, Cuba, Mexico, Norway and the UK. The festival begins at midday, when the participating countries will take part in the inaugural pro-

cession. This will be followed by an afternoon of live music including Welsh singing, folk dancing from the Philippines and a show by the Banana Studios amateur group. Participating countries will offer their traditional festive cuisine for visitors to sample, from mince pies and Yule log to exotic festive foods. There will be plenty of activities to keep children occupied such as Father Christmas and the Three Kings, a bouncy castle, face painting and festive games and competitions.

For more information, [www.benalmdena.es](http://www.benalmdena.es)





## LECTURES

## U3A Lectures

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

**A Mixed Bag:**  
**'Britain's Heritage Railways'**

11 December, 11am.

Geoff Cooke. In 1968 four grammar school boys realised that their world of steam traction and mechanical masterpieces would soon end unless working engines were preserved. How did they manage to kick start the preservation movement and why are we building new steamengines?

**Science and technology:**  
**'Spectroscopy'**

12 December, 11am.

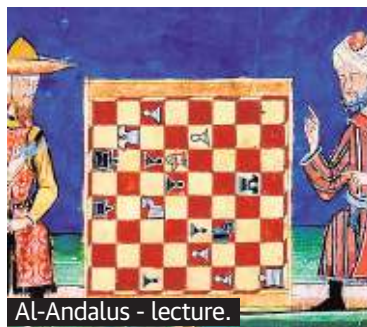
Spectroscopy is the science of looking at the light emitted by an object and determining what it's made from. Everything from a speck of paint to a distant galaxy is amenable to this science.

**The Arts Society Costa del Sol**

**Fuengirola.** 10 December, 4.30pm. *Salon Varietés Theatre. Visitors 10€.* www.theartssociety-costadel-sol.org

**Nerja.** 11 December, 6pm. *Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja.* www.theartssocietynerja.com *Visitors 10€*

**'Memories of Al-Andalus: A History of Art, Power and Passion in Spain'** Lecturer Ann Haworth. In 711 AD, Spain was conquered by Moorish armies from North Africa who named this country Al-Andalus. A magnificent golden age of building and culture flourished during subsequent centuries.



Al-Andalus - lecture.

## FOODIE FAIRS

**Sabor a Málaga Gran Feria**

**Malaga.** Until 9 December. *Paseo del Parque.*

This traditional fair will have stalls from dozens of local companies selling food products direct to the public. Honey, oil, olives, cheeses, vegetables, wines, beers, cooked and fresh meats, Christmas treats and dried fruit are just some examples of what will be available. There will also be tastings, demonstrations, competitions and workshops.

**Saborea Manilva**

**Manilva.** Until 9 December. *Plaza de la Vendimia.*

This gastronomic fair will include, besides tastings and stalls selling local produce etc, cookery demonstrations, workshops, live music,

# Acclaimed Korean pianist to perform on the Costa del Sol

**TONY BRYANT**

**MALAGA.** The award-winning concert pianist, Sarah Lee, is to perform two concerts on the Costa del Sol next week. The internationally acclaimed musician from South Korea, who lives in New Zealand, is currently on a European tour and these will be the only concerts she will perform in Spain. Born to a musical family, Lee began to study classical piano and flute at the age of five. Her father was also a composer and she took on composing as a hobby. As a pianist, Lee performs her own piano works and covers a wide range of established classical music. Besides performing as a soloist, the pianist forms part of several chamber groups. She composes original works using jazz, R&B and Latin



Sarah Lee. :: SUR

rhythms to give her ballads a richer texture. She also using sounds to create imagery.

Lee is an affiliate pianist of the Singapore Association of Com-

posers and a member of the American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA). She is also a registered BMI writer and composes music for film and theatre.

Her performances on the Costa, which will include the music of Chopin, Ravel and Clementi, will be held in Las Brisas in Marbella (Sunday, 9 December) and the Avanto Theatre in La Cala de Mijas (Tuesday, 11 December).

Tickets for the Marbella concert, which will begin at 8pm, cost 55 euros and include welcome drinks and canapés, and a three course dinner.

The show in La Cala de Mijas will start at 8.30pm. Tickets cost 30 euros and include welcome drink and canapés.

For more information, contact Anita: 6 44 24 23 65.

dancing and a cake competition.

**Craft and gourmet market**

**La Cala de Mijas.** Until 16 December, 11am-8.30pm. *Plaza Supersol.* The first Feria de la Artesanía y Gourmet is being held in La Cala until 16 December. It will offer craft items, gifts and gourmet food.

## EVENTS

**Chocolate and churros**

**La Herradura.** 8 December, 5pm. *Plaza de la Independencia.* Traditional hot chocolate and churros to raise funds for the Three Kings parade, Christmas market and collection of foodstuffs for Cáritas.

**The Mustard Seed Gang**

**Alhaurín el Grande.** 8 December, 3-4.30pm. *Cemetery Chapel.* Christmas fun for children, crafts, stories and songs. Contact: 655342874 or 658235268. www.st-andrewscofe-spain.org

**Nuevo Futuro market**

**Malaga.** Until 9 December, from 11am until 9pm. *Palacio de Ferias y Congresos.* The Rastrillo de Nuevo Futuro will have numerous stalls selling clothing, furniture, antiques etc. There are also restaurants, live music, children's activities and a dance competition.

**Conservatives Abroad**

**Mijas.** 13 December. *Tamisa Golf Hotel.* The Conservatives Abroad are holding their annual Christmas lunch. Reservations email: john.conservativesabroad@hotmail.co.uk or call Christine: 952 668 267

**La Cala Lions Christmas party**

**La Cala de Mijas.** 8 December. 7pm. *Treetops restaurant, El*

*Chaparral Golf.* 45€.

Cava and canapés on arrival, three course meal. Black tie/Lounge suit Tickets from the Lions Club shop in C/Torremolinos.

**Excursion to Cordoba**

**Torre del Mar.** 11-13 December. *Various departure points.* 169€ pp sharing dble room or 199€ single. In the Hotel Conquistador 4\* Bed and breakfast. Lux Mundi Torre del Mar. Tel:952 543 334 or e-mail: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org

**Phoenix Club trips**

**Christmas lights and market in Seville.** 15, 16 December. *Depart Algarrobo Lidl 8.30am other pick-ups to be confirmed.* 100€ pp sharing dble room. Single 135€. Includes B&B, coach fare and driver's gratuity. For more information email: phoenixsocialclub@yahoo.co.uk or go to www.phoenixsocialclub.co.uk.

**TAPAS Christmas Party**

**Coín.** 7 December. *Restaurant Las Cabales.* Music from TAPAS choir, dancing to DJ Big Kevin and two-course Christmas supper and mince pies. Tickets 14€ members 16€ non



Mustard Seed Gang, Alhaurín el Grande.

members. Tel: 678 932 284

## CHRISTMAS FAIRS

**Acompalia Christmas Bazaar**

**Castell de Ferro.** 7 December, from 7.30pm. *Sala de Exposiciones in the town hall.* Father Christmas, tombola, cakes, crafts, bric-a-brac, mulled wine and a raffle.

**Christmas Market**

**Almuñécar.** 7, 8 December. *Plaza de la Constitución.* Various foreigners associations as well as other local institutions will be manning stands at the market.

**Anglican Church Christmas Fair**

**Estepona.** 15 December, 11am-5pm. *Palacio de Congresos.* Free. Carol singing, face painting, Santa's grotto, bouncy castle as well as stalls and Age Concern stand. Marbella Montessori School Choir and other entertainment throughout the day. Raising funds for multiple charities.

## 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 www.cinealbeniz.com  
**The Children Act:** 22.35 (every day).

**Cinesur El Ingenio**

Avda. Juan Carlos 1, Vélez-Málaga. Tel. 667 77 31 87.  
**Robin Hood:** 18.05, 20.20 (Tues).  
**Bohemian Rhapsody:** 22.30.  
**Ben is Back:** 18.15, 20.20, 22.25 (Tues).  
**Ralph Breaks The Internet:**

12.10, 16.20.

**Cinesur Miramar**

Avda. de la Encarnación, Fuengirola. Tel. 952 19 86 00.  
**Bohemian Rhapsody:** 19.15, 22.10 (every day)  
**Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald:** 12.00, 16.30 (every day).  
**Ralph Breaks The Internet:** 12.00, 16.40 (everyday); 19.20, 21.40 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).  
**Widows:** 16.00 (Mon-Thurs).  
**The Grinch:** 11.50, 16.20 (every day).  
**Robin Hood:** 17.15 (Mon-Thurs).  
**Ben is Back:** 18.05, 22.20 (Tues)  
**Opera: Don Giovanni:** 11 December, 20.00  
**Musical: An American in Paris:** 13 December, 20.00

**Cines Teatro Goya**

For tickets and information call 951196665. www.cinesteatrogoya.com  
**Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald:** 22.00 (Mon, Tues); 22.15 (Fri, Sat, Sun, Wed, Thurs).  
**Bohemian Rhapsody:** 15.30, 22.45 (Fri, Sat, Sun); 19.45, 22.15 (Mon, Tues); 20.00; 22.00 (Wed,



Sabor a Málaga Gran Feria.

Thurs).  
**The Grinch:** 12.00 (Sun); 16.00, 18.30, 20.30 (Fri, Sat, Sun); 17.45 (Mon, Tues); 17.50 (Wed, Thurs).  
**Widows:** 17.30 (Tues, Wed); 18.00 (Fri, Sat, Sun); 19.45 (Wed); 22.15 (Mon, Tues, Wed).  
**Ben is Back:** 16.30, 18.30 (Fri, Sat, Sun); 17.50 (Wed); 18.00 (Mon, Tues); 20.00 (Mon-Thurs).  
**Ralph Breaks The Internet:** 11.45 (Sun); 15.45, 18.10, 20.00 (Fri, Sat, Sun) 17.30 (Mon, Tues); 17.50, 19.45 (Wed, Thurs).

**Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor**

Centro de Ocio Plaza Mayor, Avda. Alfonso Ponce de León. Tel: 902 902 103 or visit www.yelmocines.es  
**The Nutcracker and the Four Realms:** 18.30 (Tues).  
**The Grinch:** 14.15 (Sat, Sun).  
**Ben is Back:** 15.45 (every day except Tues); 20.05 (Tues).  
**The Children Act:** 17.15 (Tues).  
**Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald:** 19.40 (Tues).  
**Bohemian Rhapsody:** 20.30 (every day).  
**The Possession Of Hannah Grace:** 22.35 (Tues).  
**Ralph Breaks The Internet:** 12.00 (Sat, Sun); 16.30 (Fri-Tues).  
**Robin Hood:** 12.50 (Sat, Sun); 19.45 (Tues).  
**Widows:** 13.30 8Sat, Sun); 18.40 (Tues).



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JAVIER  
ALMELLONES

## AROUND MALAGA

# Walks in the most authentic part of La Axarquía region

The Great Trail of Malaga runs along the Mediterranean coastline and then heads to the inland region, passing through small villages on the eastern side of the province



## QUICK GUIDE

### The villages

**Alcaucín.** On Stage 8 of the Great Trail of Malaga. In the Sierra de Tejeda.

**Alfarnate.** This is the end of Stage 10 of the Great Trail, and the start of Stage 11. In the Alta Axarquía area.

**Alfarnatejo.** Stage 9 of the route passes through here. In the Alta Axarquía area.

◀ **Algarrobo.** A point on Stage 3 of the route. On the coast of La Axarquía.

**Canillas de Aceituno.** Stage 7 ends here, and Stage 8 begins. In the Sierra de Tejeda.

◀ **Canillas de Albaida.** Stage 7 passes through here. In the Sierra de Almijara.

**Cómpeta.** The end of Stage 6 and the start of Stage 7. In the Sierra de Almijara.

**Frigiliana.** The end of Stage 5 and start of Stage 6. In the Sierra de Almijara.

**Periana.** The end of Stage 8 and start of Stage 9. In the Alta Axarquía area.

◀ **Salares and Sedella.** Villages on Stage 7 of the route. Also on the Mudejar Route.

**Torrox.** End of Stage 3 and start of Stage 4. On the coast of La Axarquía.



The stage

**F**ormer minarets converted into bell towers, medieval bridges, mountain scenery and ancient watch-towers are just some of the attractions of the Great Trail of Malaga (Gran Senda de Málaga as it is known in Spanish) as it passes through the region of La Axarquía.

This long circular route around Malaga province begins on the coast and then heads inland through small towns and villages, giving them the chance to show off their tourist attractions to those following the trail.

The part of the Great Trail of Malaga which passes through La Axarquía can be divided into three sections. One stretch runs along the coast, another takes you through part of the Tejeda and Almijara mountain ranges and finally one goes through what is known as 'Alta Axarquía', or Upper Axarquía, which connects with the Sierra Norte region of Malaga.

The first of these stretches visits the coastal areas of the municipalities of Algarrobo and Torrox. This is where the Great Trail begins its journey

### ALTA AXARQUÍA.

The Great Trail passes through Alfarnatejo, Alfarnate and Periana.

### SIERRA TEJEDA.

This circular route includes the GR-242 or Great Trail of the Sierra de Tejeda-Almijara.

**COAST.** The coastal part of the Great Trail passes through parts of Algarrobo and Torrox.

**VILLAGES.** This route includes a dozen relatively small villages in La Axarquía region.

**HERITAGE.** The Great Trail takes you through an area rich in history.

### Where to eat

**Venta La Parra.** Before entering (or upon leaving) Alcaucín, you can stop for lunch at a very old 'venta' with panoramic views of La Axarquía. It is a roadside restaurant renowned for its traditional dishes, so you can find everything from a family recipe for 'morrete' to a delicious bean and vegetable stew.

Paraje Cruz Del Gitano, 3, 29711 Alcaucín. Tel. 697 982 561.

### Where to stay

**Cortijo rural Pulgarín Bajo.** At the end of the tenth stage of the Great Trail of Malaga, very close to the peaceful village of Alfarnatejo, is this complex of three self-catering cottages with the traditional architecture of an old farmhouse. Outside and inside, this is like a trip back to the past for visitors, especially the cosy style of the bedrooms and living rooms. Cortijo Pulgarín Bajo, 8. 29194. Alfarnatejo. Tel. 620 059 787. cortijopulgarin.com







between C mpeta and Canillas de Aceituno includes spectacular views of the countryside :: SUR

through places with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants.

After leaving behind the town of V lez-M laga, the third stage of the Great Trail heads back towards the sea at Algarrobo Costa, passing along the pretty sea front promenade and close to the Torre Lade , one of the most emblematic watchtowers on the coast of the province because of the remarkable angle at which it leans.

After walking along this part of the coast you come to Torrox Costa, where you can explore the historically interesting area around the lighthouse. From there, this stage heads inland to the village of Torrox, passing through its pretty streets which still bear traces of its Moorish past.

The stretch which passes through the natural park of the Sierras de Tejed , Almijara y Alhama is much longer. Here, after leaving Nerja, it goes through the villages of Frigiliana, C mpeta, Canillas de Albaida, Salares, Sedella, Canillas de Aceituno and Alcauc n, in that order.

This stretch, which is nearly 70 kilometres long and divided into three

stages, coincides with a pre-existing linear route, the GR-242 or the Great Trail of Sierra de Tejed -Almijara.

This walk is especially interesting because it is very varied, combining some of the tourist routes such as the Mudejar, Wine and Olive Oil routes with tracks which link the villages and pass through the Sierras de Tejed , Almijara and Alhama Natural Park.

It is therefore a combination of ecology, history and gastronomy, which will delight all those with an interest in rural tourism and walking.

Through olive groves (of the verdial variety), the remains of Moorish and even Roman buildings, fast-flowing rivers and panoramic views are just some of the attractions to be enjoyed along this part of the route.

Among the enclaves and beauty spots which should not be missed on these three stages of the Great Trail of M laga are the Higuer n river and the 'Barribarto' district of Frigiliana; the hamlet of Acebuchal and the church of La Asunci n, in C mpeta; the Santa Ana chapel and Roman footpath in Canillas de Albaida; the minaret and

Casa Torre n, in Salares; the visitors' centre of the natural park of Sierras de Tejed , Almijara y Alhama, in Sedella; the Casa de los Diezmos and El Saltillo, in Canillas de Aceituno; and the 'Fuente de los Cinco Ca os' fountain and ruins of the Zalia castle, in Alcauc n.

The Great Trail of M laga then continues, in this order, through the villages of Periana, Alfarnatejo and Alfarnate. The ninth stage begins at Periana, and travels through some of the outlying hamlets before arriving at the famous farming estates of Alfarnatejo.

The tenth stage runs through the municipalities of Alfarnatejo and Alfarnate, which are by far the highest villages in M laga province. They are both more than 900 metres above sea level, in the area known as Alta Axarqu a, very close to the Sierra de Alhama mountain range which forms a natural frontier with Granada province. Rugged mountains and gorges, cherry orchards, olive groves and one of the oldest 'ventas' or roadside restaurants, await the walkers who choose to do this part of the route.

## PLACES WHICH SHOULDN'T BE MISSED

### El Barribarto

#### Frigiliana

##### Sierra de Almijara.

The village of Frigiliana is the finishing point of one stage on the Great Trail of M laga and the start of another, providing walkers with a great opportunity to explore one of the prettiest villages in Andal c a.

Frigiliana is a typical Andalusian white village, with pots of colourful plants hanging on the fronts of immaculate whitewashed houses, especially in the 'Barribarto' district, whose steep and narrow passageways are just as they were in medieval times.

The variety of colours in



which the doors and window frames are painted is surprising. Blues, greens and reds stand out against the whitewashed fronts of the properties.

Frigiliana is also home to some very interesting historical buildings, and has impressive views over the countryside and down to the sea.

*In the oldest part of the village of Frigiliana.*



### El Saltillo

#### Canillas de Aceituno

##### Sierra de Tejed .

La Axarqu a has its own version of the famous 'Caminito del Rey', although in this case it is called El Saltillo and is a walkway in Canillas de Aceituno.

This path, part of which was restored last year, crosses the Almanchares river which begins at an altitude of more than 1,000 metres in the Sierra Tejed  mountains and then rushes down its slopes.

This spectacular walkway, which is definitely not suitable for anyone with vertigo, can be accessed from the village of Canillas de Aceituno, which is where one of the stages of the Great Trail of M laga ends and another begins.

A relatively short track, which is not very difficult, leads to the walkway, which these days complies with all regulations regarding safety for its users.

The karst mountain landscape and erosion by water have made this a particularly beautiful area, and it is known to local people as La Rah ge (or sometimes La Rah je).

This beauty spot, which is situated next to the picnic area of the same name, can be easily accessed from one of the bends on the road between Sedella and Canillas de Aceituno. It is also a very popular area among those who are keen on canyoning. *In the municipality of Canillas de Aceituno.*

### Moorish past

#### Canillas de Aceituno, Salares and Sedella

##### Mudejar Route.

This Great Trail through the province is also a good excuse to discover more about one of the most important cultural and historical routes in La Axarqu a region.

Minarets, water deposits and other constructions dating back to the last years of Al- ndalus are the main attractions on the so-called Mudejar Route, which includes three of the same villages as the Great Trail of M laga: Canillas de Aceituno, Salares and Sedella.



As well as the most evident architectural Moorish remains, such as the minarets and mosques, the villages are also interesting in themselves, because they still retain some very obvious traces of their Andalusian origins.

*In the villages of Canillas de Aceituno, Salares and Sedella.*

### The route of the bridges

#### Various villages

##### Sierras de Tejed  y Almijara.

The Great Trail of M laga is also a good opportunity for finding out more about the interesting history of the small villages in La Axarqu a through which it passes.

Several of these have a number of well-preserved medieval and even Roman bridges, which walkers cross as they follow the Great Trail.

These can be found in the municipalities of Salares, Sedella and Canillas de Albaida, but other villages along the route are also still using



bridges of this type to cross rivers and streams, such as Alcauc n and Canillas de Aceituno.

At the moment, the councils of these villages, together with those of  rchez and Arenas, are in the process of creating a 'Route of the Bridges' for tourists, with the support of the M laga provincial government. *In Salares, Sedella, Canillas de Albaida, Canillas de Aceituno and Alcauc n.*



**Creating cuisine from his memories**

For Diego Gallegos, his work with freshwater fish, something natural for him, has also led him back to the cuisine of his country of birth.

**Cachaça**

A cheap and popular drink in Brazil, cachaça is aguardiente made with sugar cane, and is the basis for caipirinha, the national cocktail, but it can also be drunk on its own, for example to accompany the feijoada.

**Picanha**

The most highly-valued piece of beef in Brazil for roasting comes from the highest part of the animal's hindquarter.

**Feijoada**

This is practically the national dish, made with refried black beans and pork, served with long-grain rice, farofa (cassava flour toasted with bacon) and fresh orange.

**Farofa**

Doughs, porridges and polentas made from corn or cassava are hallmarks of Brazilian cuisine. Farofa is cassava flour toasted with a bit of fat, normally bacon.

DANIEL MALDONADO

# Cuisine from the Amazon

**Diego Gallegos teaches us that Brazilian food is delicious and talks about tastes, products and recipes**

**ESPERANZA PELÁEZ**

**FUENGIROLA.** Sometimes, even without intending to, people end up going back to their origins. In the case of Diego Gallegos, who has just retained his Michelin star for his sustainable cuisine based on freshwater fish and home-grown vegetables at the Sollo restaurant (Reserva del Higerón, Fuengirola), it seemed quite natural to link his food with the fluvial world. However it also led him back to the river of all rivers, the biggest on the planet, which flows through the territory and the soul of his country of birth, Brazil.

Coming from this green country not only gave him a full understanding of fish that are little-known here, such as tilapia and bagre ("it's river chicken, and people eat it two or three times a week," he says), but enables him to call on his memory of flavours for dressings, preparations and garnishes, which he adapts with the use of local and Mediterranean ingredients.

Now, the culinary culture of his youth (although Gallegos lived in Sao Paulo until he was 18, his mother's family is from Peru) is enhancing his reputation, not only

through his research in Sollo's own laboratory, but also through the menu at Arara, his bistro beside the restaurant at the Hilton Doubletree hotel at La Reserva del Higerón.

Named after the national bird of Brasil, a yellow-green macaw in danger of extinction, Arara has always served cosmopolitan fare, but from now on Brazil will be playing a bigger role.

"Brazilian cuisine hasn't had the luck of being acclaimed as the Peruvian gastronomy has, but it is as wonderful as the country is. A wealth of products, preparations and influ-

ences. However, most of the haute cuisine there is French. There are still very few chefs who go back to their roots.

"At Sollo we are doing that because, although it is not our exclusive theme, you have to talk about what it is. At present we are working on fermentations, which we do with guarapo, sugar cane juice. We use manual presses for that. We also use other Brazilian vegetables and fruits which are sometimes hard to find here," says Gallegos.

At Arara there are more common Brazilian flavours, but what is this

type of cuisine like?

"Very varied, in terms of products, geography and influences," says the chef. "There are some national dishes like feijoada, rice with refried beans, which they eat there in the same way we eat bread here; flours, starches and semolinas made with corn and cassava; barbecued meats, which are predominantly eaten inland; and moquecas, fish stew which is eaten all along the coast. But then there is a huge variety of influences such as Japanese, Italian and German cuisine, in Sao Paulo; African in the Bay, Antillean... and there are native prod-

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### Fermentation

At Sollo, they take advantage of the diversity of Brazilian vegetable products, especially sugarcane juice, to experiment with fermentations.



### Cassava

This is the Brazilian name for the most-used tuber in the country, known here as yuca. It is used to make flour, among other things.

ucts which also mark the cuisine," he adds.

In Brazil a lot of palm oils are used, not the ones that are frowned upon here, but natural oils which give a lot of flavour such as dendé, as well as vegetables that are practically unknown here such as chayote or okra, tropical fruits, coconut and coconut milk...

"There is a basic flavour which, when you taste it, takes you straight to Brazil," says Gallegos. It is the mixture of crushed salt with garlic and coriander, and the first thing he puts into a pot when making a stew. "That and bacon," he explains.

He is fascinated by moquecas, a fish stew with onion, chilli, tomato, coriander and malagueta pepper. In the north, it also has dendé and coconut milk. It has featured on the most recent menus at Sollo.

However, the childlike side to this chef comes out in his fondness for 'petiscos', tapas or canapés sold cheaply as street food, such as cheese bread, made with cassava flour and a touch of parmesan. "Cheese bread with a good butter or jam... that's heaven," he says. Or the coxinhas, fried pastry filled with shredded chicken, a dish that Brazil shares with Portugal.

"These are the things we want to recover at Arara - simple but very delicious and authentic dishes. I believe this is the time to highlight Brazilian cooking," he says. Amen to that.

## SOLLO INSPIRATION

### Cheese bread

'Pão de Queijo' is one of the most popular and well-loved foods in Brazil. It is eaten at any time of the day, usually hot. It can be eaten on its own or with a filling like a sandwich. One of the most common ways is to serve it with a little jam, a delicious contrast of flavours.

#### PÃO DE QUEIJO

##### INGREDIENTS

200ml milk  
180ml sunflower oil  
100ml water  
500g cassava flour (yuca starch)  
4 eggs, beaten  
360g parmesan cheese  
a pinch of salt

##### METHOD

Put the milk, water and the sunflower oil in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Remove from the heat and beat in the cassava flour and salt while the liquid is still hot. Leave to cool.



Mix the beaten eggs into the dough little by little.

Once all the eggs are mixed in, incorporate the parmesan cheese.

Leave the dough to rest for a few minutes.

Pinch off small amounts of the dough and form into balls; placing them about 3cm apart on a greased baking sheet.

Bake in a preheated oven at

180° for around 30 to 40 minutes, depending on the size of the buns which should be well risen and golden. Remove from the oven and serve immediately.

*Diego Gallegos is at the helm of the Michelin-starred restaurant Sollo and Arara bistro bar, both in the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Resort & Spa Reserva del Higuierón, Fuengirola*

**DIEGO GALLEGOS**





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**BENALMÁDENA**

The Ha'pennybridge Irish pub has been a local landmark in Benalmádena for many years. Recently under new management, it has been given a new lease of life and is now open 365 days a year. Serving traditional favourites like fish and chips, chicken curry and of course Guinness stew, it's well worth a visit for a bite to eat and a pint.

Sunday lunches remain a popular favourite and why not call in and sample something from the new cocktail menu?

Christmas is nearly here and the pub is decorated from floor to ceiling adding festive cheer and a welcoming party atmosphere. The Christmas Day Lunch menu will be available from 1pm and will include a welcome glass of cava, a choice of four starters, traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings, roast beef, salmon or vegetarian options followed by rich sherry trifle, lemon cheesecake or luxurious chocolate brownie, tea or coffee with petit fours. A children's menu is available. Bookings are required so ring Adam to reserve a table on 665639378.

There is live, acoustic music every weekend as well as a Christmas sing along with local favourite Siobhan Tierney on 29th December. For the New Year's Eve celebrations there will be a special countdown party. The Ha'penny Bridge caters for family parties, christenings, weddings and all types of special events, call Kate the party gal for more information on 722174610. The bar also offers full sports coverage with all important matches being shown.

**Ha'penny Bridge**

**Address:** Calle Torrealmádena, Benalmádena Costa.  
**Tel:** 952575222  
**Facebook:** Ha'penny Bridge Benalmádena



The interior is decorated from floor to ceiling, ready for Christmas.



Paddy O'Baubles, the resident elf, enjoying Sunday lunch.



The outside of the bar in Benalmádena.

ANDREW J. LINN

## TRICK OR TREAT?



**F**ar too frequently a new wine comes onto the market at a price that puts it outside most drinkers' reach. We recently saw pictures of footballer Ronaldo dropping into a London restaurant for a drink, that involved a bill of 31,000 euros for a bottle of Richebourg Grand Cru and Pomerol Petrus. For footballers, who probably know less about wine than the average reader of this column, the price of an item denotes its quality, but at least in this case the wines drunk were among the world's very best.

So far so justifiable, but what about those wines that are conceived to be exclusive? Any idiot can make a wine and claim it is unique because there are only a few bottles available. This is called artificial unavailability. A wine from the unrated region of Cuenca, AurumRed, is produced using ozone, apparently because the producer was cured of a serious illness by it. The minimal production is the conceived reason for the price of 15,000 euros a bottle, so even if you need it as a medication, you will likely run out of cash before you get even a tenth of the way cured. Allegedly enough of each year's production is sold to enable half to be cellared away for some future sale, while logic dictates that it should be donated to the sufferers from whatever disease it is supposed to cure.

The latest pathetic claim of 'the Most Exclusive Wine in the

World' title is being made currently for Demuerte Black 2016. The Yecla bodega, until now rated favourably by critics, makes and sells excellent wines at around 12 euros, but it has just dynamited any possibility of being considered a serious producer by adding to its range the said Demuerte Black, which costs 99 euros. Apart from the usual guff about old vines, hand-selected grapes, etc, the main justification for the price is the bottle, decorated with 'two Swarovski precious stones'. Fortunately for the bodega, there may indeed be some idiots who believe that the merits of its wines can be summarised by the bottle rather than by what it contains.

**WINE OF THE WEEK****Pavina Pino Noir 2017**

The Alta Pavina winery is just outside the Ribera del Duero official zone so its products have to be classified as Vinos de Castilla y Leon. This rosado is one of the very few in Spain made from 100% Pinot Noir grapes, notoriously difficult to manage but when successfully harnessed can produce excellent wines like this one. Sold locally at around 8 euros.



## Christmas dessert traditions from around the world to be centre stage in Estepona

**CHARO MÁRQUEZ**

**ESTEPONA.** On 12 December, representatives of twenty different nationalities living in Estepona will be showing off traditional Christ-

mas dessert dishes from their home countries. The event will be held at the town's gastro-market, Mercado San Luis, from 5pm, and will see short demonstrations of what goes into making the sweet Christmas treats from each country.

This is the fourth year that the event, called "Dulce Encuentro Navideño", (A Sweet Christmas Encounter), has been organised by the town hall and Sabor a Málaga. The UK, Germany, Bolivia, Brazil, France, Norway, Poland and others will be represented.

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**Kitchen** page 57

**Glass curtains** page 59

**Removals** page 58

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Víctor Díaz (left) celebrates after Montoro's deflected strike beats Munir in the Malaga goal. :: NITO SALAS

LA LIGA 123											
Results						Next match day					
Zaragoza - Cádiz	0-1	Tenerife - Extremadura	0-0								
Córdoba - Elche	1-1	Deportivo - Numancia	1-1								
Reus - Mallorca	0-2	Gimnàstic - Granada	0-1								
<b>MALAGA</b> - Granada	0-1	<b>Mallorca</b> - <b>MALAGA</b>	0-1								
Almería - Extremadura	1-1	Albacete - Osasuna	2-1								
Sporting - Tenerife	2-1	Oviedo - Almería	0-0								
R. Majadahonda - Deportivo	0-0	Alcorcón - Reus	1-0								
Osasuna - Lugo	1-0	Cádiz - R. Majadahonda	3-0								
Numancia - Gimnàstic	2-1	Lugo - Las Palmas	2-1								
Albacete - Alcorcón	2-1	Zaragoza - Córdoba	0-0								
Las Palmas - Oviedo	0-0										
Table											
TEAM	PT	P	W	D	L	GF	GA				
★ 1. Alcorcón	33	16	10	3	3	20	8				
★ 2. Deportivo	31	16	8	7	1	26	10				
3. Granada	31	16	9	4	3	24	12				
4. Albacete	30	16	8	6	2	23	13				
5. <b>MALAGA</b>	29	16	9	2	5	19	12				
6. Mallorca	27	16	7	6	3	22	14				
7. Cádiz	26	16	7	5	4	23	14				
8. Osasuna	25	16	7	4	5	19	16				
9. Las Palmas	23	16	5	8	3	20	16				
10. Oviedo	23	16	6	5	5	19	21				
11. Sporting	21	16	5	6	5	17	15				
12. Almería	20	16	5	5	6	18	17				
13. Numancia	20	16	5	5	6	16	18				
14. R. Majadahonda	20	16	6	2	8	14	20				
15. Extremadura	16	16	4	4	8	23	26				
16. Lugo	16	16	4	4	8	13	17				
17. Tenerife	16	16	3	7	6	14	21				
18. Elche	16	16	3	7	6	13	21				
▼ 19. Zaragoza	15	16	3	6	7	17	21				
▼ 20. Reus	13	16	3	4	9	10	24				
▼ 21. Córdoba	12	16	2	6	8	18	33				
▼ 22. Gimnàstic	10	16	2	4	10	11	30				

# Malaga's 100% home record ends with defeat in Andalusian derby

**The Blue and Whites are down to fifth after suffering back-to-back defeats**

**DARYL FINCH**

✉ dfinch@diariosur.es



**MALAGA.** After seven consecutive league wins at La Rosaleda, defeat in the Andalusian derby against Granada on Saturday afternoon brought an end to Malaga's 100 per cent home record - the only one remaining in Spain's second tier.

Ángel Montoro's second-half goal pushed Granada above Malaga in the league table as Juan Ramón Muñiz's side fell to back-to-back defeats for the first time this season,

denting hopes of an automatic return to the top flight.

Jack Harper was back in the starting eleven after missing the previous five games and this meant that Muñiz could once again deploy his favoured 4-4-2 formation after experimenting, albeit unsuccessfully with Juanpi in the number ten role in Extremadura last week.

However, Malaga's forwards were limited to very few efforts on

goal on the day by a combination of organised defending from the visitors and a distinct lack of creativity from midfield.

The absence of Adrián was particularly felt as Malaga lost the ball on 163 occasions (a season high) and struggled to regain possession, doing so on just 50 occasions, compared to 69 a week earlier.

The hosts' best chance in the first half fell to top scorer Gustavo Blanco Leschuk whose attempted near-post flick from Alfred N'Diaye's low cross from the right was blocked by keeper Rui Silva.

N'Diaye was then almost culpable for giving away a goal when he clumsily lost possession deep in his own half but goalkeeper Munir came to his rescue to block Adrián Ramos' shot towards the near post.

For the third successive match, Muñiz made a half-time substitution. Clearly unhappy with his wide players' contribution, Javi Ontiveros made way for Dani Pacheco, himself coming in from the cold after not appearing for two games.

This did not improve things for the home side who went behind less than ten minutes after the restart when Ángel Montoro's strike from the edge of the area trickled past Munir who was deceived by the deflection off Mehdi Lacen. This was just the second goal Malaga have conceded at La Rosaleda this season.

Having not seen his wide players lay on a pass for a strike on goal since Renato's intervention against Gimnàstic two games previously, Muñiz made two further changes on the wings in a bid to open up Gra-

**0-1**  
**MALAGA-GRANADA**

**Malaga:** Munir; Cifu (Haksabanovic, 80'), Diego González, Pau Torres, Ricca; Juanpi (Renato, 61'), N'Diaye, Lacen, Ontiveros (Dani Pacheco, 46'); Blanco Leschuk, Harper. Unused substitutes: Kieszek, Iván, Lombán, Boulahroud.

**Granada:** Rui Silva; Víctor Díaz, Germán, Martínez, Álex Martínez (Quini, 18'); Vadillo, Fede, Montoro, Pozo; Fede Vico (Puertas, 64'), Adrián Ramos (Nico Aguirre, 82'). Unused substitutes: Aarón, Alberto, Juancho, Rodri.

**Goals:** 0-1 Montoro (54').

**Referee:** Soto Grado. Yellow cards for Montoro, Diego González, Rui Silva and Haksabanovic.

nada. Renato and Sead Haksabanovic entered the fray but barring N'Diaye's wayward strike from the edge of the box, Malaga rarely worried Rui Silva between the sticks.

Quick to play down talk of a crisis after the recent downturn in results, Muñiz insisted following the game that it would be "unfair" to say that Granada were the better team. "It was a very even game," he

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Up next

## MALLORCA (A)

■ JAMES CHAPMAN

As Christmas approaches, Malaga's run-in isn't easy. Next up is a trip to the Balearics to take on newly-promoted Mallorca who have maintained their momentum from last season and trail by just one place and two points.

In 1999 Mallorca reached the final of the European Cup Winners Cup only to be beaten by Lazio in the final 2-1. That year, and again in 2001, they finished 3rd in La Liga - their highest position ever.

Since then, though, the club has gone through difficult times both financially and on the pitch and in 2017 they dropped down to the Segunda B, following a draw to already relegated Mirandés.

One year later, against the same opponents and in the same stadium, a draw sealed Mallorca's return to the second tier.

Unbeaten in seven league games, Mallorca have not lost at home since 23 September.

said. "Both teams worked very hard and gave everything on the pitch. We came up against a side which worked very hard in defence and stopped us from creating a lot of chances."

Muñiz leapt to the defence of his players, saying that their influence was limited by "defensive discipline" of the opposition.

Despite two losses on the bounce, the head coach said: "It's important not to go overboard. We've always said it wasn't going to be easy - quite the opposite. It's a long campaign and there will be bumps along the way."

Malaga currently sit in fifth place and face two difficult away days in Mallorca and Oviedo, either side of a derby at home against Cadiz, before the Christmas break. "We must turn this around as quick as possible," said full-back Cifu.



Journalists surround Al-Thani outside the Ciudad de Justicia on Tuesday. ■ SALVADOR SALAS

## BlueBay trial postponed again, leaving the club's future up in the air

Malaga CF president Sheikh Al-Thani has been accused of "deliberate manoeuvring" to further delay proceedings

■ ANTONIO GÓNGORA

**MÁLAGA.** The so-called 'BlueBay case' has been hit with yet another delay as the trial was postponed until 21 February 2019 at a hearing at the Ciudad de Justicia in Malaga on Tuesday.

Malaga CF president Sheikh Abdullah Al-Thani was in attendance and was set to testify against the BlueBay hotel group which is demanding that the conditions of a contract, which it signed with the sheikh and his associates in 2013, be honoured. They are calling for 49 per cent of shares in the club as well as control of its running.

Al-Thani, for his part, says BlueBay never complied with the conditions of the contract, rendering it invalid.

The trial was postponed two years ago when Al-Thani's lawyers lodged a criminal complaint for falsehood and misappropriation against former Malaga CF directors Abdullah Ghubn and Moayad Shatat, and the head of BlueBay, Jamal Satli Iglesias, a day prior to the preliminary hearing. With these complaints officially shelved, the trial was set to resume on Tuesday.

This time, however, it couldn't go ahead for procedural reasons with Ghubn not in attendance. Sources say that he never received notice that he needed to attend.

This was not received well by Iglesias, who said that he believed this was yet another ploy by the sheikh's team to delay proceedings.

"We hoped that it would take place today, but once again it hasn't been possible thanks to yet another deliberate manoeuvre from Mr Al-Thani which only serves his interests and not those of the club. We hope this can be resolved as soon as possible," he said.

Al-Thani had flown into Malaga on Friday morning with his daughter Hamyan and both attended Malaga's clash against Granada at La Rosaleda on Saturday, ahead of his court appearance.

**The sheikh set to leave again**

Despite this being his first visit to the city since May 2017, Al-Thani told reporters as he left the Ciudad de Justicia that he would not remain in the city for long: "I have a work trip, but I might come back after."

The sheikh also insisted that he didn't know anything about the whereabouts of Ghubn but told reporters that the team was doing "very well".

"I hope that we return to Primera; we have a lot of players and we can improve," he said.

Asked whether there would be any new players coming in January, he said: "There are a lot of possibilities. We will see what happens with [sporting director José Luis] Caminero. He has the final say."

### IN BRIEF

#### Season tickets for second half of the season go on sale

**MÁLAGA**

■ **A. GÓNGORA.** Malaga CF on Monday made season tickets for the remainder of the season available for purchase.

These half season tickets will grant you entry to all home games in the second half of the league campaign, plus the remaining two of this half against Cadiz and Reus.

Tickets are available for between 120 and 600 euros for adults and cost just 30 euros for children.

They can be bought either from the club's ticket offices at La Rosaleda stadium or online ([www.malagacf.com](http://www.malagacf.com)).



#### Two defeats in less than a week for Malaga women

**MÁLAGA**

■ **M. RIVAS.** Malaga CF's women's team failed to deliver a win on Thursday, despite the holiday turnout of around 500 spectators at La Federación ground. The locals were unable to fight back after visitors Athletic Club Bilbao scored twice in the first half hour.

This result followed a disappointing 1-0 loss away to Rayo Vallecano on Saturday. Iris Ponciano scored the winner with ten minutes to go after Antonio Contreras' side enjoyed the majority of the possession.



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## A LOOK AT LA LIGA

**ROB PALMER**  
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# From El Tel to Gran Sam?

## Athletic Bilbao are facing the real prospect of relegation for the first time in their history

Athletic Bilbao is a club that is respected globally for being a constant in Spain's top league and sticking to its Basque-only player policy.

It's a club with a magnificent support, an incredible modern stadium and an impressive history but the problem is the present. After failing to win since the opening weekend of the season, they have slipped into the relegation zone and it prompted them to sack the coach Eduardo Berizzo this week.

Gaizka Garitano has been promoted from running the B team but he has a pretty unimpressive CV and the tradition of appointing from within almost cost them last season when Cuco Ziganda managed only a 16th-place finish.

The Athletic dilemma is unique. The club is cash rich. In the past 11

months Aymeric Laporte headed to Manchester City and Kepa Arrizabalaga to Chelsea for a combined 140 million euros.

Outgoing president Josu Urrutia said recently: "Financially speaking we are on a better footing than at any time in modern history." Would they reverse the player policy? "No, never" was the comprehensive answer.

So the president's successor has to think laterally. There are a couple of Basque players - Fernando Llorente and Ander Herrera - who could be persuaded to return home for the good of the club.

Llorente has played just 13 minutes of Premier League football for Tottenham this season and at the age of 33 he may be ready to move back. He left under a cloud when he refused to sign a contract in 2013 and left to

seek his fame and fortune in Serie A. Now he's made his fortune he could be the saviour they need as time has finally caught up with the club's 37-year-old striker Aritz Aduriz.

Joining him on the plane from England could be Ander Herrera. A move from Manchester United is generally a step down but maybe he could be persuaded to make a temporary trip to the San Mamés as he's only started three top flight games this season.

The situation isn't desperate; they've only lost five games, the same as Real Madrid. The problem appears to be the will to win. Eight games have ended in a draw. A couple of them, Real Madrid and Barcelona were creditable, but others like Rayo, Getafe and Eibar less so.

There is talent. A number of clubs were reported to be interested when Iker Muniain was stalling on a new contract and Iñaki Williams is an exciting young striker who has been capped by Spain. The



Herrera and Llorente during happier times for the club. :: EFE

fact that none of Williams' four goals this season have been scored at home tells a story.

The players have history weighing them down. Only three clubs have never been relegated from La Liga: Real Madrid, Barcelona and Athletic.

The Basque-only policy doesn't apply to managers. Jupp Heynckes, Marcelo Bielsa and Howard Kendall all enjoyed a spell in charge. Kendall left his legendary Everton

team behind to move to Bilbao.

The modern Everton fans may scoff but Athletic find themselves in a similar situation to the Merseysiders a year ago with an underperforming team in need of someone to pull the players together. It sounds like a job for Sam Allardyce - the man who claimed his Englishness always held him back from big jobs.

We've had 'El Tel' in La Liga after all. So why not 'Gran Sam'?



Juanma controls the ball under pressure from Marín. :: J. RODRÍGUEZ

## The Marbella slide continues

Padilla's men couldn't score despite their opponents going down to ten men early in the first half

**MARBELLA 0  
RECREATIVO GRANADA 2**

**:: JULIO RODRÍGUEZ**

**MARBELLA.** Marbella fell to their second consecutive league defeat on Sunday, in what was quite possibly their worst showing of the season so far.

Padilla's side started and finished the game slowly and were

punished in the 20th minute from Recreativo Granada's first effort on goal. Despite a warning minutes before with a similar move, the hosts still allowed Héctor, the smallest man on the pitch, to steal a march at the near post to head home a corner.

Six minutes later, Marbella were given an unexpected lifeline as Hongla received his marching orders for two yellow cards in the space of seconds. The first was for a foul; the second for his vociferous protests afterwards.

The hosts then spurned several clear chances which fell to Elías, Añón and Juanma - chances they would later regret passing up as

Granada's second team shut up shop in the second half.

Padilla brought on forwards Montero and Mustafá in a double change in the 53rd minute as the side attempted to work the ball into wide areas before crossing. However, the lack of rhythm displayed meant that they couldn't carve out any further chances and instead went two goals behind when a loose pass from Cruz was punished as Jean Carlos scored on the counter-attack.

Unfortunately for the around 700 fans inside the Antonio Lorenzo stadium, there was no fight-back and Marbella are just a point outside the relegation zone.

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## SPAIN'S UNDER-17S CROWNED WORLD CHAMPIONS

Two goals inside the first half hour from Claudia Pina were enough to seal a historic victory for Spain's women's under-17 side in the World Cup final in Montevideo (Uruguay) on Sunday. The side saw off Mexico 2-1, banishing memories of four years previously when they lost out in the final to Japan (2-0) and had to settle for bronze in the Jordan tournament two years ago. Upon their return to Madrid, the players were given a hero's welcome and reception at the Ciudad de Fútbol.

## Luke Modric wins his first Ballon d'Or to break the Ronaldo-Messi duopoly

■ DARYL FINCH

Luka Modrić and Ada Hegerberg were the winners of French publication France Football's prestigious Ballon d'Or trophy at a ceremony on Monday night.

Real Madrid midfielder Modrić, who last season won the Champions League and reached the final of the World Cup, finished ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo (476 points) and Antoine Griezmann (414). With 753 points, the Croatian became the first player other than Ronaldo and Lionel Messi to win since 2007. Messi came fifth with 280 points.

This year saw the first women's version of the prize and its first ever recipient was Lyon's Norwegian striker Ada Hegerberg. Hegerberg's side won the treble last year with the forward scoring 13 goals in nine games on the way to Champions League victory. She finished ahead of Wolfsburg's Pernille Harder and teammate Dzsenifer Marozsán.

The moment, however, was marred by an incident involving host DJ Martin Solveig who asked her if she knew how to 'twerk'. He has since apologised.

# Spain happy with Euro 2020 qualifiers draw

Luis Enrique's side will compete in a six-team group alongside Sweden, Romania, Norway, Malta and the Faroe Islands

■ AMADOR GÓMEZ / DARYL FINCH

MADRID. Fortune was on Spain's side on Sunday as the draw for the qualifying rounds of the 2020 European Championships at the Convention Centre Dublin paired them with Sweden, Romania, Norway, Malta and the Faroe Islands in Group F.

"Each group is difficult in its own right in a draw like this but we are happy," said coach Luis Enrique.

Having successfully avoided drawing Germany, who were for the first time in pot two, La Roja will only be disappointed that they

were drawn in a group of six, rather than five, meaning that there will be no opportunity to contest friendly matches.

However, with World Cup quarter-finalists Sweden the highest ranked side in the group, Luis Enrique should have plenty of opportunity to experiment against minnows Malta and the Faroe Islands.

### Gibraltar

Gibraltar's quest for qualification starts with a visit from Mick McCarthy's Republic of Ireland in March.

A venue has not yet officially been announced but the GFA's preference is for the game to be contested on home soil.

They are joined in Group D by Georgia, Switzerland and Denmark.

The Republic of Ireland were originally placed in the 'group of death', alongside the Netherlands and Germany, but earned a reprieve

with the group containing one too many host nations. Euro 2020 will, for the first time, be held across 12 host cities, once more with the participation of 24 nations. ROI's place was taken by Northern Ireland.

World Cup semi-finalists Eng-

land, who were drawn in Group A, should progress without any issues having drawn Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Kosovo.

Coach Gareth Southgate called it a "great opportunity" for his young side.



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## SPORT IN PICTURES



▲ **Karate.** The Goju Ryu club in Torremolinos produced six medallists at the recent Spanish Karate Championships held in Ponferrada. Alfie Bannister, Antonio Lozano and Salvador Balbuena came runners-up in the boys' team event, while the latter triumphed in the boys' kata. Marta Vega claimed bronze in the under-21 women's category, as did Paula Quesada in the girls' event. :: SUR



▲ **Petanca.** The Buena Vista Petanca Club recently held its Autumn Cup Competition at Torrox Park. Twenty-eight members took part in the competition. The winners were Sue Cole and Ged Hart with three wins and plus 18 points. The runners-up were Joan Hart and Fred Bamynek with three wins and plus 17 points. :: SUR

► **Handball.** Spain's women's handball side go into the second phase of the Euro 2018 championship in France with zero points after losing to Hungary 32-26 on Wednesday. This poor result, due to a great extent to a lack of solid defence, followed their previous loss on Monday to Holland. In the next phase they meet Germany, Romania and Norway. :: AFP



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THE STARS




**Aquarius**  
January 21 - February 19  
A suggestion brings a far better response than expected. Overall there is a very optimistic atmosphere. All that you need is that little extra bit of confidence?




**Pisces**  
February 20th - March 20th  
This being a rather emotional time for you, it is best to take a deep breath before speaking. Be wary of sharing personal matters with a workmate as this can be unwise.




**Aries**  
March 21st - April 20th  
A cluster of chances to get ahead mean a busier than usual time with scant left for leisure. Still there is the holiday to plan and look forward to, isn't there?




**Taurus**  
April 21st - May 21st  
Remember that people come and go despite what we may want! The kindest people in the world are the most taken for granted sometimes.




**Gemini**  
May 22nd - June 21st  
Being social with colleagues can bring dividends right into next year. Co-operation in this area may seem tedious at times. However, someone has a solution to your problem.




**Cancer**  
June 22nd - July 23rd  
It may be necessary to change your own plans for the holiday if you want to be in a particular place. Disruption to travel may mean starting your journey earlier.




**Leo**  
July 24th - August 23rd  
A completely new idea for the holiday could emerge and surprise those who think that they know you. Some last-minute suggestions give you something special to look forward to.




**Virgo**  
August 24th - September 23rd  
Going with the flow and really living in the present can make this a sparkling time. You may not feel over emotional but very much 'at one' with the people around you.




**Libra**  
September 24th - October 23rd  
There are likely to be some problems to solve midweek. Nothing serious but having an extra pair of hands could be invaluable.



**Scorpio**  
October 24th - November 22nd  
Want to impress someone special? Just make an extra effort with your appearance but remain yourself! Nobody wants you to change your sparky attitude or cheeky smile!

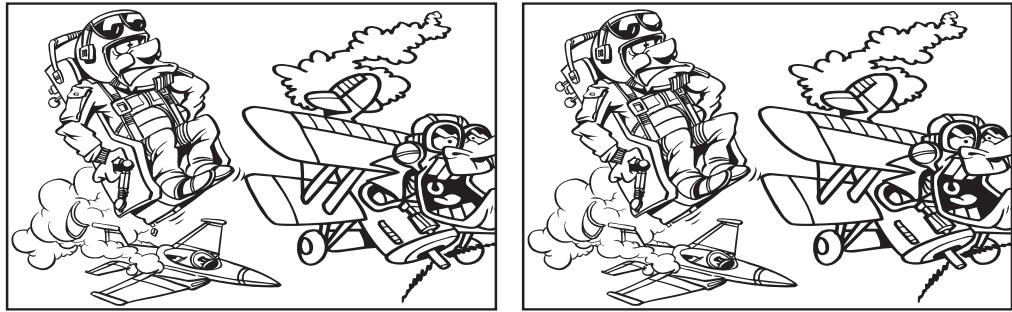


**Sagittarius**  
November 23rd - December 21st  
A slight hiccup with a loved one is best resolved by not making too much fuss. After all, it is the forgiving time of the year.

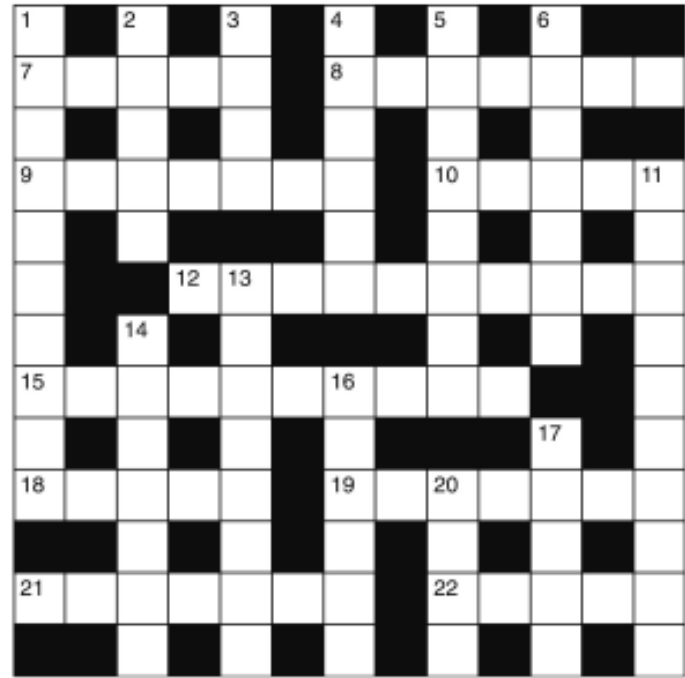


**Capricorn**  
December 22nd - January 20th  
Is this the best time to discuss the future with a loved one? You can with actions and not just words. Getting the ball rolling, despite the time of year, could see you strike a bargain.

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11324



- Across

  - 7 It is lost in the panic (5)
  - 8 Clients conform to a pattern (7)
  - 9 Bill waxing vocal? (7)
  - 10 In which one is bound to be clapped? (5)
  - 12 Does he help us to make more healthy purchases? (10)
  - 15 Not new on watch (10)
  - 18 In a citadel hidden away in India (5)
  - 19 Grim outlook for worker periodically on the move (7)
  - 21 He's top in Church and animal orders (7)
  - 22 Grant proves a drawback (5)
- Down

  - 1 At home inclined to be mildly unwell (10)
  - 2 Does it mean the golfer doesn't have to walk? (5)
  - 3 Fairy has some improper intentions (4)
  - 4 Not on the alert, please! (6)
  - 5 Correction about dream (8)
  - 6 Opens conversation on current charges (7)
  - 11 Movement of the sea in leap year? (6,4)
  - 13 The set of cards I can beat proves a disadvantage (8)
  - 14 Hail demand on account (7)
  - 16 Impede using a picnic basket (6)
  - 17 Father takes friend from the Vatican (5)
  - 20 Happy for boy to have letterhead (4)

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

	1		4		9			
	5					3	7	
8					3			5
5	6			7	1	4		2
4			2	8				
								7
	8		1		7			4
	2	1		3			8	6
6							5	

THE WORDPUZZLER


E	L	O	S	P	I	T	A	O	V
M	E	S	L	E	E	K	U	N	E
A	M	C	A	R	M	E	L	I	A
Y	O	A	W	A	Y	R	E	O	R
A	R	R	O	M	E	G	V	N	D
M	A	R	R	O	W	L	I	G	S
P	G	O	M	K	A	N	T	L	W
E	N	T	U	R	N	I	P	L	E
R	E	A	L	A	D	R	E	O	D
S	O	S	A	T	I	K	A	L	E


Can you identify the vegetables from the anagrams listed below?


- 1. Warmor
- 2. Ape
- 3. Nooni
- 4. Roak
- 5. Elak
- 6. May
- 7. Elek
- 8. Weeds
- 9. Crrroat
- 10. Pintur


BATTLESHIPS

**Instructions** Find where the fleet of ships (1 battleship, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 4 submarines) are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some have been filled in to start you off.

 Battleship

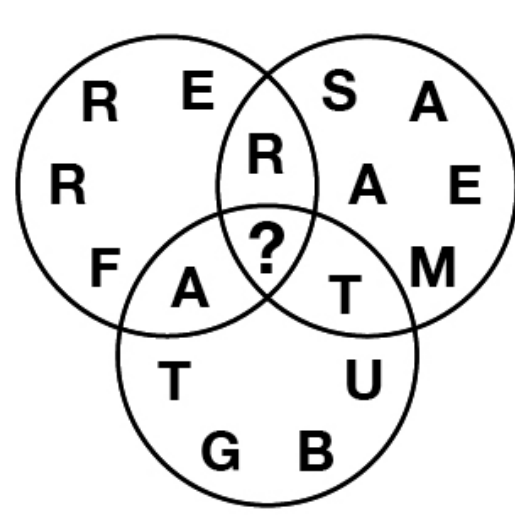
 Cruisers

 Destroyers

 Submarines

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A						■				
B										
C	■									
D										
E					■					
F	■									
G										
H							■			
I										
J										
	1	1	3	1	2	3	3	0	6	0

CIRCLEGRAM



**Instructions**  
Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

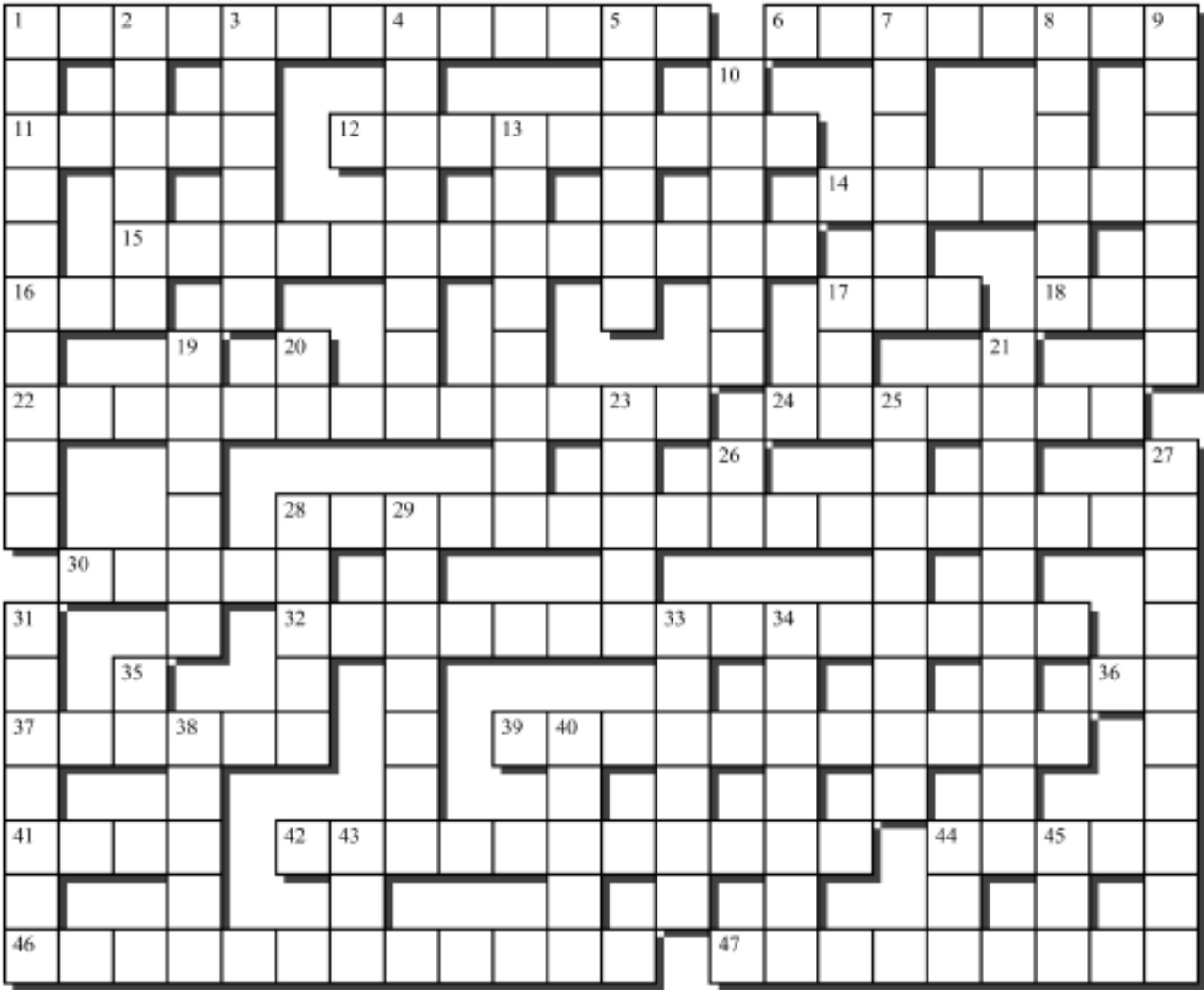


LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD

- Across

  - 1) Disqualified (13)
  - 6) Medals (8)
  - 11) Senile (5)
  - 12) Pasties (9)
  - 14) Giant (7)
  - 15) Training (13)
  - 16) Tweet (3)
  - 17) I give (3)
  - 18) Goose (3)
  - 22) Impressive (13)
  - 24) Screen (7)
  - 28) Shot put (11,2,4) (17)
  - 30) Car (5)
  - 32) Olympic Games (6,9) (15)
  - 36) Faith (2)
  - 37) Silvers (6)
  - 39) You were asking (11)
  - 41) Rock (4)
  - 42) Career (11)
  - 44) Sleepiness (5)
  - 46) Speciality (12)
  - 47) Winners (9)
- Down

  - 1) Discipline (10)
  - 2) Survey (6)
  - 3) Athlete (6)
  - 4) Women's (8)
  - 5) Dials (6)
  - 7) Offence (6)
  - 8) Canvas (6)
  - 9) To exceed (7)
  - 10) Tuesday (6)
  - 13) Pillow (8)
  - 17) Day (3)
  - 19) Bronze (6)
  - 20) Ace (2)
  - 21) Championship (10)
  - 23) Wheat (5)
  - 25) Godmothers (8)
  - 26) In (2)
  - 27) You will compete (10)
  - 28) Far (5)
  - 29) Our (f) (7)
  - 31) Sport (7)
  - 33) Achievements (6)
  - 34) Lie (7)
  - 35) It goes (2)
  - 38) Suit (5)
  - 40) Gust (5)
  - 43) Estuary (3)
  - 44) Thirst (3)
  - 45) For (3)

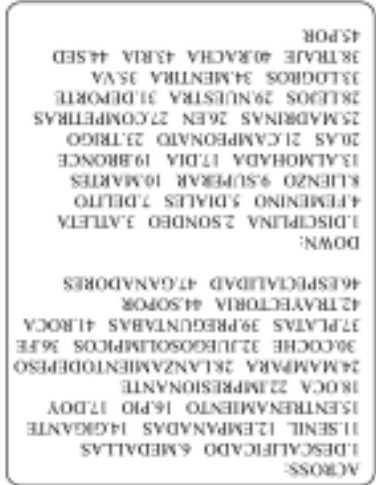


ANSWERS

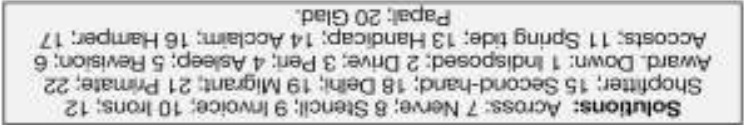
Quiz answers

**Answer :** Roads.  
**Of interest:** Hermes is the winged herald and messenger of the Olympian gods. In addition, he is also a divine trickster, and the god of roads, flocks, commerce, and thieves. Hermes was also capable of crossing the border between the living and the dead.  
**Answer:** Lost things.  
**Of interest:** St. Anthony of Padua, known as the patron saint of lost articles, is credited with recovering lost people, items and stolen goods. In art he is shown with a book, a heart, a flame, a lily, or the child Jesus.

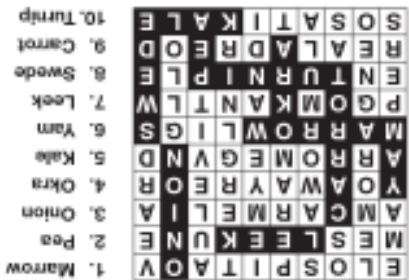
Language Crossword



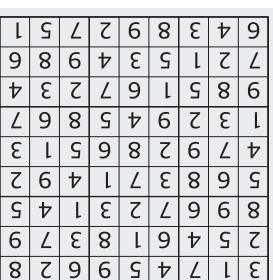
Cryptic Crossword



Wordpuzzler solution



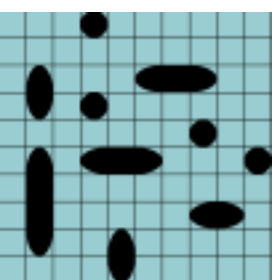
Sudoku solution



Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is I. Ferrari, Maserati, Bugatti, all sports car manufacturers.

Battleships



WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN THIS?



Last week:  
Fuengirola

The emblem of the Rotary International Club is situated on the Paseo Marítimo Los Boliches. The Fuengirola-Mijas Rotary Club was founded in 1984 by Carlos Bertrán de Lis, Ramón Morales, Miguel Arconada and the sculptor, Thomas Fischer.



MALAGA PORT INFORMATION

CRUISE SHIP MOVEMENTS (SOURCE: MALAGA PORT AUTHORITY)					
Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Mein Schiff 2	08/12	Gibraltar	Valencia	07.00	21.30
Nieuw Statendam	08/12	Cartagena	Funchal	08.00	18.00
Norwegian Spirit	11/12	Funchal	Alicante	07.00	17.00
Viking Sun	13/12	Cartagena	Cadiz	08.00	22.00
Norwegian Spirit	21/12	Funchal	Alicante	07.00	17.00
Aidamar	25/12	Arrecife	Cartagena	10.00	19.30
Mein Schiff 2	29/12	Gibraltar	Valencia	07.00	21.30









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f i



## A new life for Buu in Fuengirola

Chessington Zoo and Bioparc in Fuengirola have arranged the transfer of a female gorilla who they hope will mate with Bioparc's male, Echo

■ **IVÁN GELIBTER**

Although these are the times of speed dating and Tinder, it is still possible to find love with the help of a matchmaker and arranged marriage. That, at least, is what is happening to one of the most famous inhabitants of Bioparc, a gorilla called Echo, who more than a year after arriving in Fuengirola is about to meet his future partner.

This is what the park staff hope will be the start of a new life: a 20-year-old female called Buu travelled from her previous home at Chessington Zoo near London this week to Bioparc to take up a very important position: the second member of the breeding group of the gorilla species at the park. It is hoped that Buu, who has already given birth once in London, will create a new family with Echo.

Some months ago, after the death of Ernst, the iconic silverback gorilla who lived at the Bioparc for more than 14 years, the park trans-



Echo arrived at the Bioparc last year and has adapted perfectly to his new habitat. ■ **SUR**

formed its facilities, security measures and the protocols of the technical and veterinary team to become the fifth park with a gorilla breeding programme in Spain. The initiative is extremely important, because this species is among the ten most endangered primates in

the world. It has been decided that the park is ideal to house a male and two fertile female gorillas, who will share their habitat with Kim, an elderly female who lives there at present.

Echo, a young male from Kolmar-

den zoo in Sweden, arrived at Bioparc in May last year. After a year and a half with Kim, he has adapted perfectly to his new home, his companion and his keepers. The transfer and the coordination between the Swedish zoo and the Fuengirola park was "a total success", say sources at Bioparc. The arrival of Buu

is the next step in the lowland gorilla reproduction project, which will conclude when the second fertile female is brought here next year.

After weeks of coordination between Chessington and Bioparc, Javier Vicent, a keeper in Fuengirola, set off for London last week, for what he described as a "unique experience in my professional life".

### A new life

Before Javier accompanied Buu to Fuengirola, he had to learn as much as he could about her: her character, daily diet, favourite food, habitual behaviour, customs, relationship with her keepers, etc.

These animals are much more sociable than other primates such as chimpanzees, but this process is essential for Buu as well as Javier, because there needs to be a close link between them. Every animal's personality is different and Javier's work involves getting to know and understand them.

Bioparc expects that it will take three to four weeks for Buu to adapt to her new surroundings and companions, after which time visitors will be able to see her.

Once she has settled in, everyone at the Bioparc will be hoping that this will be the start of a long and happy fertile life for its gorillas.



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