



Local birth rate falls to lowest level since records began

In Malaga province 6,297 babies were born in the first half of this year

Figures released last week by the Spanish statistics institute, INE, show that the birth rate in Malaga province has plunged to its lowest since records began in 1941. In the first six months of 2019, 6,297 babies were born, just over 2% fewer than the

previous year, and 29% down on ten years ago. During the same period of 2019, 6,551 people died in the province, leaving a negative natural population growth for the first time. The total population continues to grow only thanks to immigration. **P2**

Catalan regional president receives 18-month ban on holding public office

The Barcelona court ruling, which is open to appeal, says Quim Torra broke electoral law by refusing to remove yellow independence ribbons

The president of Catalonia, Quim Torra, could be forced to stand down if an 18-month ban on public office is upheld. A court has ruled that Torra disobeyed the electoral commission by displaying pro-independence symbols prior to the April vote. **P20**

A cheerful delivery on Christmas Day. A local family firm will be providing dinners and company for those in need **P9**

Berrocal's warriors stand guard at the palace. The Museum of Malaga is now exhibiting sculptures by the late local artist **P36**

SPORT
A triumphant welcome home for local handball 'warriors' **P51**



:: F. SILVA

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The Christmas tree outside Malaga cathedral. :: FÉLIX PALACIOS

Birth rate in Malaga province at its lowest since records began in 1941

NURIA TRIGUERO

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In the first six months of this year only 6,297 babies were born in Malaga and there were 6,551 deaths, so the province is now suffering negative population growth

MALAGA. 2019 looks like being the first year in recent history in which more people died than were born in Malaga. In the first six months of this year only 6,297 babies were born in the province, the lowest figure since records began in 1941. That is 139 fewer babies (or a reduction of 2.16 per cent) than in the first half of 2018. These statistics are from a study into natural movement of the population which has just been updated by the National Institute of Statistics (INE).

The birth rate is so low that even though the number of deaths is lower than last year (6,551 people died, nine per cent fewer than in the first six months of 2018), the province is now in a situation of negative population growth (there were 254 more deaths than births).

This has been the case in Spain as a whole for years, but until now Malaga had escaped thanks to its younger population and higher birth rate than other regions.

In reality, the first half of 2018 was the first period in history in which there were more deaths than births in Malaga, but there was also an unusual situation during that time because the number of deaths was higher than normal. Experts attribute this to an especially virulent flu epidemic.

In the first half of 2019 that was

not the case. Mortality was lower than the previous two years. To be specific, 6,551 people died between January and June this year, which is 9.2 per cent fewer than in the same period the previous year.

Clear downward trend

The birth rate does seem to be falling inexorably, though. "The number of deaths is more variable depending on the year, because of basic circumstances such as the winter, although there is always a recognisable trend behind the rises and falls. On the other hand, the births follow a much clearer trend," said José Jesús Delgado, a professor in the Geography department at Malaga University.

This downward trend has been ongoing for the past decade, coinciding with the economic crisis. Between 2008 and 2018 the birth rate in Malaga province fell by 29 per cent, from 31,434 births to 19,015. Every year during this decade fewer babies have been born than in the previous year, with the exception of 2014, when there was a sudden rise.

Some attribute this fall in the birth rate to the economic crisis, but most experts in demographics believe the recession was only an aggravating factor in a phenomenon which has more to do with the composition of the population pyramid and social changes. The generation of women from the 'baby boom' period are no longer of fertile age and, given that later generations are less numerous,

In the past decade the number of births in the province has dropped by 29 per cent

Malaga's population is still increasing, but only because of internal and external immigration

every woman would need to have more children in order for the birth rate to be maintained.

That doesn't happen; in fact the situation is the contrary. Every year the fecundity index (the average number of children per woman of fertile age) falls and the average age of motherhood rises. Ageing and the fall in the birth rate feed each other. They are two sides of the same phenomenon, the so-called 'demographic winter' which is affecting most countries in western Europe.

Professor Delgado confirmed that this ageing process is common all over Spain, but stresses that there are major differences between regions and that Malaga "can consider itself among the most fortunate, because it maintains a strong demographic dynamism thanks to its coastal situation and economic power".

In fact, compared with the loss of inhabitants suffered year after year in the provinces of 'empty Spain', Malaga is one of those which gains the most population, thanks to internal and external immigration.

Migration

"Nobody should fear immigration, because it is the solution to make sure our country does not lack labour in the not-so-distant future," said Professor Delgado. He said the so-called natalist policies can be effective, but it is advisable for the authorities to take some type of action to stop the fall in the birth rate.

According to Delgado, measures which aim to improve the conciliation of working and personal life, such as extending paternity leave, are positive, although on the other hand he said the fact that there has recently been talk of another crisis "isn't exactly encouraging people to procreate".

This week the INE also published the marriage statistics for the first half of this year, showing that there were 2,331 weddings in the province, which was 104 more than in the same period of 2018.

"Decent salaries and job stability would increase the birth rate"

A "culture of seasonal employment" and the "fragility" of conciliation policies are causing the low birth rate in Spain, according to Antonio Izquierdo, an expert in demography and head of Sociology at the University of A

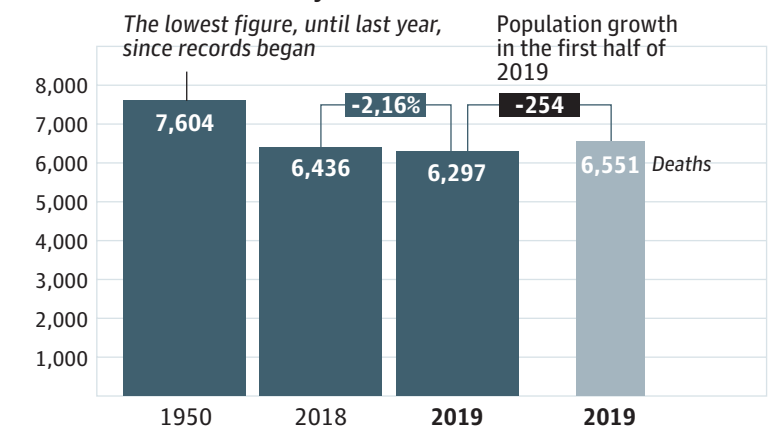
Coruña. In the first half of this year 170,074 babies were born in this country, which was 6.2 per cent lower than in the same period last year and the lowest figure since 1941, when records began to be kept.

"There is nothing different about this trend, which we have been following for many years, and it is generalised in the EU," says Izquierdo, although he stresses that fecundity in lowest in southern European countries such as Spain.

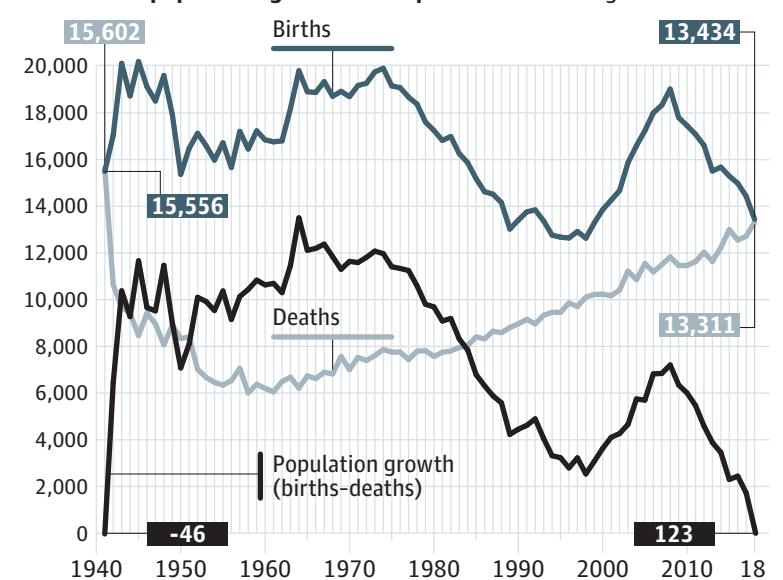
"The economy determines demography, not the other way round," he says, and points out that countries in northern Europe have an average of "half a child more than we do", to demonstrate the effect of the labour market on people's decision to have children. "Decent salaries and job stability would increase the birth rate," says this expert, who believes "fragile conciliation policies" in Spain also have a negative effect on the number of children born.

Births in Malaga province

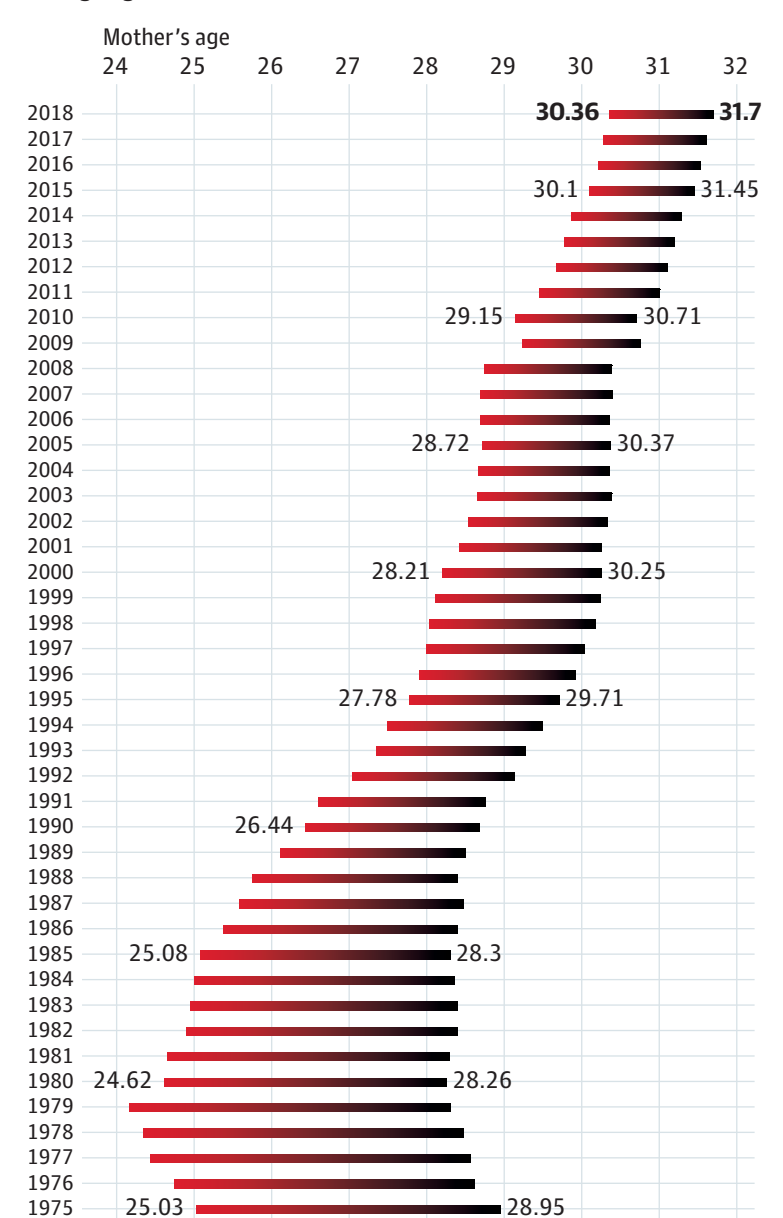
Births in the first half of the year



Evolution of population growth in the province Annual figures



Average age to become a mother



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística

✉ E. HINOJOSA

Municipal police forces call for more protection to be able to help fight organised crime

Police union leaders call for better coordination, communication and heavier firearms as Marbella mayor asks the government to intervene

:: ÁLVARO FRÍAS / JUAN CANO / HÉCTOR BARBOTA

COSTA DEL SOL. Every day more than 2,500 Local Police (Policía Local) officers patrol the streets of the municipalities in Malaga province and along the Costa del Sol. These officers are part of municipal-controlled forces and have witnessed the rise in violent crime in their areas.

So far this year, there have been eight supposed revenge killings linked to drug gangs and over 50 serious violent incidents, such as kidnap or attempted murder, along the coast.

Representatives of the Local Police officers have said they feel under appreciated in their crime-fighting role compared to colleagues in the better equipped and trained National Police and Guardia Civil. Their unions in Malaga have now spoken out about their fears over the spiral of violence, adding to the recent voices of Guardia Civil and National Police representatives.



Local Police say they have inadequate firearms on routine patrols. :: SUR

Mayor of Marbella, Ángeles Muñoz, responsible for one of the largest municipal Local Police forces in the area, has called on national government to bring local mayors together to discuss better coordination between the different security forces. "This isn't something we can just deal with on Marbella council's security committee," she said.

Ignacio Mérida, Mijas head of the UPLB union, says there is poor communication between the different police services covering the area.

"We don't want to do the investigating [but] just want to know when something happens in a neighbouring municipality, as we're on the streets and exposed to the same dangers as [National Police and Guardia Civil] forces. For example, nobody told us about the shooting in Cabopino (Marbella) when they killed a Frenchman on 3 December. We only got a call that there was a car on fire near to Mijas quarry, where the hitmen abandoned the vehicle after fleeing the scene. We were the

first on the scene and treated it as a fire when really it was a crime operation," he explained.

Call for bigger guns

Óscar Camacho, a Local Police officer in Marbella and head of the CSL union, pointed out that criminals don't distinguish between the different uniforms and that Local Police are just as exposed as the other police forces. "There should be a communication channel between everyone so we're not left out."

Mérida also called for access to the same databases as the Guardia Civil and National Police, as often his officers lack the same basic information on who has been arrested.

Manuel Troyano, local leader of Sip-An called for Local Police to have longer-barrel guns, as other police forces and the criminals do. "In a stand off with a hand gun against one of those, the only thing you can do is hide as otherwise they'll fry you," he explained.

What do you think?

Is better coordination between Local Police, National Police and Guardia Civil the solution? If you have an opinion we want to hear from you. We may publish your comments.

Email: surinenglish.su@diariosur.es

IN BRIEF

Worker killed in A-7 Nagüeles-Banús tunnel

MARBELLA

:: **C. MÁRQUEZ.** A 40-year-old man working inside the A-7 road tunnel that runs between the Nagüeles and Puerto Banús areas of Marbella was killed early on Wednesday morning. Emergency services received a call at about 1.10am saying that a worker had been hit by a drilling machine, but the man was dead by the time they reached the scene. Workers' unions said that so far this year there have been 18 workplace deaths in Malaga province.

Lithuanian sex-slave ring supremos held

AXARQUÍA

:: **E. CABEZAS.** In a joint Spanish and Lithuanian police operation, 15 people have been arrested in connection with a network of sexual slavery and exploitation in Lithuania that saw 25 women freed there. Police said last week that the two leaders were living in the Axarquía municipalities of Vélez-Málaga and Arenas, while another 13 were held in Lithuania. Investigators say that flats were rented where women were held and money was sent back to Spain.

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Madrid orders Junta to cut back 2020 budgets due to overspend by previous administration

The PP-Cs coalition regionally is outraged by the irony of the move as it refers to debt run up in 2018 when the PSOE were in power and who also control the acting national government

■ SUR

SEVILLE. There was outrage in the Junta de Andalucía this week when it found out that Madrid was going to intervene in the devolved regional government's spending for the coming year, ordering cuts or adjustments to the recently approved 2020 regional budget.

The Partido Popular (PP) and Cs coalition in regional government in Seville criticised the acting prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, for cutting back its regional spending plans, when it was, ironically, Sánchez's PSOE party itself in power in 2018 in Andalucía that caused the overspend.

Under a budgeting law for Spain's public authorities, Andalucía had not been allowed to run up debt of more than 0.4 per cent of the regional gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018. However, in the last quar-



Junta president Moreno (l) with Susana Díaz on Thursday. ■ EP

ter of that year, an extra 831 million of unforeseen expenditure was made, pushing the debt up to 0.51 per cent of GDP, meaning the region broke Madrid's spending rules.

Even more ironic for the regional president, the PP's Juanma Moreno, only in power since January, was that the order to cut back in 2020 has come from the Finance ministry in Madrid headed by María Jesús

Montero, who was the PSOE regional minister for Finance in Andalucía for part of the year the overspend took place.

The order from Madrid says that the national government has to approve regional spending plans and the Junta de Andalucía cannot raise debt on the markets in 2020. The acting national government's letter said that Andalucía could resort

to a centralised support fund for the regions, but this means it needs to make cuts to the 2020 budget. This year the new PP-Cs regional government had managed to place 1.32 billion euros of debt on the markets.

While the regional government said this was intervention by stealth, the Finance ministry in Madrid explained that all regions had to abide by the rules before they went to the markets and that the Valencia and Murcia regions also didn't comply in 2018. It wasn't clear whether they had had a letter as well.

Arguments in parliament

In the Andalusian parliament's last session before Christmas on Thursday, Juanma Moreno clashed heavily with opposition leader, the PSOE's Susana Díaz, who was also the Junta president in 2018.

Díaz accused Moreno of lying over Madrid's intervention in the accounts, saying it was routine and that Moreno still had ten days to fulfill the deficit objective in his spending plans.

Moreno told her, "We're here to build a new Andalucía and absolutely nobody is going to stop us, least of all the government of Pedro Sánchez with the complicity of the PSOE party in Andalucía."

Malaga's festive lights may need to spread to other city areas to cope with their success

■ SUR

MALAGA. The city of Malaga's spectacular display of Christmas lights might need to spread to other areas, local politicians and business leaders have suggested.

The biggest crowds for the illuminations, concentrating around the Calle Larios pedestrian area, were over the long holiday weekend early this month, however on many other nights as well, visitors have been packed in for the three-times nightly music show and others have been left in queues for the car parks.

Daniel Pérez, leader of the opposition PSOE group, has called for the mayor to prepare a special action plan "just like in Holy Week" and to "guarantee the safety and movement of the people of Malaga".

Meanwhile the mayor, Francisco de la Torre, has admitted that the lights could be spread out more around the city. Head of the Malaga hospitality industry association, Javier Frutos, has agreed, adding that, "the throng of people can't be seen as a negative providing that safety comes first and everything is controlled".

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How to retire to Spain with financial peace of mind

By Steven Langford, Partner, Blevins Franks

Anyone recently retired or approaching retirement is entering a new and exciting phase in life. While some worry retirement will be boring, many embrace the freedom it offers. If you have chosen to retire in Spain, you probably fall into the latter category!

Southern Spain certainly offers a beneficial lifestyle for retired expatriates, but long-term financial security is crucial to help you enjoy your retirement years. To achieve this, you should take a good look at your finances and the way you hold your assets. Your situation is totally different now from your UK working days, so be prepared to make some adjustments.

Savings and investments

You may have built up a successful portfolio of savings and investments over your working life, but your circumstances and objectives were different then. With a regular salary you could afford to take more investment risk and focus more on growth.

Many retirees, however, are looking for income; whether it is receiving regular payments or taking ad hoc withdrawals. Besides planning for

that, you need to protect the capital that generates the income, so be careful about managing risk. Aim to earn at least enough capital growth to keep pace with inflation to help maintain your spending power throughout retirement.

It is a fine balance. Start by obtaining an objective assessment of your risk tolerance. Together with a good understanding of your aims, circumstances, needs and time horizon, this is key to ensuring your portfolio is suitable for you. In any case, diversification is central to managing risk within your defined risk profile.

Taxation

All that free time in retirement costs money! Strategic tax planning could help maximise your income. While tax mitigation opportunities are limited when paying PAYE on your salary, how you hold savings and investments can make a difference to retirement income.

Note that UK tax planning is unlikely to be effective in Spain. ISAs, for example, become fully taxable for Spanish residents. Once resident in Spain, you gain access to investment opportunities that might provide

much better tax-efficiency alongside other advantages.

Locally compliant arrangements, such as a suitable life assurance bond, can combine your investment, tax and estate planning in one exercise, grouping different investments together under one tax-efficient roof.

Pension plans

You now get to benefit from those years of pension contributions; instead of paying money in each month, you can start taking it out.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for expatriates, but once you are no longer UK resident it may become less beneficial to leave UK pensions where they are.

UK pension income is paid in sterling, so if your key spending is in euros, this invites exchange rate risk. UK pensions also remain subject to UK regulations, which are could change for non-residents after Brexit.

Many expatriates choose to transfer UK pensions to a Qualifying Regulated Overseas Pension Scheme (QROPS) or reinvest funds into more tax-efficient arrangements for Spain. This can offer benefits such as

greater access to funds and more flexibility to choose how it is invested and in what currency to take income.

To protect your long-term financial security, research your pension options and understand the various implications. You need to take care here, so professional, regulated advice is critical.

Estate planning

None of us like to think about our departure from this world, but there is no denying that reaching retirement age does bring it closer to home.

The key message here is not to risk leaving it too late. Decide who you want to leave your assets to, how much and when. Then research the most effective way to achieve this, in the most tax-efficient way, taking both Spanish and UK rules into account. But do not ignore your own needs in the process – look for arrangements that provide tax-efficiency for you today as well as your heirs in future.

An integrated financial planning approach produces better results than just focusing on one element at a

time. For example, the way you hold your investments can affect how much tax you and your heirs pay and how the assets are passed to heirs.

While some try a DIY approach, cross-border tax, wealth management, pensions and estate planning is complex and it is difficult to objectively assess your own situation. For peace of mind, talk to a specialist adviser like Blevins Franks who will take time to understand your circumstances, needs and goals to help you secure a prosperous retirement in Spain.

The tax rates, scope and reliefs may change. Any statements concerning taxation are based upon our understanding of current taxation laws and practices which are subject to change. Tax information has been summarised; individuals should seek personalised advice.

Keep up to date on the financial issues that may affect you on the Blevins Franks news page at www.blevinsfranks.com

Is your financial planning on the right path?

- Are your financial arrangements designed to get the best from your capital?
- Are you paying too much tax on your investment income?
- With all the options for UK pension funds, which is the best for you?
- What will happen to your estate when you die? Can you reduce inheritance taxes for your heirs?

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The Costa del Sol sets to work on minimising the effects of Brexit

Two specific tourism promotion campaigns are planned for the UK while the area still hopes to attract British businesses

■ MATÍAS STUBER

MALAGA. The resounding reelection of Boris Johnson as UK prime minister comes with some certainty: the UK will leave the European Union, probably on 31 January.

As a key tourism market for the Costa del Sol, provincial president Francisco Salado was keen to send out a message of reassurance last Friday that the area was working hard to minimise the effects of Brexit. Alongside the director of Turismo Costa del Sol, Margarita del Cid, Salado explained that the referendum had had a "negative effect" but that the area had already overcome it, according to data provided by the Madeca Foundation.

To overcome this next obstacle, however, the local tourism authority has announced two new tourism promotion campaigns aimed specifically at the British market.

The first, on which 175,000 euros is being jointly spent by Turismo



Francisco Salado and Margarita del Cid last Friday. ■ SUR

Costa del Sol and Turismo Andaluz, will be launched before the end of this month. The second, much larger campaign, will come into effect specifically after 31 January. This one will be led solely by the Costa tourism board at a cost of 300,000 euros. Both campaigns, said Del Cid, will be digital and focused primarily online.

Another important aspect of relations with the UK is trade. The Madeca report found that exports

of Malaga products to the UK were worth 73 million euros, with avocados the most popular. Conversely, imports come to 138.6 million euros (61 per cent of which made up by alcoholic drinks) - a deficit more than made up by British tourism in the province, according to the report.

To maintain these trading relations, Salado also said that there would be ongoing efforts to attract British businesses post-Brexit.



Several information points have been set up around the town. ■ SUR

Mijas Foreign Residents department expects Brexit enquiries to shoot up

■ IVÁN GELIBTER

MIJAS. Mijas town hall is expecting a marked increase in enquiries regarding Brexit in the wake of the Conservative victory in the UK general election last Thursday.

According to the head of the Foreign Residents department, Arancha López, in October alone, her department dealt with enquiries from more than a thousand residents seeking clarification about their future position when the UK's departure from the EU is finally ratified.

Now, with a path to Brexit

seemingly a lot clearer, López anticipates that January will be a busy month for her department. "Our department always keeps up to date with all of the latest developments so that we can best help those that come to us for guidance and help with administrative processes," she said.

Once such process is getting foreign residents registered on the 'padrón': "We have had 227 people registering as resident [in the last three months] which shows the interest in continuing to live here and form part of our community," she said.

Collectives vow to keep fighting to protect citizens' rights in Brexit deal

British in Europe and The Three Million issued a joint statement while Bremain in Spain and Brexpaths have also said they will continue to lobby governments

■ JENNIE RHODES

MALAGA. As Britons living in Spain and across the EU27, as well as EU

citizens living in the UK, come to terms with the reality of Brexit following last Thursday's election, groups representing them are beginning to plan for the future.

Far from giving up, collectives including Bremain in Spain, British in Europe and The Three Million, which represents EU citizens in the UK, issued statements to assure followers that they will be continuing to campaign on their behalves.

British in Europe and The Three Million issued a joint statement in which they stated, "We will renew our campaign for both the UK and all the EU27 to automatically guarantee our rights."

While Sue Wilson, chair of Bremain in Spain, which is part of the British in Europe umbrella group, said, "We must now accept that the UK will start the process of leaving the EU on 31st January, unless there's a Christmas miracle."

A statement issued by the group went on to say, "This is not the end of the road for Bremain. The nature of our fight will change, but our goals and our ethos will not. We still believe, and always will, that the UK's place is at the heart of the EU."

Anne Hernández, president of Brexpaths in Spain, which represents people regardless of their views on Brexit but stands to protect people's rights, said she was personally "resigned" to Brexit but added, "With all my determination to get the best possible outcome for us as citizens in the EU." Hernández said, "We shall be needing the support of Spain and I am doing all I can, as I have been from the very beginning since the referendum, to reciprocate their help."



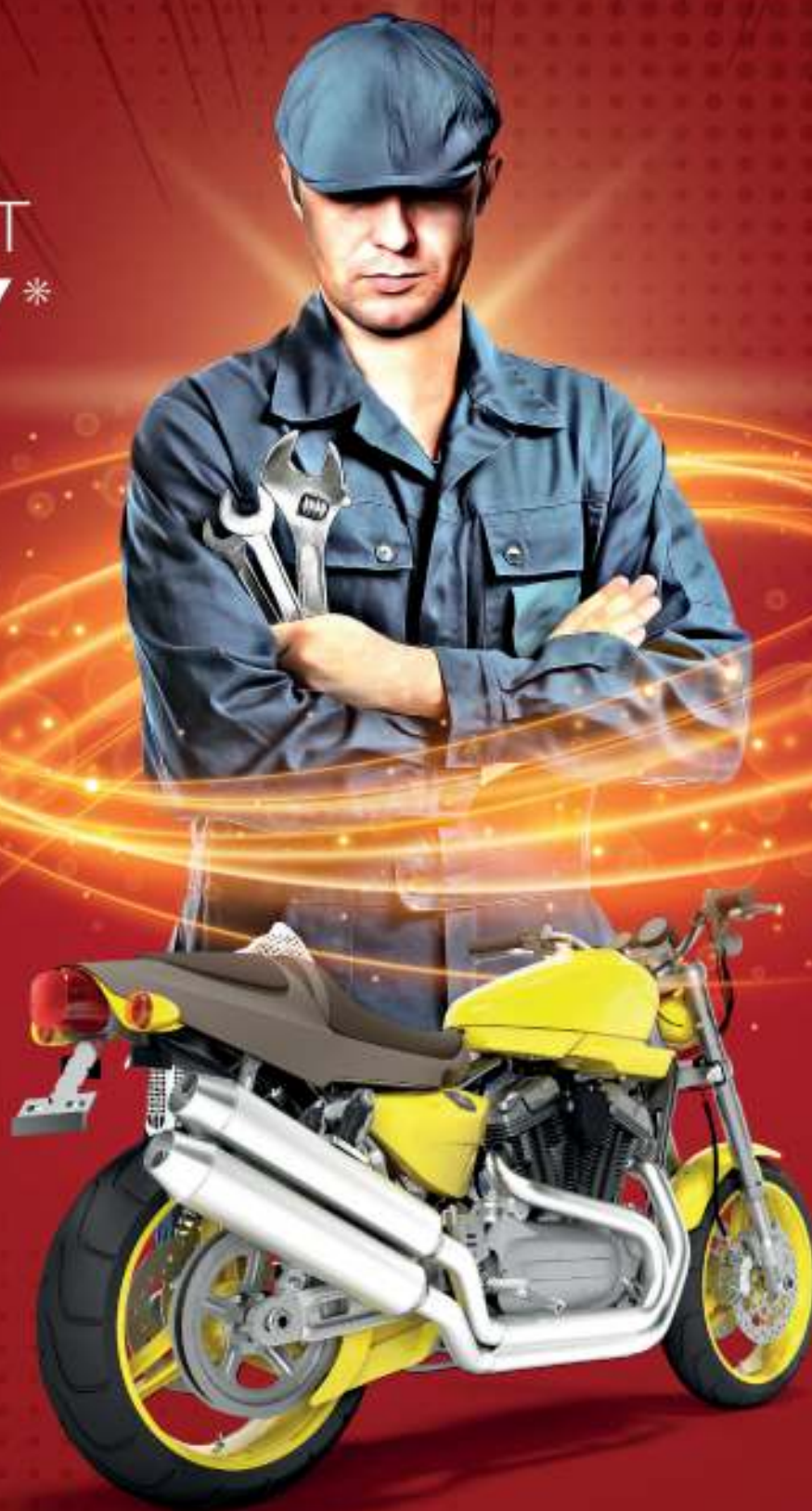
Placards at October's anti-Brexit demonstration in London. ■ AFP

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HERE AND THERE

Mayor in talks over plans for El Playazo beach

NERJA
E. CABEZAS. Mayor of Nerja, José Alberto Armijo, has attended a meeting in Madrid with Spain's Environment minister, Ángel Muñoz, to reinstate a plan to build a promenade along the town's El Playazo beach.
The idea was first muted in 2014 under a previous Environment

minister. However, nothing has happened since then.
Following the meeting, which Nerja's councillor for beaches and infrastructure, Francisco Arce, also attended, the town hall said that it will make land available for the construction.
Salado announced last September that he had started discussions with owners of land near the Playazo beach with a view to 1,200 homes and hotels being built in the area.



El Playazo beach. E. C.

5,000 people use indoor pool in first three months

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA
SUR. During an official opening of Rincón de la Victoria's indoor swimming pool last week it was reported that 5,000 people have used the facility since it opened on 30 September. Among those, 2,915 people have subscriptions and there are still 700 people on the waiting list. Open water swimmer from Rincón, Christian Jongeneel, after whom the pool is named, attended the event.

Tropical fruit growers postpone protests

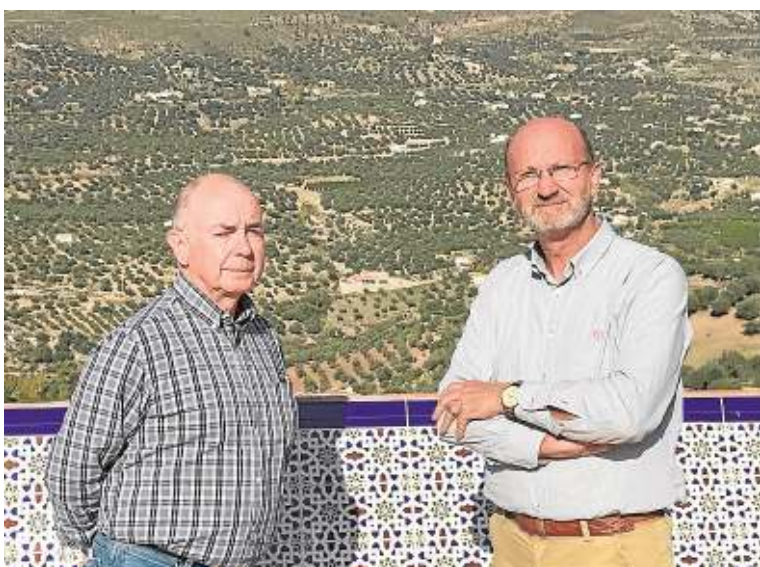
MALAGA
A. P. Growers of tropical fruit in Malaga and Granada provinces have agreed to postpone planned protests until January. Growers are demanding solutions to the restrictions on water which they say is affecting production of avocados, mangoes and other fruit. Axarquía growers fear further restrictions if there is no significant rainfall soon as La Viñuela reservoir is only 29 per cent full.

Concern over plans to repeal decree which recognises illegal houses

SOHA have reacted with "anger" to an article published in a digital newspaper that claimed the government is disputing a regional law

EUGENIO CABEZAS
MALAGA. Save Our Homes Axarquía (SOHA) have voiced their "anger" after seeing an article written for Spain's El Confidencial digital newspaper published last week, which claimed that Pedro Sánchez's government was considering a jurisdictional conflict which could repeal a decree to regularize many of the province's illegal homes.
The conflict could end up in Spain's constitutional court if an agreement between the regional government, the Junta de Andalucía, and central government, isn't reached in the next few months.

Recognition for illegal houses
The decree in dispute was passed by the Junta de Andalucía in mid September and allows almost 70,000 illegal homes in the region to be recognised by the Andalusian government and be registered in order to receive services such as mains water and electricity.



SOHA President Phillip Smalley and spokesperson Mario Blancke. SUR

SOHA spokesperson and Alcaucín councillor Mario Blancke said last week that the decree had been approved "thanks to wide consensus" and with the support of the regional PSOE party.
President of the collective Phillip Smalley added that if the houses have to be demolished, town halls would be obliged to pay compensation to

the owners and asked, "Which town halls have that much public money to pay that many people?"
Smalley and Blancke have called on the regional PSOE party to mediate with their central government colleagues to find a solution and have asked for the current Andalusian government formed by the PP and Ciudadanos parties to share "information about the deal which was signed with the central government".

Rincón de la Victoria to trial wet wipe detection system

SUR
RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. An agreement to trial a project designed to detect wet wipes in sewage systems was signed last Friday at Rincón de la Victoria town hall.
The iON Wipes initiative, a private - public collaboration, will use an artificial vision system which, those behind the project say, will

be able to detect the accumulation of wet wipes and other waste items that enter the sewage system and help to determine the biggest factors that lead to the buildup.
It is estimated that wet wipes cost sewage treatment companies 200 million euros a year as well as causing serious environmental damage.



SUR

SPAIN'S TOOTH FAIRY MOVES TO TORROX

Ratoncito Pérez, a small mouse who is the tooth fairy's Spanish counterpart, has become a tourist attraction in Torrox. Mayor Óscar Medina (above) welcomed the mouse to his new tiny ceramic home at the bottom of the steps in the town's Plaza de la Hoya last week.

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Festive food for those in need

A team of volunteers will help deliver free meals to those without on Christmas Day



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MARBELLA. A British family will hit the road between Alcaidesa and Estepona on Christmas Day with a team of volunteers to deliver free meals to those facing the day alone.

Louise Jones and her husband plan to cook and deliver more than 20 Christmas dinners to people who otherwise wouldn't get a meal.

Setting aside a budget of 60 euros and donations from members of the public, the mum-of-three said they will be delivering meals to the elderly, single mums and homeless people of all nationalities.

Together with around 10 British and Australian volunteers, the team will also spend time with those with nowhere to go on 25 December.

Louise, 38, who is originally from near Manchester and now lives in Guadiaro, told SUR in English that she got the idea from her seven-year-old son.

Louise, a personal trainer, explained: "It's for anyone who can't



Louise with her two youngest children, Charlie and Summer. :: SUR

make a Christmas dinner, doesn't see the point because it's just them or homeless people and single mums who can't afford it.

"It was actually my son who came up with the idea. We wanted to get him involved in helping people as he's really conscientious. So I said

we either go and walk some dogs at the pound, or we go and visit some people that are on their own and won't see anyone on Christmas Day and maybe take them a Christmas dinner, and he chose that one.

"So it went from there and a few friends said it was a great idea and

they have now joined us as volunteers."

Louise, who also runs the Fate Food Deliveries company with her husband, who is a professional chef, added that they asked Age Concern Estepona for suggestions as to who might need a free dinner on Christmas Day - before coming up with their list of 20 people.

Louise said that they are also reaching out to the public for donations of food or money to help deliver more than their planned 20 meals.

She explained: "We've already had one person donating two chickens. So if anyone wants to help out so we can do more, please get in touch.

"The trouble is finding the people, as not everyone wants to admit that they are on their own on Christmas Day and that they need help. And the people that we are reaching out to are not on Facebook - such as the homeless. So it's relying on people that know them to put their names forward."

Get in touch : Contact Fate Food Deliveries on Facebook or fatefooddeliveries@gmail.com

Businessman gifts life-saving netting to family of toddler who fell from seventh floor

CHARO MÁRQUEZ

MARBELLA. When two-year-old Álvaro escaped unhurt after falling from the window of a seventh-floor apartment in Marbella, it was described as a Christmas miracle. But now, such fortune will not be required again after local businessman Matías Lozano installed, free of charge, netting on the apartment's windows and balcony.

Matías, who himself almost lost a child from a fall, discovered the netting in Argentina and has since commercialised it in Spain through his business Happynets.

"I understand exactly what the mother went through. She would have been so scared, but it wasn't her fault, these things happen all the time. Now she can have peace of mind," he said.



Matías and the netting. :: c.m.

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Fuengirola told to give land grab back to Benalmádena

COSTA DEL SOL

The Junta de Andalucía is to force Fuengirola to abide by an 1874 boundary in the El Higuerón area, in a long-running dispute between the two neighbours

■ ALBERTO GÓMEZ

The municipal boundary war between Benalmádena and Fuengirola is starting to sort itself out after years of argument between the two neighbouring local authorities. The Junta de Andalucía regional government has told both town halls that the border set in 1874 will be “definitive and immovable”.

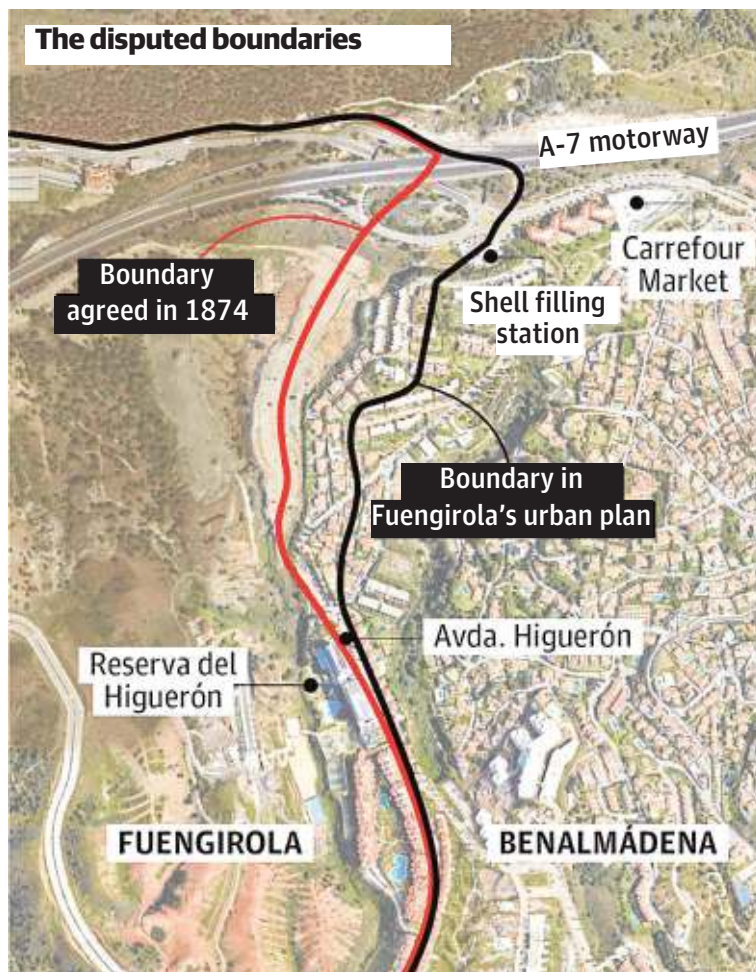
The decision means that Benalmádena is due back some 74,000 square metres in the El Higuerón area, the upper part of both municipalities close to the A-7 motorway.

Mayor of Benalmádena, Víctor Navas, has offered Fuengirola “a roundtable negotiation” to sort out the “historic, monetary and moral” debt he claims the adjoining town now has with Benalmádena.

The dispute is particularly important as Benalmádena will be getting back some lucrative developed land and the revenue from building permits and IBI municipal tax. Navas said that if “an agreement” couldn’t be reached with Fuengirola on compensation, then he would take the matter to court.

Fuengirola can still appeal the Junta’s decision to the regional supreme court and has already said that it is in no mood to give away a single metre. Mayor Ana Mula pointed out that Benalmádena hasn’t looked after the area in dispute for decades and that the Junta hasn’t taken into account the reality of the current situation.

The problem started when Benalmádena’s PGOU master town plan published in the early 1980s



The 1874 border doesn't match the current boundary. ■ SUR

THE DISPUTE

► **Land.** Benalmádena complained that Fuengirola had taken over more than 74,000 square metres in the El Higuerón area.

► **Population.** Fuengirola claims there are 200 residents on the disputed land while Benalmádena claims there are 500.

► **Administration.** The mayor of Fuengirola, Ana Mula, points out that the area has been run by her town hall for decades. Víctor Navas, her Benalmádena counterpart says his town is “owed” money.

missed off the land in El Higuerón which was subsequently spotted as a mistake by local planners. Fuengirola took advantage of the omission to add the forgotten land to its own PGOU plan in 2006.

Now the Junta says that an old agreement in 1874 to settle the boundary in the Sierra Mijas area, which also involved Mijas, is the real legal border that Fuengirola and Benalmádena have to stick to.

Once an unimportant hillside, the coming of the motorway has meant the area has been developed with luxury villas, and now Benalmádena wants those homes back, along with the revenue they generate in local taxes.

Torremolinos joins abandoned dogs adoption programme

■ TONY BRYANT

TORREMOLINOS. Torremolinos is the latest town to join the initiative #CuidayAdopta, a service that encourages the adoption of abandoned and lost dogs. Organised by the Spanish association of municipal veterinarians (AEVM), the project aims to reduce the number of stray dogs that currently live on the streets of Torremolinos.

The new initiative will promote a policy of “dog owners taking responsibility, zero tolerance of aban-

donment and the promotion of adoption”.

As part of its commitment, the town hall has agreed to collect, shelter and offer any vaccinations and food until adequate homes can be found.

Until 2015, municipal dog pounds could euthanise dogs if they were not claimed or rehomed within ten days, but legislation now prohibits the sacrifice of dogs and cats, except for humanitarian reasons, or if they pose a danger to public health.



Strays will be found homes. ■ SUR



The Fuengirola favourite is opposite the Puerto Deportivo. ■ SUR

Mallorcan group takes over Las Palmeras hotel

The well-known hotel on the promenade in Fuengirola will be run by Fergus hotels and get a 10-million-euro makeover

■ IVÁN GELIBTER

FUENGIROLA. The large Las Palmeras hotel on Fuengirola seafront is well-known to genera-

tions of holidaymakers but has been looking the worse for wear in recent years.

Now the management contract of the 400-room building has been awarded to Fergus Hotels, a Mallorcan-based group which also operates properties elsewhere in Andalucía.

The hotel will run as normal for the forthcoming high season, then close in October next year for a 10-million-euro facelift.

HERE AND THERE



The market offered more than 5,000 books and magazines. ■ SUR

Book market raises 2,000 euros for Cudeca

BENALMÁDENA

■ **T. B.** The annual Christmas charity book fair held in Benalmádena last month raised more than 2,000 euros for the Cudeca Cancer Hospice. Held in the municipal library in Arroyo de la Miel, the market offered more than 5,000 second-hand books, magazines and audiovisual aids. In addition to helping

Cudeca, the initiative is part of the town’s recycling programme and also aims to foster an interest in reading.

The money will be added to the 2,562 euros that has been raised during the weekly book market held throughout the year.

A town hall spokesperson said, “The library aims to help the Cudeca Foundation in its invaluable work, while recycling and giving a second life to something as valuable as books.”

Lux Mundi appeals for donations for homeless

FUENGIROLA

■ **T. B.** As part of its campaign to provide presents and hot food for homeless people in Fuengirola over the festive period, Lux Mundi has made an urgent appeal for donations of underwear, socks and shoes. The ecumenical centre has organised a Christmas party on Monday 30 December, when the presents will be distributed among the needy.

Spokesperson Marta Rivera said, “People can either give a cash donation, or buy items and leave them at any of our centres.”

Guided tours and visitors centre for San Pedro ruins

MARBELLA

■ **A. J.** Marbella town hall will invest 118,000 euros over the next three years in providing guided tours and specialised maintenance at the archaeological sites of the Vega de Mar Paleochristian basilica and the Las Bóvedas Roman baths, it has been announced.

Also in next year’s budget is a further 50,000 euros which will see a project drawn up for the creation of a new visitors centre.

“Our objective is to demonstrate the value of these sites,” said the director of Cultura de San Pedro.

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Works to supply recycled water to 40 golf courses on the Costa are now complete

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The project, which has cost over nine million euros, has included increasing the productive capacity of La Víbora treatment plant by 14,000 cubic metres a day

MARBELLA. The works to improve the recycled water network on the western Costa del Sol, so that this type of water can be used to irrigate all 40 golf courses in the area, have now been completed by the Acosol and Acumad companies.

The improvement works, which have cost over nine million euros, began in 2015 and have included increasing the productive capacity of La Víbora treatment plant by 14,000 cubic metres a day.

The completed project was officially handed over last week, at a ceremony attended by Carlos Caña-



Wastewater from Marbella and Mijas is treated at La Víbora. :: JOSELE

vate, who is the Director General of Acosol; Manuel Cardaña, the CEO of Acosol; Melchor Conde, the company's regional director for Infrastructure and Production; Francisco Barartech, the president of Acumad; and Javier Alcántara, the regional

director of Acumad.

This was the final phase of the project to supply recycled water to all 40 golf courses in the area, and it means that the seven between La Siesta, on the eastern side of Mijas, and Río Real, west of Marbella, are

now part of the system. Another five golf courses are waiting to be connected.

The pipes have been laid through the centre of Marbella so that in future recycled water can be used for parks and gardens as well.

The works were carried out in two phases. At La Víbora, double-layer sand filters and a rotating drum mesh filter have been installed. After filtering, the water then passes through a new pumping station, and up to 20,000 cubic metres a day can be produced.

Carlos Cañavate said this project is part of the company's commitment to the use of recycled water.

"We are focusing our attention on models of sustainability to enable us to meet the demand of the tourism sector, which has to be a priority. This year we have increased the capacity considerably, and that is how we plan to continue in the future," he explained.

Manuel Cardaña was also keen to point out that recycling is an essential way of saving water and is a vital part of the fight to protect the environment.

"Projects such as this are a clear demonstration of Acosol's unequivocal commitment to sustainable development," he said.

Cleaning work under way on Marbella's iconic Pirulí tower

:: A. JIMÉNEZ

MARBELLA. The council in Marbella has set to work on giving the Pirulí lighthouse-tower in central Marbella a clean for the first time in five years.

The copper and marble monument, created in 1992, requires special chemical treatment and the town hall has designated 13,000 euros for its care.

Some of the panels, lifted off by strong winds will also be restored to give it a better finish and increase safety.



El Pirulí tower. :: JOSELE



Fernando Moreno

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IN BRIEF

Gibraltar government files criminal complaint against Vox in Spain

GIBRALTAR

:: D. BARTLETT. The government announced on Wednesday that it has begun legal proceedings against the Spanish far-right party Vox for inciting hatred towards the people of Gibraltar, including statements urging violent action. It says Vox is abusing

the right of free expression and has crossed the line to incitement of hatred, libel, slander or defamation, and that the government will not allow anyone to cross that line unchallenged. The action is being taken against four of the party's leading figures. The leader of Vox in La Línea recently resigned, accusing the national party leadership of fomenting hatred against Gibraltar. Since the recent election, Vox has had a significant political presence in the area.



The chief minister. :: SUR

Apology for Easyjet luggage mix-up

GIBRALTAR

:: D.B. GibAir has apologised after Easyjet passengers' luggage was accidentally loaded onto the wrong planes last Sunday. The bags for the Gatwick flight were put into the hold of the plane heading to Manchester, and vice versa. Passengers were reunited with their baggage the following day, and told they could claim compensation if affected.

The Rock to see in the New Year in style

GIBRALTAR

:: D.B. Gibraltar will be seeing in the New Year in style, with live music starting at 10.30pm in Casemates Square on Tuesday 31 December and continuing until 3am on New Year's Day. The entertainment includes a spectacular firework display at midnight, and it promises to be a fantastic evening and a great atmosphere for all to enjoy.

Chief minister confirms Boris Johnson has assured his support for Gibraltar

In a statement to parliament, Picardo also said the Rock does not have to be part of the UK's new trading relationship with EU if it isn't in its interest

:: DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. Chief minister Fabian Picardo made a statement to parliament on Monday about the results of the UK election and the way forward with Brexit, now expected to take place on 31 January. He said that when he congratulated Boris Johnson on his electoral victory last week, "the prime minister reiterated directly to me his continued and entirely fulsome support for Gibraltar".

Picardo also pointed out that thanks to the work done by the Gibraltar government, the Rock will be leaving the EU with the benefit of the Withdrawal Agreement and the transitional arrangements, something which at one time was thought might not be the case. However, he also warned that Gibraltar

"must not fall into the trap.... of thinking that we must be a part of the FTA [Free Trade Agreement] to be negotiated between the UK and the EU. That new trading relationship may not include anything of interest to us on the benefit side of the equation and many obligations on the liability side of the equation. Such a trading relationship may cover services, or it may not. If it does include services, it may include matters related to financial services, or it may not."

"So we must be clear in understanding that we will need to be involved from the beginning but ready to walk away in the end if the balance of rights and obligations is bad for Gibraltar businesses and bad for the people of Gibraltar. We must hold our nerve and be ready to do a great deal for Gibraltar," he told the House.

The chief minister also reiterated that there will be no compromise on Gibraltar's sovereignty, no matter what, saying, "We are never going to sell our birthright for a commercial advantage".

This stance was also supported by the Leader of the Opposition, Keith Azopardi, in his response to Mr Picardo's statement.

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:: OCEAN VILLAGE

SANTA RAISES FUNDS FOR WOBBLES

Santa's Grotto and other events at Ocean Village have raised over £2,200 for the Wobbles Children's Charity, during a magical eight-day Christmas festival. Founder Frankie Hatton said Wobbles was thrilled at being chosen: "As a children's charity, seeing the children arriving in their droves for just over a week to meet Santa and the other Disney characters was a really worthwhile and rewarding experience for us."



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COSTA DEL SOL

Christmas can be a very difficult time of year emotionally, especially for people who may find themselves alone, a long way from home or have experienced a loss of some sort. Feelings of loneliness, isolation or depression may seem harder than ever to cope with when the rest of the world appears to be busy celebrating.

Asking for help can often be very hard, particularly as many of us have lingering ingrained opinions of counselling or therapy being a taboo topic, and of course the last thing we want is to end up spending months or years ruminating on a couch while a cold, distant figure with a notebook nods and mmmms.

Gail Berry is quite the opposite, and is confident that no matter what it is that's making you feel bad, she can make you feel better - fast. This highly experienced, qualified therapist specialises in grief counselling, couples therapy, narcissism, heartbreak and all types of emotional turmoil. While many counsellors may appear wishy-washy and refuse to be pinned down on whether or not they can actually help, or how long it could take, Gail is fully confident that her solution-focused methods bring quick, effective results and she has glowing patient testimonials to back this up.

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Her secret may well be that she is not only a highly skilled professional, but also someone who cares deeply about humanity in general and her patients in particular, and feels privileged to be able to help them. She has worked on various charitable projects to provide emotional support to people in need.

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SPONSORED FEATURE**Malaga Port set for luxury makeover with 31 new berths for megayachts**

Works are expected to start immediately after the contract was awarded on Wednesday

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Next summer Malaga Port will have a completely different feel. Over the next few months it will take a huge qualitative leap as it undergoes a transformation into a leisure port with 31 new berths for megayachts.

The contract to carry out the modifications was awarded on Wednesday to American multinational IGY Marinas, the Ocean Capital Partners company and businessman Domingo de Torres, head of the Antequera transports and logistics company, Acotral.

The winning project will see 16 of the berths installed in the most commercial part of the port, Muelle Uno (for boats between 30 and 100 metres in length), and the remaining 15 in Muelle 2 (boats between 30 and 50 metres long).



An illustration of how Muelle Uno will look. :: SUR

Works are expected to start immediately, with some berths to be ready in the near future. The entire project will be complete by the summer, ready to capitalise on the large amount of traffic which passes through the Mediterranean at that time of year.

It is estimated that the overhaul

could be worth 100 million euros annually, with the creation of 800 direct and indirect jobs.

Some 11 million euros will be required to transform the port and equip it for the needs of yachts and superyachts, expected according to demand to average 51 metres in length.



:: FRANCIS SILVA

HISTORIC GALLEON DOCKS IN MALAGA PORT

The Galeón Andalucía has arrived in Malaga, docked at Muelle Uno where it will remain over the Christmas period. It has just completed a year-long European tour and its doors will be open to the public until 12 January. This is a unique replica of the historic Spanish galleons which for centuries connected Spain with America and the Pacific.

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Online shopping pushes up postal sector despite fall in traditional mail

Although 74% of people in Spain claim not to get letters, sales increased by 19% as more express and premium parcel services are being used

by J. A. BRAVO

MADRID. The rise in the use of the internet initially seemed to mark the end of the postal service. However the huge increase in online shopping in Spain is, paradoxically, pushing up money spent on sending by mail once again.

The latest report by the competition and markets regulatory authority, CNMC, which covers 2018, says that nine in ten online purchases led to a parcel being sent. The lion's share of this business was handled by the longest established parcel and courier companies, although Amazon now has its own Flex network, made up of self-employed using their own vehicles.

In the second half of last year, the biggest slice of the parcel business, at 48%, still went through the state-owned Correos postal service. Home-grown firms, Seur (15.7% share) and MRW (11.2%)



State-owned Correos still has almost half the market. :: SUR

come next, followed by DHL (6.2%).

Online sales reached 39bn

Online shopping sales in Spain reached over 39 billion euros in 2018 and helped increase postal services' revenues by 19% to almost 4.9 billion euros, even though the amount of items sent across the postal system fell by 8%. Internet shopping parcels tend to weigh more and need faster delivery and premium serv-

ices, which, the report explains, is the reason for companies earning more with less volume of items.

The study adds that traditional mail, delivered on postal rounds, still accounts for 84% of the volume of items sent. Prices of sending a standard letter are below the EU average, at 50 cents, compared to 72 cents. Some 55% of people in Spain didn't visit a post office in 2018, and 74.3% didn't receive a letter by post, says the report.

IN BRIEF



The new store in the Fuentenueva district. :: JOSELE

Mercadona costing 5m opens in San Pedro

MARBELLA

by A. JIMÉNEZ. San Pedro has a new Mercadona supermarket following a five-million-euro investment. After 18 years with its old site in the Fuentenueva area, the largest

supermarket chain in the county has relocated to a state-of-the-art unit nearby. It covers 1,800 square metres and has 117 parking spaces. The store has been designed in the firm's latest energy efficient format and with an increased take-away range. An additional 20 staff have been taken on to add to the existing 96 San Pedro employees.

City tourism bosses to debate visitor tax

MALAGA

by F. JIMÉNEZ. Tourism bosses from the public and private sectors in Malaga city are to debate the pros and cons of a tourist tax, levied on visits or overnight stays. Experts will advise whether the city should copy places such as Barcelona to cope with a large rise in visitors.

Línea Directa to float on stock exchange

MADRID

by J. M. CAMARERO. Online insurance company, Linéa Directa, is to get a Spanish stock market listing in the second half of 2020. The brand has, since 1995, been owned by Bankinter which now wants to spin it off, valuing its business at over 1.4 billion euros.

Finally some sort of progress is being made, with acting prime minister Pedro Sánchez looking anywhere and everywhere in an attempt to form Spain's next government before Christmas - which, assuming a political miracle hasn't occurred by the time you read this, means he has just four more days.

But given the amount of choices on offer, it's odd what the Socialist (PSOE) leader has designated as his 'Plan A': teaming up with leftist Unidas Podemos (UP) - a partnership that would still be 21 seats short of a parliamentary majority - and squeezing that deal through Congress by securing the abstentions of the pro-independence Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC) in the investiture votes. This week, Sánchez also met with two other pro-independence parties from

THE EURO ZONE
MARK NAYLER

A MONSTROUS GOVERNMENT



Catalonia and the far-left Basque group EH Bildu, showing just how far he's prepared to go to become prime minister again.

In October last year, after Catalan separatists celebrated the first anniversary of their failed independence bid, the region's president Quim Torra gave Sánchez a choice: either guarantee a legal referendum on secession within a month, or forfeit the congressional

votes of pro-independence parties. The government's robust response was "we do not accept ultimatums". Times have changed or desperation has increased since then, though, as the ERC presented Sánchez with almost precisely the same ultimatum last week: open a "negotiating table" with us regarding the possibility of a referendum on Catalan independence, it said, or we'll vote against you becoming

prime minister again. This time the PSOE leader caved, meaning that he's now pandering to groups whose constitutional ideologies he firmly opposes.

Inés Arrimadas, centrist Ciudadanos' glamorous spokeswoman and top bet for the party's next leader, has dubbed a PSOE-Podemos administration backed up by abstentions from the ERC and other regional parties a "Frankenstein" government. Sánchez, in one interpretation of this colourful and entirely appropriate metaphor, is like Mary Shelly's mad scientist Victor Frankenstein, cobbling together a monstrous government out of ill-fitting and inanimate parts.

In the case that the Frankensteinian Plan A fails, it's encouraging to see what Sánchez's Plan B is. This week also saw him meet-

ing with the Conservative Popular Party (PP) and Ciudadanos, two of the parties that have come out most strongly against the Catalan secession movement and with which the Socialists would have a comfortable majority of 219 seats (far more than the 176 required). This should really be Sánchez's Plan A, so Arrimadas and PP leader Pablo Casado can only hope that the 'Frankenstein government' proves impossible, paving the way for a 'Grand Coalition' comprised of their own parties and the Socialists - a government that would actually be able to get things done.

In other words, they depend upon Sánchez's grotesque creation rebelling against him, rendering another governmental experiment necessary in the new year.

Fingers crossed.

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IN BRIEF

PSOE still negotiating power as holidays near**MADRID**

■ **SUR.** The negotiations between the PSOE party, winners of last month's general election, and ERC, separatist Catalan republicans, continued this week. It is hoped ERC will abstain in an investiture vote in parliament to allow PSOE leader, Pedro Sánchez, to become prime minister in a coalition with Unidas

Podemos. On Wednesday, the ERC were upset after a PSOE spokesperson implied a deal was almost done and that the ERC had renounced unilateral independence. The PSOE had been pushing the ERC towards an investiture vote before the end of the year.

By Thursday, the talks were calmer again, with both the PSOE and ERC saying privately a deal was close. ERC were waiting to see in writing what the PSOE are finally proposing to persuade them to abstain.

Diana Quer murderer given harshest jail term**SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA**

■ **SUR.** José Enrique Abuín Gey, alias 'El Chicle', has been given a reviewable full life sentence, since 2015 the harshest prison term in Spanish law.

Last month a jury found Abuín guilty of the August 2016 murder of 18-year-old Diana Quer, who disappeared from a Galician seaside village after a summer fair. The case drew widespread media attention until Abuín was arrested in December 2017.



'El Chicle' during his trial. ■ EFE

School bus driver held for being five times over limit**BADAJOS**

■ **SUR.** A school bus driver has been arrested for being five times over the legal alcohol limit for professional drivers. A routine inspection of school transportation in Talavera la Real, Extremadura, led to the alarming result. The driver was carrying 22 schoolchildren at the time and sources said he could face up to six months in prison as well as a driving ban.

Court bans Catalan president from public office for 18 months

The blow to the stability of the regional government was offset by separate news that the EU has said that Oriol Junqueras, in jail for sedition, could be an MEP with immunity

■ SUR**BARCELONA / LUXEMBOURG.**

Quim Torra, the separatist president of Catalonia's regional government, has his days in charge numbered. On Thursday, a court in Barcelona handed Torra a year-and-a-half ban from public office for disobeying the Spanish electoral commission's order to remove pro-independence yellow ribbons from public buildings during the lead-up to campaigning in the national general election held in April.

The yellow ribbon is the widely displayed symbol of the independence movement. Regional governments are partly responsible for overseeing voting in national polls and electoral law requires political symbols to be withdrawn during an election campaign.

The decision by the highest regional court in Catalonia isn't definitive and Quim Torra can appeal to the national Supreme Court in Madrid.

The sentence, if upheld, means that the president would be forced to give up running the Catalan government, which he controls thanks to a coalition between his Junts per Catalunya regional MPs and ERC, the Catalan republican party. It is expected that the coalition partners wouldn't



Quim Torra, wearing a yellow ribbon pin on Thursday. ■ EFE

Clashes at Barça-Real Madrid 'Clásico'

The postponed 'Clásico' game between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid took place on Wednesday night, despite fears that protests by organised separatist groups around the ground in the Catalan capital could force the game to be cancelled. Hundreds of extra police were drafted in as 5,000 protesters, fewer than expected, gathered near the Nou Camp. There were limited disturbances outside, and inside some fans succeeded in unfurling large secessionist banners. The match ended in a goalless draw.

be able to agree on a new president, meaning the separatist-run regional government would fall and Catalan elections would be called next year.

Jail and MEPs

While Thursday's ruling was possibly good news for the Spanish government, it was tempered by a decision by the EU's top court that Spain should have let imprisoned independence politician and leader of ERC, Oriol Junqueras, out of jail to take up his MEP seat in Brussels, and so giving him immunity. The decision is only for guidance and the Spanish Supreme Court must now make its ruling.

This could clear the way for other pro-independence MEPs who were refused their Euro seats by Spain to possibly sit in the EU parliament. This includes Carles Puigdemont, former president of Catalonia, who has been in self-imposed exile to avoid trial since the banned independence referendum in 2017. He tweeted on Thursday that he hopes to be allowed to return to Spain soon.

The EU court's view is that MEPs are official as soon as the election result is announced, adding that that the Spanish courts should have allowed Junqueras out to be sworn in as an MEP, as at the time he was only on remand and not sentenced, and then should have requested special dispensation from the EU parliament to put him back in jail again.

Junqueras was eventually sentenced for sedition.



A delegate voting during the closing session. ■ REUTERS

Madrid climate conference closes without agreements

While the importance of science was emphasised, the COP25 ended with little more than a vague call for increased ambition

■ DOMÉNICO CHIAPPE / ALFONSO TORICES

MADRID. The COP25 climate summit in Madrid finished last Sunday with many delegates and activists expressing their disappointment at a perceived lack of progress.

The delegates assembled in Madrid did recognise the importance of climate science, and the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in particular, and the need to open a dialogue about climate change's effects on the ocean.

However, agreement was not reached on two of the main objectives: making countries commit to

expanding their emission reduction plans, and fleshing out the details of a global carbon market and the institutions that might regulate it.

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General, tweeted: "The international community lost an important opportunity, but we must not give up."

Teresa Ribera, Spain's minister for Ecological Transition, stated, "The mandate is clear: countries must present more ambitious national targets in 2020. It's important to respond to science's demands and the people's demands."

One glimmer of hope was the European Commission's announcement of an ambitious set of reforms which plan to make the EU carbon neutral by 2050.

The absence of any real progress in Madrid ramps up the pressure for comprehensive agreements at next year's COP26, which will be held in Glasgow in November.

The Professional Association of Real Estate Managers in Building Developments (GIPE) is an association of professionals from the real estate sector who offer their services in intermediation and management of all types of real estate operations, with offices all over the country.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A problem with trees

While recognising the need to preserve trees and/or replace them from time to time, there has to be an element of common sense in the way that we approach this subject.

I am the owner of a small apartment in Andalucía, in a community that boasts excellent well-maintained gardens which contain a number of large trees that have been in situ for many years. Owners, including myself, enjoy the presence of these trees but are now encountering what seems to be an insurmountable problem.

We are all aware that trees need regular maintenance to ensure their long-term health and safety in our landscapes. However, decisions concerning the removal and/or lopping of trees in Spain rests with the Nature Protection Service (Servicio de Protección de la Naturaleza, SEPRONA), which is a unit of the Spanish Civil Guard responsible for nature conservation and management of the hunting and fishing industry. While accepting that an element of control is necessary to prevent indiscriminate abuse of trees, the Nature Protection Service seems to adopt the attitude that, regardless of the concerns of property owners, if trees look healthy they should not be touched. As a result, without specific authority, attention to trees by property owners can result in fines, if not prosecution.

Interestingly, the Nature Pro-

tection Service seems to take no responsibility for the maintenance of trees to ensure their long-term health and safety in our landscapes. In my view, this is a ludicrous situation in that it places the management committees of communities, which are responsible for their communities and are familiar with the needs of their communities, in a position where they cannot take decisions regarding actions required for the safety of property and persons.

In recent years a number of owners have raised concerns regarding the condition of trees, some of which are leaning over towards their properties and there is visible evidence of trees and tree roots causing structural problems to boundary and internal walls. Calls for inspections regularly encounter delays and regardless of visible damage to structures, requests to remove trees are refused, more often than not. Fortunately, to date, there have been no injuries - but what happens if (when) someone is injured? Is it likely that the Nature Protection Service will accept responsibility?

As I understand the position, this problem is encountered throughout much of Spain and community administrators continue to tear out their hair. Surely the time has come for this subject to be reviewed.

NEIL KELLY
SUSSEX, ENGLAND

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Tipping point

PETER EDGERTON
MUSIC MAKER WWW.E-PETER.COM

The two middle-aged men were engaged in a dance which, while employing elements of a passable tango, was largely a sort of grunting push-me-pull-you routine; not the kind of activity we're looking for down at The Shakespeare. It would have to be brought to a halt, sharpish.

"Alright, you win. Thank you very much."

I took the money and retired with as much dignity as I could from the scene, sporting a startlingly reddened complexion and a rictus grin. I'd spent the last three or four minutes, you see, attempting to refuse the offer of an eye-watering tip from a happy customer who'd spent every evening of his week's holiday in the bar. He'd tried to squeeze the money surreptitiously into my palm while I forcefully resisted, hence the unedifying spectacle of a couple of blokes in their fifties lunging about the place under the bewildered gaze of

a few customers hitherto expecting little more than a quiet pint in a convivial atmosphere.

When the generous offering was divvied up the next day, each of the staff received the handsome sum of fifty euros.

"Right," I thought, "I'll put my share to one side to make sure it doesn't get swallowed up in day-to-day expenses and then I'll treat myself to something really lovely." I tucked the spondulicks in a sock drawer.

This all happened quite some time ago and, I have to say, the drawer in question remains steadfastly unopened. Well, except for when I've needed clean socks.

The thing is, I really can't think of anything I want, certainly not a caprice, anyway. I mean, there's a bathroom tap that needs replacing in the flat but that would feel like a rather ungrateful purchase. In the olden days I'd have bought two or three CDs but that endeavour has become all but obsolete

and, not being a big reader, I've already got various books lying around I still need to get to grips with. Clothes? Nope, don't like 'em. 100 guitar plectrums? Possibly, but if past experience is anything to go by, I'll have lost them all by a week on Tuesday. No, let's face it, I've accumulated everything I could ever need in life and that makes me very, very lucky indeed.

This is why this time of year always feels a bit uncomfortable.

"What do you want for Christmas, Peter?"

"Erm, nothing really, thank you. I'm fine."

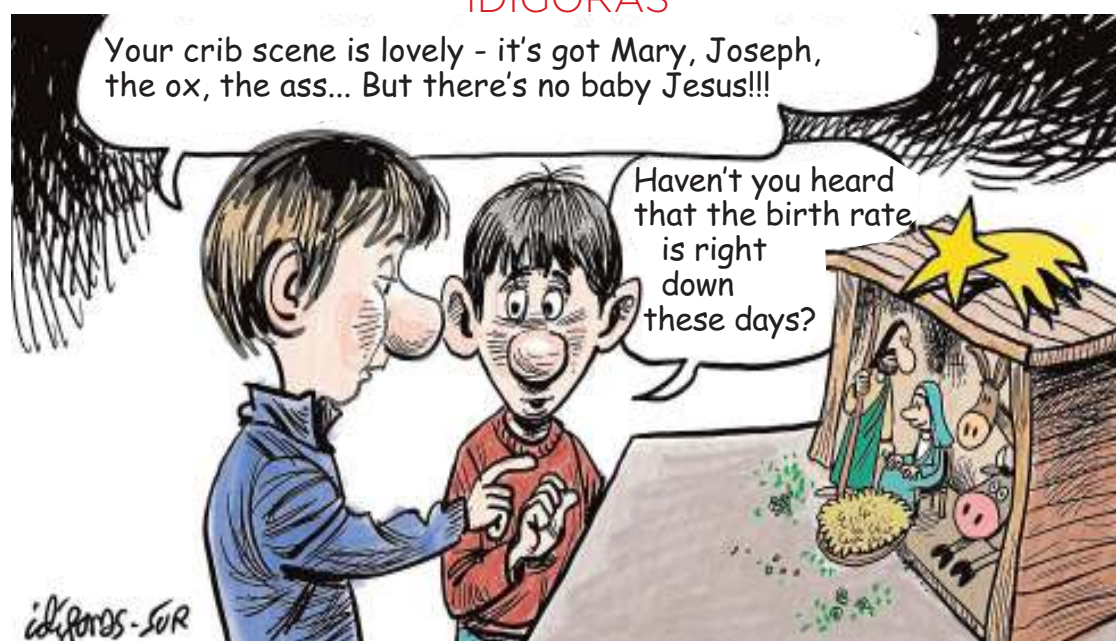
"Don't be miserable. There must be something."

"No, really, thank you. Give a couple of quid to Cudeca instead, that'll do the trick."

With any luck someone might get me a pair of socks as a gesture - at least there'd be a reason to open that desperately neglected drawer.

Merry Christmas, everybody.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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This is the season when the fragment of society with ability, age and the will to work, and is also lucky enough to have a job, can be divided into two groups.

On one hand there are the ones who try to avoid at all costs having to go to the office Christmas party but who force themselves to go to avoid being labelled antisocial. Then there are the others who circle the date on the calendar with red exclamation marks because it's their chance to get tipsy, and they're keen to do it again, despite the fool they made of themselves the previous year.

However that's just the problem of those who can say they work for someone else. Then there are the self-employed; and I'm not talking about

A self-employed office party

TXEMA MARTÍN

small, medium or large companies, but about people who work for themselves, often in professions that are, I won't say liberal, but creative. Those hard workers who can also be called "freelance", that is, they are free of all ties, some because they like it that way, and others because they have

no choice.

Well, not content with being able to work all day in their pyjamas, these freelancers have been spotted this week in posh restaurants dining alone. There's nothing wrong with that: it's good from time to time to treat yourself to a fancy lunch, some-

thing that can be done any time of the year, and doesn't necessarily have to involve getting plastered. And as freelancers can't stop being creative, now they have come up with organising Christmas dinners with other freelancers they don't know as a way of networking, something which in my case, I can't be bothered with.

What's really more serious is that freelancers don't get a Christmas hamper. To save costs, companies stopped giving them out to employees and the trade unions were quick to respond. The grumbling reached the Supreme Court which has ruled that these Christmas boxes are a worker's right, not a gift.

Out of all these cases, which have almost always ended up with an order to bring back the hampers, or compensate the employees with 60

euros, one stands out - that of Transcom, a company that decided to replace the hampers with a party.

We don't know whether the workers first ate and drank their fill before filing their complaint against the company, but we do know that the court ordered the firm to reinstate the Christmas box, which the previous year had been limited to an exquisite four-euro Panettone: each pinch of cake would have been worth around 30 cents.

What I mean is that the Supreme Court has not, at least for now, gone into considering the content of these sought-after boxes, something it could do, although I prefer not to comment on these things as I've never received one myself. I'm waiting for a freelancers' consortium to bring me one.

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The most unusual seasonal traditions

From religious services with folk music on Christmas Day to a very unusual custom where an entire village gets up early to go to Mass, there are some curious festive celebrations in this part of Andalucía

== JAVIER ALMELLONES

MÁLAGA. From the days before Christmas Eve to the run-up to Three Kings' Day on 6 January, there are some very unusual traditions in some rural parts of Málaga province. From religious services accompanied by folk groups on Christmas Day to a village where the entire population gets up in the early hours of the morning to attend Mass, these customs are a great way to get into the spirit of Christmas the local way.

"Living" nativity scenes, gastro-nomic events and even a real carnival to bid farewell to one year and welcome the next: these are just some of the festivals taking place over the next couple of weeks. They take place in Algatocín, Canillas de Albaida and Torrox, as well as Jeva in Antequera and Almayate, although many other towns and villages have their own unique festive traditions.

19 to 23 December

Mañanitas de Algatocín

This is a very unusual custom at this time of year in **Algatocín**, a small village in the Serranía de Ronda, where in the days before Christmas there are some very busy early mornings, known locally as 'Mañanitas'. Practically the whole village takes part.

Just after 5am the church bells are rung to invite local people to attend Mass. After the service, the residents of the village, who are known as 'algatocileños', walk through the streets, singing carols. Afterwards, they gather together to breakfast on hot chocolate, anisette, mantecados (the traditional crumbly cakes) and different homemade cakes prepared the night before by some of the local women. This is a really lovely and un-



The Verdiales festival takes place in Puerto de la Torre on 28 December. == SUR



Left to right, Migas in Torrox, nativity in Canillas de Albaida and Jeva in La Higuera, Antequera. == SUR



New Year's Eve fancy dress in Coín. == SUR

made from bread, however, but from semolina flour, olive oil, garlic and water.

This dish is part of the simple and traditional cuisine of agricultural villages. In fact, it was eaten a great deal in the old days, when the labourers needed the calories to sustain them during their hard working days in cold weather. The event is always held on the Sunday before Christmas Eve. As well as the famous 'migas', there is 'ensaladilla arriera' salad and locally-made wine.

This is not the only migas festival to take place at this time of year, though. The neighbouring village of Benajárfé held its own on Sunday 15, although in that case the crumbs were indeed made with bread.

25 December

The Jeva festival

Christmas Day itself is celebrated in unusual ways in some places near **Antequera**. As on every 25 December since 1987, the Day of Jeva will be taking place in the hamlet of La Higuera. This is classified as a Festival of Interest to National Tourism, and it pays tribute to the Virgen de la Purificación. The image, painted on a canvas, is carried in procession from the Ermita de Jeva to a threshing ground, where a Mass is held. There is a great atmosphere all day, verdiales folk groups will perform and there will be homemade mantecados and anis to enjoy.

19 to 29 December

Real life crib scenes

In the area east of Málaga known as the Axarquía you can find some of the most unusual "living" nativities, where the traditional "Belén" crib scene is formed by local people in costume. For example, on Saturday 21 December **Canillas de Albaida** will be holding one at 4.30pm and, unlike many others, this takes the form of a street procession through the village.

The Virgin Mary and Joseph with Baby Jesus walk around looking for an inn in the company of musicians to enliven this unusual piece of theatre. No detail is spared to make this as realistic as possible, from the real donkey to the characters that take part, dressed in costume, in this Christmas procession. This year, to encourage people to join in, a prize is

usual way of maintaining a tradition which has taken place for many years.

22 December

The migas festival in Torrox

Some of the festivals that take place at this time of year can only be described as delicious, and one example is in the town of **Torrox**, which on Sunday holds the oldest gastro-nomic event in the province, the Fiesta de las Migas.

This takes place in the fairground, where throughout the day thousands of helpings of this dish (often described as fried breadcrumbs) are given out. In Torrox, these 'crumbs' are not

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being awarded to the best character.

Meanwhile, **Almayate** has reason to be proud of its living nativity, partly because of its size. This year it takes place on the weekend of 28 and 29 December from 6.30pm at the Juan Paniagua school.

Much more modest, but especially moving, is the nativity in the hamlet of **El Valdés**, which is part of Moclinejo, which took place on 19 December.

The Axarquía is also home to the highest living nativity in Spain, which takes place at the top of **La Maroma**, in the Sierra Tejeda, at 2,068 metres above sea level. The second performance this year, which is organised by the Running Playas Club of Torre del Mar and the Grupo del 17, will be on Sunday 22 December.

28 December

Fiesta Mayor de Verdiales

One of the most popular festivals in Malaga city is this Fiesta Mayor de Verdiales, which has taken place on 28 December every year for decades. It is the biggest folk music event in the province, celebrating this type of music which only exists in this part of Spain.

According to studies, verdiales preceded the fandango, a very widespread form of flamenco. Despite its age, this folk festival of

Malaga continues to grow. Every year more people join in, playing guitars, lutes, violins and tambourines. This lovely event can be enjoyed in the Malaga district of **Puerto de la Torre** on 28 December, as part of a festival with plenty of traditional gastronomy, washed down with Moscatel wine from Los Montes and La Axarquía.

31 December

New Year's Eve in Coín

Some rural towns have their own original ways of celebrating New Year, and **Coín** is one of them. After the bells have rung in the new year, the streets fill with people in fancy dress so the occasion seems more like a large carnival celebration.

Most of the residents of Coín join in with this unusual tradition, dressed in some very original costumes which are often related to current affairs. Revellers gather in and around the Plaza Bermúdez de la Rubia as midnight strikes, to eat their lucky grapes, but afterwards the party makes its way to the Alameda.

More information: For traditional crib scenes, see page 40.



Visitors held candles during the Light the Light event at the hospice last Friday. :: SUR

Supporters remember loved ones as Cudeca hospice lights up for Christmas

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

MÁLAGA. The Cudeca hospice in Benalmádena lit up for Christmas last Friday with its traditional Light the Light event.

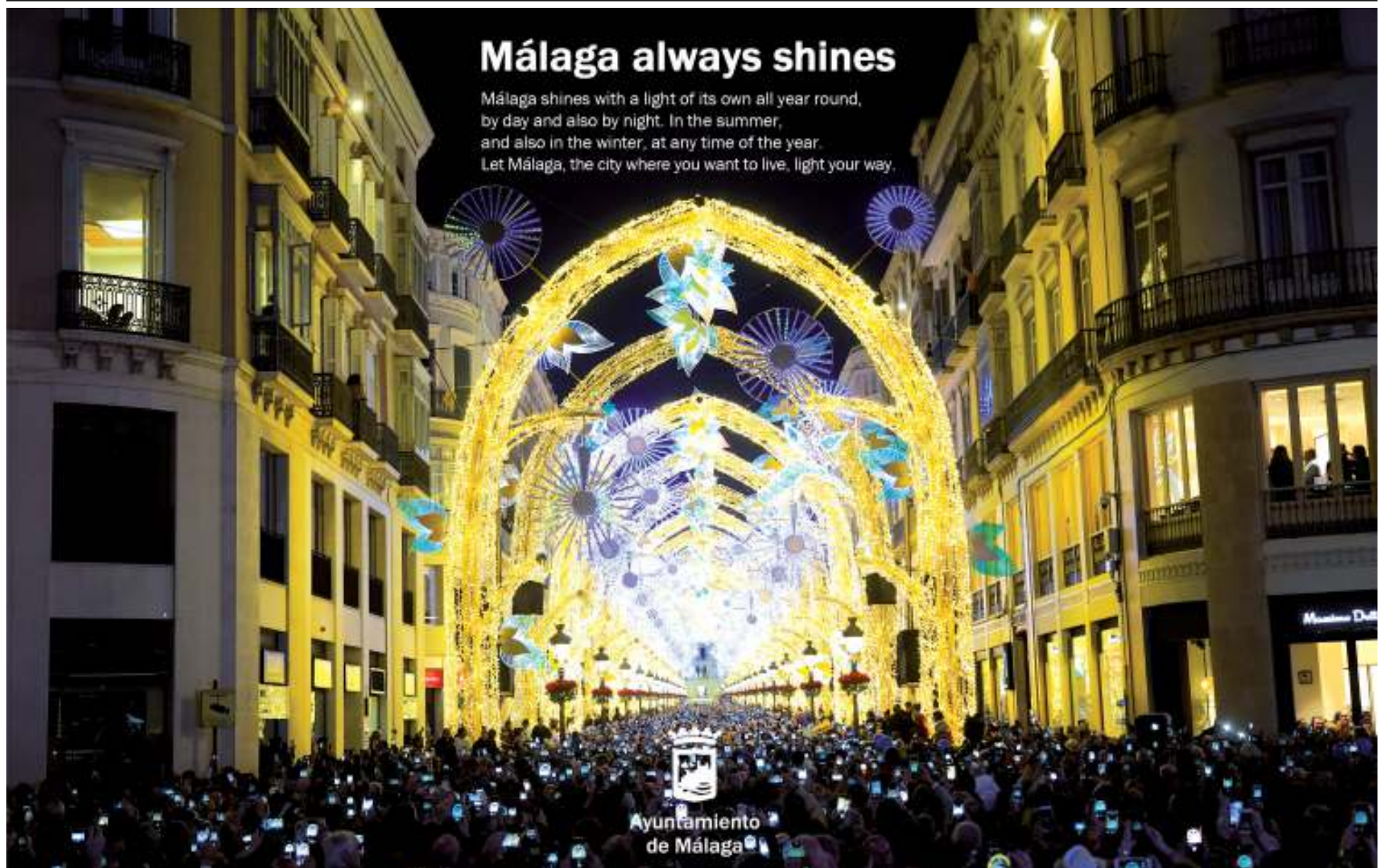
More than 250 people, holding charity candles in memory of loved ones, gathered to watch as Joan Hunt OBE, founder and honorary president of Cudeca, switched on the

Christmas lights, along with Marisa Martín, chief executive and medical director; Yusuf Hamied, president of the Yusuf & Farida Foundation; and Alicia Laddaga, Health councillor at Benalmádena town hall. The carol Silent Night was performed by tenor Rodrigo Orrego.

Prior to the lighting, the evening began with a performance by the

Sunny View School students' choir. The Costa Soul Singers choir also entertained while the younger ones enjoyed Magic Mota's performance and Santa Claus' visit.

Joan Hunt, together with the charity shops' manager, Daniel Beaudet, handed out diplomas to the volunteers of the Cudeca Crafts Workshop.



SOCIETY SCENE

Getting together with festive food, carols and fun

Groups and organisations have been meeting up to celebrate Christmas as well as to help those in need

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

Soroptimists Danish fare

Soroptimist International Costa del Sol ran a stall at the recent Danish Christmas market at the Centro Idea to raise funds for families in need in Mijas. Gluhwein and Danish æbleskiver were served on the stall which raised 610 euros, while donations were received from the Malaga CF supporters club La Peña de Dinamarca, the Odd Fellow Søsterloge Andalucía, the Danish Church Margrethekirken, Overseas Supermarket Iceland, Reiki & Therapies Mijas, Age Care, Ibex Insurance and Eyeprint.

The Soroptimists prepared 150 special food parcels, working with the Red Cross, including some bigger parcels for large families.

"We've been working with the Red Cross in Mijas for 10 years and are very grateful for the many donations we've received, which make it possible to help the local families," said Aura Roderick, president of Soroptimist International Costa del Sol.

An extra donation of more than a thousand nappies was also given to the Red Cross.

Lux Mundi Carol service

The Lux Mundi Torre del Mar Ecumenical Carol Service was held on Saturday 14 December in the San Andrés parish church in Torre del Mar where Christians from different traditions got together to pray and enjoy the traditional carols.

The prayers were led by priests from the different churches in the area and the carols were performed by the Spanish Choir Amigos de Lux Mundi, the German Choir Con Los Cantores and the TIMS English Choir.

After the service many of the



Soroptimists at the Danish market at Centro Idea. :: sur



Age Concern Estepona and Manilva volunteers Christmas lunch. :: sur



Singing by candlelight at the Lux Mundi Ecumenical Carol Service in Torre del Mar. :: sur

friends and the choirs enjoyed drinks and a buffet supper in the upper room of the church and there was more carol singing.

Age Concern Estepona and Manilva Christmas lunch

The Estepona and Manilva branch of Age Concern recently held a lunch for volunteers at De la Mar restaurant in Estepona port. Elderly people in the area are receiving Christmas cards this year thanks to a collaboration between Queens British Grammar School and Age Concern. The charity shop in Estepona closes on Friday 20 December after trading and re-



Members of the Costa Press Club at their Christmas party. :: sur

opens on Tuesday 7 January. The Age Concern advice line, 650163928, is in operation from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday and the charity can also be reached by email on ageconcernestepona@gmail.com

Costa Press Club Christmas party

The Costa Press Club held its Christmas party last week at Miraflores Golf Club, where members and guests were entertained by a Communications Quiz devised by the club's president, Jesper Sander Pedersen. The winners, who each took away a bottle of 'La Ola del Melillero' courtesy of Bodegas Victoria Ordóñez, were SUR in English editor Rachel Haynes and Marbella Now TV presenter Nicole King. The dinner and quiz were followed by the always popular Secret Santa raffle.

The Costa Press Club is a fully accredited association which provides members with a unique social and professional forum. Details from www.costapressclub.com

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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The tradition of Christmas has changed greatly over the last one hundred years and the simple customs that many of us grew up with have long fallen by the wayside. In days of old, Christmas was defined by the custom of exchanging simple handmade gifts, yet today, it has become a multi-billion-euro industry synonymous with commercialism and consumption.

The tradition of gift giving was embraced by retailers, for whom the weeks and, eventually, the entire month before Christmas became a very profitable period. During the 20th century, retailers started directing marketing efforts at children in the hopes that they would entice the parents to spend more money. Up to the 1970s, the six weeks before Christmas accounted for 80 per cent of the toy industry's sales. Retailers in the UK predict 1.1 billion will be spent on toys this Christmas, while researchers found that it was normal to spend as much as 500 pounds on each child in the UK.

Although my own memories of Christmas include many of the traditional customs like being allowed to open one small present on Christmas Eve, I can't help but feel that the true meaning of the Christmas gift has now lost its direction. I grew up listening to stories of how my parents were lucky to receive "an apple, an orange and some walnuts" in their

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

TONY BRYANT



In days of old, Christmas was defined by the custom of exchanging simple handmade gifts; today it has become a multi-billion-euro industry synonymous with commercialism and consumption



Christmas stockings. Although this may seem somewhat Dickensian, it is a fact that the presents me and my sibling received (or expected) were considered luxurious compared to the type of gifts given during the 1920s and 30s. During this era, if one was lucky, they may receive a Raggedy Ann doll or a Lionel Train, while those less fortunate would make do with Crayola Crayons or lead soldiers.

The Raggedy Ann doll was introduced by newspaper cartoonist Johnny Gruelle, who, after having one made for his daughter, decided to start selling them. The first Lionel Train was designed to attract shoppers using the power of animated display, although it was not long before they became popular with consumers.

Board games became popular during these decades, especially Monopoly and Scrabble, but the Second World War meant that there were fewer toys in production.

Some of the most popular gifts of the 1950s, 60s and 70s included the Hula Hoop, Play Dough, Etch and Sketch, and the Action Man or Barbie doll, which cost anything from a few shillings to a couple of pounds.

I was grateful to unwrap gift vouchers and record tokens, books, board games and puzzles: these would now probably be tossed out with the wrapping paper, because the style of gifts that most children expect today has

changed greatly, as has the average spend per child.

While my generation were content with a new Cabbage Patch Kid or scooter (the kind that was foot propelled), today's Christmas wish list will include anything from designer clothes and accessories to an iPhone or a state-of-the-art computer system.

This obsessive desire to spend hideous amounts of money on presents at Christmas has destroyed the true meaning of gift giving and removed the chance of the younger generation having any appreciation of money.

I was brought up to "live within my means" and although my parents enjoyed spoiling me and my sibling at Christmas, they never, to my knowledge, got into debt in order to do so.

If we did receive an expensive gift, and occasionally we did, I would wonder how my parents had been able to pay for it. This is certainly not the case today.

It would be nice to return to the traditional act of gift giving, where part of the fun was finding practical, inexpensive presents that were truly appreciated.

Of course, today's generation would probably not know what to do with a Rubik's Cube or an Erector Set, or anything that does not have a USB socket, but I guess that's just a sign of the times.

It seems children have come a long way from simply wanting 'two front teeth' for Christmas.

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20 DECEMBER 2007

Picasso portrait stolen in daring heist

The Portrait of Suzanne Bloch, as well as Cândido Portinari's The Coffee Worker, were stolen from the Art Museum of São Paulo

On 20 December 2007, thieves carried out a heist on the Art Museum of São Paulo, making off with Pablo Picasso's Portrait of Suzanne Bloch and Brazilian artist Cândido Portinari's The Coffee Worker.

In an operation which was complete in a matter of minutes, three men broke into the museum at around 5am while security guards were changing shift. They used a jack to open the main door, and a crowbar to smash a glass door, while an accomplice kept watch outside.

The theft sparked criticism of the management of the mu-

seum, as it had no alarms, and much of the valuable collection it hosted, with works spanning from Spanish Golden Age master Diego Velázquez to Salvador Dalí, was uninsured.

The thieves' celebrations were somewhat short-lived, however. In January 2008, the paintings were recovered by the Brazilian authorities after being found undamaged in a house on the outskirts of São Paulo. Two arrests were made, with reports in the national press at the time suggesting that police had been informed of the location of the works by a third suspect.

The paintings were returned to the museum, escorted by a helicopter and multiple police vehicles. The Portrait of Suzanne Bloch is considered one of the last works in Picasso's 'Blue Period'. It was painted in 1904, when the Malaga-born artist was living in Paris. His art at this time was often melancholic, reflecting the difficulties faced by the struggling artist and many of those around him, and was characterised by the use of shades of blue and green.



Sao Paulo police guard the two paintings after their recovery. :: EFE

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The Portrait of Suzanne Bloch is considered one of the last works in Picasso's 'Blue Period'. It was painted in 1904, when the Malaga-born artist was living in Paris. His art at this time was often melancholic, reflecting the difficulties faced by the struggling artist and many of those around him, and was characterised by the use of shades of blue and green.

Bloch, the painting's subject, was an influential singer in Paris at the turn of the century. She owned the portrait until her death, after which it changed hands several times. First it went

to the Thannhauser gallery in Munich, before being purchased to form part of a private collection in London. It remained in private hands after being bought by a family in Lugano, Switzerland, and was then held by the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC during the Second World War.

It was acquired by the Museum of Art of São Paulo in 1947 and remains on display in Brazil's largest city today.

It was acquired by the Museum of Art of São Paulo in 1947 and remains on display in Brazil's largest city today.

Bilingual crossword inside back page



An expert examines Picasso's portrait. :: REUTERS

LEGAL ADVICE



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REF. N. I. A.

We are going to have the Christmas dinner at our company, and as always, I am afraid there will be altercations. There are many people who, taking advantage of the fact that there is free alcohol, drink too much, and this causes them to behave inappropriately, and fights take place between colleagues who do not get on well. My question is: is it

possible to fire an employee because he behaves inappropriately at a Christmas dinner?

Going too far with comments, mean jokes and even physical and psychological aggression could lead to a dismissal or a sanction depending on the circumstances and seriousness of the events. Although generally for an employee to be dismissed for an insult or comment out of place, the offence must have been committed by the same person before; or the behaviour of the employee must be considered serious or very serious. Similarly, in order for excessive alcohol consumption to be grounds for dismissal, the situation must be repeated on several occasions and constitute an impediment to the employee's work tasks and functions.

REF. T. N. U.

I have a second residence in Spain in which I spend little time, and every time I come, I find that my parking space is

occupied by a neighbour's car. My parking space is the best located, since it is next to the access door to the building, so I imagine that this neighbour, seeing that it is almost always empty, has decided to occupy it himself so that he does not have to walk the metres separating his parking space from the access door. What can I do to prevent him from using my parking space?

In these cases, you can inform the president of the community, so that he or she is the one who admonishes the troublesome neighbour on behalf of the community. The warning should be given in a reliable manner, that is, it should be recorded that the neighbour has received the communication. If he still persists in his attitude, legal action can be taken. Likewise, the community of owners can approve that a private tow truck be hired to proceed to remove the car from the car park, and the non-compliant neighbour would be the one to pay the costs incurred.

Festive fundraiser nets over 10,000 euros for Triple A animal shelter

The funds will help look after hundreds of the town's abandoned and mistreated cats and dogs

ASH BOLTON

MARBELLA. A Christmas gala dinner raised 10,700 euros for Marbella's animal charity Triple A last Sunday, 15 December.

Organised by volunteers at the charity, the event saw 110 guests dig deep at the Puente Romano on Marbella's Golden Mile to raise the funds.

Ticket sales, a raffle and donations helped raise the cash at the hotel's Sea Grill restaurant. The money will help towards the charity's running costs, around 45,000 euros a month.

Jan Weima, 74, secretary for Amigos de Animales Abandonados, told SUR in English that the gala dinner was a "great success".

"It was a great night and there was lots of support, especially from Marbella's foreign resident community. Count Rudi also came to give us his support. We are very pleased to know that despite the bad press recently we still maintain credibility and support from the public."

At present Triple A looks after around 300 dogs, 300 cats and one Vietnamese pig.



Handing over the cheque. :: SUR

The charity re-homes pets around Spain but the majority of dogs are adopted by people in Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden.

Jan added that the charity now offers 'Virtual Adoption', meaning people can pay 15 euros a month for a dog's upkeep, until it is adopted by someone.

Formed in 1991, the charity is located in a disused mine on the road up to Ojén and covers Marbella and San Pedro.

Jan said more volunteers are always welcome from all nationalities - especially for dog-walking every Saturday morning, when all of the dogs are taken out for a weekly stroll by dozens of volunteers.

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DENISE BUSH

GARDENING

The fairy fan flower

Scaevola flowers abundantly throughout the summer and can withstand extreme heat and dry soils

Scaevola aemula is one of around 130 species in the genus Scaevola which is a member of the Goodeiaceae family (the majority native to Australia and Hawaii). Common names for this pretty plant with a trailing habit include fairy fan

flower, half flower and in Hawaii, naupaka. It is low growing and can be used for ground cover, in hanging baskets and or trailing over the edges of walls and containers etc.

The blooms of the fairy fan flower are unusual, they look like they have been chopped in half with only the bottom petals remaining. In Hawaii, where all the naupaka species are hybrids of just one mother plant, legend says that a princess tore the flower in half when the Gods refused to allow her to marry a humble fisherman. She gave one half to her lover who returned to his life on the sea shore (Scaevola can withstand salty air) and she stayed in the mountains with the other half. The plant would only bear half blooms from then onwards.

The fairy fan flower has been bred to produce bigger and better flowers and there are many hybrids available in blue, pink and white and will bloom from spring right through until autumn. Feeding once a week in the summer will ensure continued prolific flowering. There is no need to dead head it is 'self-cleaning'.

Propagation is by seed and although in temperate climates Scaevola may grow all year round, in cooler regions it may be best to treat it as an annual or grow it in a container that can be moved indoors. It is fast growing and will reach around 15cm high by about one metre wide in ideal conditions.

Scaevola in Latin means 'left handed' and is believed to have been named after Marcus Scaevola, a Roman who placed his right hand into a fire to prove how strong his faith was.



Scaevola aemula and S.chamissoniana (inset). :: WIKIMEDIA/WIKIPEDIA

READERS' PHOTOS



:: SUSAN HANNAM

ADVANCED BLOOMING

Susan Hannam sent in this photo of a Christmas cactus (Schlumbergera) which is already covered in blooms in time for Christmas.



:: PETRA LANDERS

SWEET VIOLETS

Wild violets (Viola odorata) were popular in Victorian times for posies and as a sign of spiritual wisdom, faithfulness and humility. However, as they freely seed themselves they can become invasive in damp soils. Photo sent in by P. Unwin.

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

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

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

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IN THE FRAME

A family love affair with Spanish culture

Babak Eshraghi always knew that he wanted to live in Spain. Soon after moving to Sweden from his native Iran with his parents when he was just 14 he started to have guitar lessons and attended his local music conservatory. Right from the beginning his passion was Spanish classical guitar and “anything as long as it’s by a Spanish-speaking composer”, he admits, adding, “It’s a fixed idea in my head.”

Originally his family was planning to move to the USA and his father had the papers and visas in place. “But then the revolution started and the Iranian and US relationship broke down. Everyone thought it would be temporary but it was not the case,” he explains. The family already had a relative living in Sweden, so in 1987 they moved there instead of the States.

Seven years later, in the summer of 1994, Babak, 46, met his long-term partner Linda Malmström, 45, while he was giving a classical guitar performance in a restaurant in the town of Ornsköldsvik in northern Sweden. After bumping into each other by coincidence a few times the pair finally got together. “I was already focused on going to Spain, but then I met Linda and things changed,” Babak recalls. Their first child, Sebastian, arrived a year later.

First trip to Spain

The family’s first attempt to visit Spain, when Sebastian was around one, ended in disaster before they even left Sweden, when their car was stolen, complete with all their belongings, while they were staying at a friend’s house. “We got the car back but the illusion had gone,” the couple lament. They went on to buy flights to Mallorca, but admit that the holiday wasn’t the “authentic Spanish experience” they had hoped for.

However, while in Mallorca they took a flight to Madrid as Babak had heard of a guitar shop in the city from which he was eager to buy an instrument. The guitar aficionado remembers that he spent almost three hours in the shop, trying different models and talking to the owner. He finally settled on one but when the shop owner realised that Babak was planning to

walk around the city with the 3,500-euro instrument the man became a little concerned. “But then he looked at me, said that I looked like a Spanish gypsy and decided that I would be fine and that

nobody would try to steal my guitar,” he laughs.

Babak’s looks have certainly attracted a lot of attention in Spain. He is often compared to famous flamenco singer Diego el Cigala and

has even been mistaken for him.

“People have asked me to have selfies taken with them and have been sure that I am him,” he grins, clearly flattered that people see the likeness between him and one of

his musical heroes.

The family came to Spain every year, spending between four and six weeks at a time and Babak’s parents, also fans of the country, bought an apartment in Torremolinos, where the couple, now with two children, regularly stayed.

They started to learn the language and Linda says that her family “has always travelled”, so the idea of moving to Spain also interested her. She adds that she has “always loved summer, but not the Swedish ones”, so coming to a warmer clime she admits was “very tempting”. Babak says that for his parents the temperature was also a big draw, as it’s “similar to Iran”, although he adds that Iran is “generally a bit warmer”.

They visited the east of Malaga for the first time in 2013 when they stayed in the house of some friends and liked the area so much that they bought a house in Nerja.

Babak explains that he understands “what it’s like to move to and live in a different country”. He says, “I wanted my family to have the same experience.”

“He decided I looked like a Spanish gypsy and nobody would try to steal my guitar”

They spent the summer of 2016 in Nerja, where their daughter, Sara, made friends and even went so far as to work out which school she would attend should they stay.

The family made the decision to stay for a year and then go back to Sweden, where Babak and Linda ran a successful online business selling hair and beauty products. They also owned a house.

However, they never went back and ended up selling both the house and the business.

The couple now run a popular hairdresser’s salon in Nerja town centre. Babak continues to play the guitar and still has the one he bought in Madrid.

He explains that there are “lots of similarities” between Persian and Spanish and that he doesn’t “feel foreign” here.



Babak and Linda in Bar Redondo in Nerja. :: J. RHODES

Babak Eshraghi had always dreamed of coming to Spain and was only interested in playing music by Spanish-speaking composers on his Spanish classical guitar. He managed to get his entire family to fall in love with the country too

JENNIE RHODES



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DISCOVER ANDALUCÍA



This long hiking route passes through one of the biggest natural areas of Andalucía. :: DIPUTACIÓN DE JAÉN



Signs on the route. :: DIP. JAÉN



QUICK GUIDE

What to see in the Bosques del Sur

Casa de Jorge Manrique.

House where the famous 15th-century writer is thought to have been born.
Pza. de la Encomienda, s/n.
23379 Segura de la Sierra.



Castillo de la Yedra. A

castle built by the Moors which is now an interesting folk museum.

Cno. Explanada del Castillo, s/n . 23470 Cazorla.

Centro de Especies

Amenazadas. Visitor centre about endangered species found in this area.

Plaza de Santa María, 2.
23470 Cazorla.



Centro de Interpretación del Castillo de la

Iruela. A visitor centre inside an old fortress.

Calle Esperilla, s/n.
23476 La Iruela.

Iglesia y convento de las Carmelitas.

A church and convent originally built in the 16th century.

Plaza de Santa Teresa, s/n.
23280 Beas de Segura.

The woodlands of the south

JAVIER
ALMELLONES

3 days on the GR-247 route

Car and walking.

Journey time: 2 hours
45 minutes from Málaga.

Hiking: 7 hours.

Visits to places of interest: 6 hours.

One of the biggest green lungs of Andalucía, the natural park of Sierras de Cazorla, Segura y Las Villas, is an ideal destination all year round for those who want to explore its lanes and paths on foot or on two wheels. One particular route is ideal for either option: known as the Bosques del Sur, it is officially part of the GR-247.

It is well-signed and can boast of being the longest

walking/cycling route in the largest natural area of Spain. To be specific, it is 478 kilometres in length, divided into 21 main stages and 11 secondary routes.

There are also three variants, each with two stretches - identified with the letter 'V' on the map - which help cyclists and walkers to subdivide the route and create a version especially adapted to their interests and time they have available.

The Bosques del Sur walk

leads to some exceptional beauty spots such as the sources of the Guadalquivir and Segura rivers, and passes through the mosaic of landscapes of this mountainous region: high peaks, castles, woods, rivers and waterfalls, traditional tracks, plateaus, villages and hamlets which are still inhabited today, historical buildings, and olive groves.

In addition, this GR-247, which passes through the natural park of Cazorla, Segura y las Villas from north to south, is a great way to see lammergeiers (bearded vultures) and eagles in flight, walk alongside the cleanest waters, chat with passing shepherds and experience the way of life in tiny mountain communities.

To sum up, this is a combination of experiences in one of the most extensive mountain ranges in Andalucía. Practically all the stages start and end in places which are near basic facilities - fountains, villages or hamlets, campsites and other accommodation, or roads.

However, bear in mind that some stretches only have emergency shelters with no facilities, built especially for these isolated areas of the Bosques del Sur walk. For this reason, it is a good idea to plan your hike in detail, and well in advance.



This route is wonderful for cycling. :: DIP. JAÉN



The phantom shipwreck of the Goede Hoop off Marbella

The incident never officially occurred, but one document from 1823 gives details of the disaster of the wrecked vessel

FRANCISCO GRINÁN



Twitter: @pacogrinan

Anastasio Álvarez translated the 19th century file and has written a novel about his research into the catastrophe at Guadalpín

MÁLAGA. They set off without knowing that they were heading for the perfect storm. And for oblivion. In 1823, the Dutch ship De Goede Hoop (The Good Hope) set sail from the French port of Sète with a cargo of wine from Roussillon sufficient for several banquets, but unfortunately she never reached her destination.

Her story ended in the Alboran Sea, when the captain and crew were surprised by a storm that flooded the hold. The captain attempted to reach Gibraltar, but didn't get any further than Marbella, where the ship sank. Strangely, though, if you look in the administrative and maritime archives in Spain or the Netherlands, this

shipwreck never happened. In fact, officially, De Goede Hoop didn't even exist. Writer Anastasio Álvarez, however, has discovered one original document about her, confirming that she sank off the coast of Marbella. He has researched the story, written a novel around it, and is now trying to find a publisher.

There are several stories surrounding this shipwreck: the incident itself; a notarial document which came to light nearly 200 years afterwards; and Álvarez's book - and they are all related.

The author was a language and literature teacher and one day a pupil at the Pablo Picasso school in Málaga handed him a yellow folder and said it was from his father. Álvarez promised to look at it, and the next day he returned it.

"I told him I didn't know if it was worth anything, but that it was old and was an official document about the sinking of a ship off Marbella," he says.

The folder soon came back. "The pupil said that if I didn't want it, his father had said he would just throw it away, so I took it and kept it," Álvarez explains. This was in the late 1990s.

After he retired, Álvarez took a renewed interest in the file, which consisted of 164 pages, and began translating them because they were



Anastasio Álvarez with the documents about the shipwreck. :: F. PALACIOS

written in the Castilian of the period and in legal language. It was then that he discovered the story of a Captain Wygens, who had given an official statement about the sinking of the ship.

"When they arrived in the Alboran Sea, the Goede Hoop was surprised by a storm and they soon discovered that water was coming into the hold. Despite that, they passed Málaga instead of stopping because they thought they would have time to reach Gibraltar, but that wasn't so," says Anastasio Álvarez, making a dramatic pause before going on to say that when they reached Marbella they realised that they would not make it to the Rock and the captain had to come up with a Plan B. They turned the ship around and headed at top speed towards the coast to try to run the vessel aground and save the cargo.

The wine was saved

De Goede Hoop reached land at the mouth of Arroyo Guadalpín on the night of 6 to 7 March 1823. She had been seriously damaged, and the

The Dutch consul, Enrique Roose, who owned La Cónsula, was involved in transferring the cargo

small port of Marbella organised a salvage operation to recover the cargo before the hull was completely destroyed by the waves.

"Apart from a few broken barrels, they managed to save the wines, the masts, the sails, the anchor and everything they possibly could until a huge wave sank the ship completely," says Álvarez, who then introduces a new character into this story, Enrique Roose, Dutch consul and the owner of La Cónsula estate (which takes its name from his official position). He commissioned the notarial deed that documents the journey of the cargo, which was transferred to the port in Málaga.

After translating the documents, Álvarez felt the need to find out more about the shipwreck and was very

surprised that there was no official record of it.

"I went to the municipal historical archive in Marbella and found there was absolutely no information about this ship," he says. He then went to Málaga, but neither the provincial or municipal archives had anything, nor did the Naval Command or the port, whose archive was destroyed during the civil war.

"The next step was obviously going to be to check the records in Holland, so through the Embassy in Madrid I contacted the official archives of the Netherlands, but the response was the same: there was no information about the ship or record of the wreck, even though I was holding its whole history in my hands," he says.

He now regrets not having asked his pupil's family how they came to have the file, but after two decades he can't even remember the pupil's name so he is unable to try to find him.

"My research was taking me down blind alleyways, but little by little I became interested in the history of Spain and Málaga and what was happening during the last year of the Liberal Triennium (1820-23), and I decided to finish the story of this non-existent ship and write about what happened to it," says Anastasio, who has also written two other books.

'Goede Hoop, la última travesía del Buena Esperanza' (Goede Hoop, the final journey of the Good Hope) is the title of his book about the ghost shipwreck, which he hopes will be published soon so that more people hear this forgotten story, which ended when the cargo left Málaga six months after the disaster, on a different ship heading for Holland.

Once the novel was finished, Álvarez received two emails from Holland. One was from a syndicate explaining that the name of the captain was not Wygens, as stated in the notary document, but Wijchers. The second, in two lines, corroborated that the cargo rescued from the ship had reached Amsterdam on 27 October 1823.

"My ship really did exist! It wasn't a fantasy," says the author who, two centuries later, has managed to rescue the wrecked vessel from the sea of oblivion.

Walking with Guiris: a new hiking group unites communities in the fresh air

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. A new hiking group called Walking with Guiris has been founded in Fuengirola with the aim of improving the integration of English-speaking residents and the Spanish community.

Organised by British expat Michael Griffiths and local teacher Charo García-Triviño, the group's first walk saw students from the Fuengirola official language school and a several expats come together during a ten-kilometre route from Mijas Pueblo to Los Boliches at the end of November.

Michael Griffiths said, "It's a good way to make new friends and learn to speak each other's language and



The Walking with Guiris group on their first hike. :: SUR

understand the different cultures."

The group intends to organise similar walks and other activities in 2020.

More information: Contact Michael Griffiths on mickythegriff@hotmail.com

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REVIEW
MORRIS BISHOP

MAKING JOYOUS MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS

The first of two Christmas concerts given by Collegium Musicum in the Hotel IPV Palace and Spa on 15 December began with four festive works by Handel, beginning with Canticorum Jubilo from the sacred drama Judas Maccabeus that tells the story of Hanukkan (the Jewish uprising against the empire, that is the present day Syria).

Then came five movements from his Water Music, followed by Lobet Gott mit Jubelschall (Alexander's Feast) and Let their celestial concerts all unite (Samson), followed by a selection of yuletide carols from Eastern Europe.

The orchestra then gave us a wonderful rendition of Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker suite in which the Collegium Musicum secretary and flautist, Driekje gave a quite moving virtuoso performance in the Waltz of the Flowers.

Collegium Musicum's President, Delyth Bressington, no

longer has to become the electronic percussionist as well as being the musical arranger; now the orchestra has its youngest member Valerius who, at just 12 years old, is the son of the lead cellist.

There were more carols, this time from the United Kingdom, then a compilation from the soundtrack of The Snowman.



The Colegium Musicum orchestra and choir. :: SUR

The concert ended with a Mark Hayes Medley of Western European carols.

The 100 choristers and musicians must be extremely proud of what they have achieved under the baton (or was it a pencil?) of the ebullient, psychedelic glasses-wearing Annemarie Philipps, the maestra that gave the packed house a joyous evening's entertainment.

Collegium Musicum's next concerts will be on 24 May in Fuengirola and 26 May in Marbella.

The choir and orchestra are always looking for new voices and instrumentalists. Anyone interested in joining this exceptional group is invited to contact Driekje by email secretaria@colmus.org or phone 696620872.



Wayne Chasan, Michel Cruz and Luiyo Vázquez at the launch. :: SUR

Marbella's urban evolution under the spotlight in new book

:: ASH BOLTON

MARBELLA. Three foreign residents are celebrating after publishing a new coffee table book on the recent history of Marbella.

The book - Marbella, An Urban Case Study - focuses on the transformation of Marbella from a fishing village into a glamorous cosmopolitan city.

Written in English, the book is a collaboration between economist and writer Michel Cruz, American architectural photographer Wayne Chasan and architect and Argentinian town planner Luiyo Vázquez.

Michel, owner of Marbella-based marketing company Manifesto Design, told SUR in English that the book had been a labour of love for the past few years between the three

friends.

He said: "It's something that we've wanted to do for a while and that we are very proud of. It's come about from three friends who share a love of architecture and Marbella."

"We've chronicled the city and how it evolved from a fishing village to the young city it is today. It's had a very good response from people."

Over 200 people attended the recent launch event at the Ralli Museum on Marbella's Golden Mile.

Michel, who is part Dutch and Portuguese, added that there are now plans to translate the book into Spanish next year.

The book costs 25 euros and is available in local book shops, Amazon and on the website www.marbellaurban-casestudy.com.



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Berrocal's warriors stand guard at the Aduana building

ANTONIO
JAVIER LÓPEZ

@ajavierlopez

A year and a half after being announced, the provincial museum has just inaugurated an exhibition of works by the sculptor from Malaga

MALAGA. Back in 1975 artist Miguel Ortiz Berrocal and his wife Cristina visited the Ardennes in Belgium and there, in an old forge, he found 20 anvils which were about to be thrown away. He took them and worked on them for nearly ten years, turning them into his private army, his praetorian guard, divided into two sets of ten soldiers: 'Desperta Ferro' and 'Almogávares'. The latter were inspired by the warriors sent to Constantinople by the King of Aragon between the 13th and 14th centuries, and they now stand guard in one of the interior courtyards at the Museo de Málaga, where the exhibition by this sculptor from Malaga has just opened. It was announced about 18 months ago but has had to overcome quite a few political, administrative and logistical obstacles to come to fruition.

The display, which is sponsored by Obra Social La Caixa, also introduces the 'Obra invitada' cycle which will take place in different spaces inside the Aduana building, which was converted into the provincial museum three years ago this week. The exhibition will continue for six months and it partly pays off a long-outstanding debt because Berrocal, who is internationally famous for his sculptures which can be dismantled, is not

represented in Malaga, despite a presence in collections such as the MoMA in New York and the Reina Sofia in Madrid.

At the official opening of this exhibition, his widow Cristina de Braganza, who is also president of the Fundación Escultor Berrocal, referred to this when she said "we hope this will be the start of something more permanent in Malaga".

125 assembled pieces

Cristina de Braganza explained that the ten torsos in 'Almogávares' are comprised of 125 elements which could make one large installation, but the museum had decided to group them together in the small atrium at the side of the Aduana building which leads to Calle Cortina del Muelle.

She said the warriors represent one of Berrocal's "mature works", brought out once again to meet the public after having previously been displayed 11 years ago in the Plaza de la Constitución. Visitors can read the artist's own description of his warriors on the walls: "Separately from the anvils I acquired in the Ardennes, I made some 20 centimetre models. I made them in wood so they could be transported and handled easily. I would look at them frequently and think about what I would do with the anvils, and then the spirit of the famous war cry came to me, so I called the models 'Desperta Ferro' and made the sculptures with the anvils, which were extremely heavy, weighing between 300 and 400 kilos each, and I called them Almogávares".



Berrocal's warriors will be at the Museo de Málaga until May 2020. :: FÉLIX PALACIOS



The sculptures can be dismantled. :: FÉLIX PALACIOS



Official presentation. :: F. P.



Cristina de Braganza, at the exhibition. :: FÉLIX PALACIOS

THE EXHIBITION

► **Title.** 'Almogávares', by Miguel Ortiz Berrocal (1933-2006).

► **Where.** Museo de Málaga, Palacio de la Aduana.

► **Opening hours.** Tuesdays to Saturdays 9am to 9pm; Sundays and holidays 9am to 3pm. Closed Mondays (unless the next day is a holiday). Closed 24, 25 and 31 December and 1 and 6 January.

► **Christmas activities.** Educational workshops for children 21 and 28 December and 4 January; guided tours 22 and 29 December, and talks about the links between Berrocal's works and the archaeological collection at the museum on Saturdays 21 and 28 and Sundays 22 and 29 December.

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EXHIBITIONS

Journey

Alozaina. Until 11 January. Casa del Río.

Journey is the title of the exhibition which includes oils, acrylics and mixed media produced between 2013 until the present. The artist is DMCQ.



Madueño siblings, Mijas.

Madueños Art

Mijas. Until 7 January. Casa Museo de Mijas.

The three siblings from the Madueño family will be exhibiting their works which includes paintings (Tere Madueño); cross stitch (Peña Madueño) and sculpture (Salvador Madueño).

Coleccionismo Institucional

Ronda. Until 29 December.

Museo Unicaja Joaquín Peinado, Plaza del Gigante.

An exhibition that unites works of different styles and formats found in the collections of various institutions.

International art

Marbella. Until 31 December.

Kempinski Hotel Bahía. Free.

A trio of international artists present paintings, sculptures and crystallised works within the hotel Art Foyer and Art Gallery. One of the artists, San B, from London, works with Swarovski crystals and recently rose to fame by creating clothing for Bruno Mars and hip-hop act Wu Tang Clan.

www.kempinski.com/marbella

Seoane. Portraits.

Marbella. Until 22 May 2021.

Museo Ralli Marbella.

The temporary exhibition is by Galician-Argentinian artist Luis Seoane.

Emmanuel Lafont

Marbella. Until 29 February. Galería Yusto /Giner, C/Madera.

La Gran Luz is the title of this exhibition of recent photographs in large format by Argentinian artist Emmanuel Lafont at the Yusto/Giner gallery.

Pictures for pets

Mijas Pueblo. Until 6 January.

Clinica Veterinaria, Av México 21.

Temporary exhibiton by Artistas Ecléticos, a group of professional international artists who have exhibited extensively across much of the world before joining together in Andalucía.

Nigel Gilbert

Benamargosa. Until 20 December. La Vaquería.

Paintings and prints by award winning illustrator Nigel Gilbert.

Territorio Axarco

Benalmádena. Until 12 January.

Centro de Exposiciones.

Commissioned by Antonio Sánchez Marín, the exhibition consists of 80 works in different formats using different techniques by a total of thirteen international and Malaga artists. Eight are painters and five of them sculptors, all living in the Axarquía.

The Russian museum

Malaga. Edificio Tabacalera, Avda Sor Teresa Prat.

The annual exhibition is entitled 'Saints, queens and workers. The image of women in Russian art' and runs until 27 February 2020. The temporary shows, 'Nikolai Roerich. In Search of Shambhala' and 'Anna Ajmátova. Poetry and life', run until 1 March 2020. 'La Mirada Lateral' by Emmanuel Lafont on the staircase to the exhibition rooms will be on display until February 2020.

The use of space, Calder-Picasso

Malaga. Until 2 February. Museo Picasso Málaga.

A joint exhibition explores the use of space by two famous artists, the American sculptor Alexander Calder and Malaga's Pablo Ruiz Picasso.

Exile and Nostalgia

Malaga. Until 2 February. Museo Casa Natal Picasso.

'Exilo y nostalgia. Dibujos inéditos y libros ilustrados de Picasso en la Colección de la familia Arias' consists of a collection of writings, paintings and drawings, many of them on newspaper pages, that form part of the legacy left by Eugenio Arias. Arias and Picasso met and became friends while both were in exile in France and shared a common interest, bullfighting.

Modern Utopias

Malaga. Until 26 January. Centre Pompidou, Muelle Uno.

'Modern Utopias' is an exhibition reflecting the historical events that have defined our time and fed the imagination of modern and contemporary artists.

Smile

Malaga. Until 24 January. La Casa Amarilla.

Rebecca Vilches takes us on a journey for the senses in which we follow the protagonist on their escape from negativity.

Sorolla Tierra Adentro

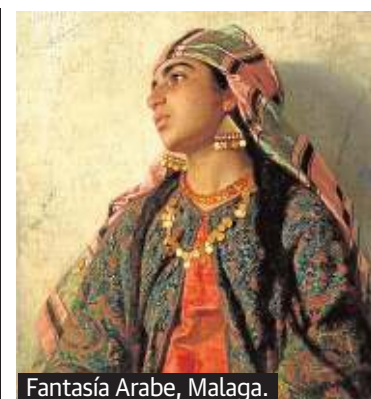
Malaga. Until 30 January. Palacio Episcopal.

A display of more than 100 works by Joaquín Sorolla featuring landscapes and characters far removed from his usual seaside scenes.

Fortuny

Malaga. Until 2 February. Sala Noble, Museo Carmen Thyssen Málaga.

Around 30 images by Mariano Fortuny created when he was experi-



Fantasía Árabe, Malaga.

menting with different techniques. Many have never been catalogued before.

Arabian Fantasy

Malaga. Until 1 March. Carmen Thyssen Museum.

'Arabian Fantasy' is the title of a new exhibition consisting of works by Fortuny, Tapiró, Fabrès, Lameyer, Delacroix, Benjamin-Constant and Dehodencq with the common theme of Arabic life or how it was romantically depicted by artists in the 19th century.

Sean Scully

Malaga. Until 19 January 2020.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. Open Tues to Sun, 9am-9pm, and third Monday of each month. The exhibition entitled 'Eleuthera', is an exhibition of abstract works by "one of the most outstanding figures on the international art scene" (as described by CAC artistic director Helena Juncosa), Sean Scully.



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EXHIBITIONS

The Butterfly Effect

Malaga. Until 31 January 2020. Museum Jorge Rando, C/Cruz del Molinillo.

'Mariposas' is the title of this exhibition of works by Malaga artist Jorge Rando. The majority of the the around 100 works are in small format and were created after a visit to the mountains around the Qi Baishi Memorial Museum in China.

Dracula X Dracula

Malaga. Until 2 February 2020. Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. Open Tues-Sun 9am-9pm and third Monday of each month.

This exhibition consists of 61 works by 56 artists around the theme of a legendary ice-lolly.

Matíces de Invierno

Almuñécar. Until 3 January, 5-9pm. Casa de la Cultura, Sala de Exposiciones Rowland Fade. A collection of paintings by Arte Sur is on display.

Ni Pies, Ni Cabeza

Nerja. Until 12 January. Museo de Nerja.

These square pictures can be hung in any position, squares with squares exists in all cultures throughout time and across the world.

Japanese culture and traditions

Macharaviaya. Until 12 January. Museo Los Gálvez.

This exhibition includes a selection of traditional Ukiyo-e art from the 19th century with scenes depicting the countryside, sumo wrestlers, courtesans and some sexually explicit paintings.

Hope

Órgiva. Until 21 December. The old town hall.

An exhibition around the them of hope has been arranged by Artists Network Alpujarra. Tues, Wed, Fri 5-8.30pm; Thurs, Sat 11am - 2pm. Closed Mondays.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Love To Sing Carol Concerts

Estepona. 20 December, 8.30pm. Plaza de Antonia Guerrero.

Duquesa. 23 December, 7.30pm. Leisure Lounge.

Duquesa. 24 December, 7pm. Duquesa Port.

Sotogrande. 29 December, 12pm. Iglesia Ntra Sra de la Merced.

Christmas Concerts in the City

Malaga. Until 29 December, Plaza de la Constitución.

A series of Christmas concerts will be held in the plaza including the Sierra Blanca El Romeral choir as well as performances by the Teatro Musical Victoria and Gym Victory.

Choir concerts

Malaga. 20, 21 December, C/ Nueva, C/ San Juan and Plaza de Félix Sáenz.

The CDR Renfe choir will be performing traditional Christmas songs.

Papa Noel and Living Nativity

Almuñécar. 20 December. Plaza de la Constitución.

Father Christmas will be visiting the plaza at 11am and at 5pm, there will be a performance of a living nativity scene.

Special Christmas Concert

Nerja. 21 December, 8.30pm. Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja. 5€.

Nerja Municipal Band conducted by José Pedro Almendro del Piao will be playing a varied repertoire with marches, waltz, film theme tracks and Christmas classics.

ACE Christmas Dinner

Calahonda. 21 December, 7pm. Los Olivos Restaurant. 25€.

The Animal Care España charity is holding its annual three-course Christmas dinner with live entertainment from Laura Elen. Also a charity raffle. Reservations: 647647671 / 606145359, or email: pr.spain@ace-charity.org

Living Nativity

Nerja. 22 December, 4-8pm. Plaza de Andalucía.

A living nativity scene with actors playing the roles of Joseph and Mary etc.



Ni Pies, Nerja.

Santa Claus Grotto

Torremolinos. 20 - 23 December, 11am-1pm, 5-8pm. Avenida Palma de Mallorca.

Santa will be collecting children's letters in his grotto.

Royal Postman

Vélez-Málaga. 21 December, from 4pm. El Parking Tánit de Lagos.

The Royal Postman for the three kings will be collecting letters from the children of Lagos and Mezquitilla.

Christmas Party

Torremolinos. 21 December, from 6pm until midnight. Marquee in Plaza Blas Infante. Free.

Local bands and musicians will be performing at this concert including DaSilva and Rayka, Rocking Crew and the Viktima and Verdugo bands accompanied by Jive Me Crazy, Escuela de Patinaje de Torremolinos, Sihomara, Esaem and the Abada Capoeira collective. There will also be dance performances.

Living Nativity

Canillas de Albaida. 21 December. Around 700 villagers will take part in bringing the Christmas story to life with traditional dress of the time and settings.

Spanish Carols

Malaga. 22 December, 12.30pm.

Parroquia San Antonio María Claret.

The Escalón Santa Maria de la Victoria choir, conducted by Narciso Perez del Campo, will sing traditional Spanish carols (villancicos).

Fiesta de Nochebuena

Estepona. 24 December, Louie Louie Rock Bar, Avda Luis Braille. Christmas Eve party at the popular rock bar.

Fiesta Mayor de Verdiales

Malaga. 28 December, Puerto de la Torre.

Traditional folk songs will be played by verdiales bands who compete in three different styles (Almogía, Montes and Comares).

Christmas Quiz

Marbella. 27 December, 8pm. Rose & Thistle Bar, Duquesa Port.

Members of the Royal British Legion, Gatos de Manilva, SOS Los Barrios (dog pound), the Samaritans, ADANA, ACORN, Heart Rescue, Spanish Stray Dogs and The Duquesa Charitable Society of St George will take part in the quiz with the winner taking all the funds raised for their chosen charity. More information on the bar's Facebook page.

Christmas Concert

Marbella. 29 December, 12am. Teatro de Marbella.

The Academia Orquestal de Málaga are holding a Christmas concert performing pieces by Mozart and Schubert.

Christmas Church Services

Benalmádena. 22 December, 9.30am. Capilla de San Jose, Iglesia Virgen del Carmen, Avda de Bonanza.

Traditional carol service.

Fuengirola.

22 December, 6pm. St Andrew's Church, Los Boliches, Edificio Jupiter.

Traditional carol service.

25 December, 11.30am. St Andrew's Church, Los Boliches, Edificio Jupiter.

Sung Eucharist and carols.

Alhaurín el Grande.

24 December, 4pm. Cemetery Chapel.

Crib building and early midnight mass for all the family.

25 December, 11.30am. Cemetery Chapel.

Sung Eucharist and carols.

Calahonda.

24 December, 7pm. Iglesia de San Miguel.

Family Christingle service.

25 December, 9.30am. Iglesia de San Miguel.

Sung Eucharist.

Fuengirola. 24 December, 6pm. St

Andrew's Church, Los Boliches. Crib building and early midnight

mass for all the family. www.st-andrewscofe-spain.org

Mercado Navideño

Puerto Banús. Until 5 January, 10am-8pm. Muelle de Ribera.

Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Twenty seven stalls offering crafts, gifts, gastronomy etc. Activities for children.

MUSIC & DANCE

Louie Louie Rock Bar
Estepona. Avda Luis Braille.
20 December. 11.30pm. Dirty Army presents Living Death and Hollywood Arson Project. 7€ in advance, 10€ on door.
21 December. Sound Friction.
27 December. 11.30pm. O'Funk'illo. 12€ in advance, 15€ on door.

The Wall Bar
Malaga. Hotel Vincci Posada del Patio, 10pm, entry free.
21 December. Iris Nieto. Oboe and acoustic guitar play adapted jazz, soul, rock and pop music.
28 December. The Villanos. Ricardo Teixidó and José María Villatoro classic jazz, blues and soul.

Janis Joplin Tribute
Nerja. 20 December, 8pm. Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja. Wasabe Cru perform a concert in



IrisOboe, Wall Bar.

tribute to the great Janis Joplin.

Y Que Más Da, Todo Es Gracia
Malaga. 20 December, 8pm. Museo Picasso Málaga. Ballet dancer and choreographer Luz Arcas with her company La Farmáco presents this show which has been created especially for the Calder - Picasso exhibition currently held in the museum. Tickets: www.museopicasso-malaga.org

The Rob Sas band
Estepona. 21 December, 9pm. O'Callaghans, Sabinillas. The Rob Sas band will perform classic rock songs from a wealth of artists such as Free, Whitesnake, Deep Purple, Jimi Hendrix, Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, AC/DC and many more. www.therobsasband.com

Opera & ballet at the Cervantes
Malaga. Teatro Cervantes. www.teatrocervantes.com
26 December, 8pm. Swan Lake performed by the Saint Petersburg Classical Ballet.

Virsky National Ballet
Estepona. 22 December. Auditorio Felipe VI The Virsky National Ensemble was created in 1937 by ballet maestro Pavlo Virsky. Sixty ballet dancers will be performing traditional folklore dances with acrobatics and stunning costumes.



More than 200 bikers will participate in the Toy Run. :: T. B.

Two-wheeled Santas in charity Toy Run

TONY BRYANT
The fifth edition of the charity Toy Run organised by the Komando Amimoto motorcycle club and Torremolinos town hall will take place on Saturday 21 December. More than 200 bikers dressed as Santa Claus will participate in the collection of toys and gifts for children in danger of social exclusion. The event will begin at 11am in Plaza Blas Infante, where a collection point will be installed.

The red and white cavalcade will set off at midday and continue through the streets of Torremolinos, where they will stop off at dozens of shops and commercial outlets in order to collect the donated toys, before returning to the drop off point outside the town hall. An afternoon of live entertainment will begin at 1pm, with a performance by Mad Mary, a local four-piece band that perform well-known rock and pop anthems.



Rob Sas Band. Estepona.

Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra
Malaga. Teatro Cervantes. 20 December, 8.30pm. Conducted by Manuel Hernández Silva, the orchestra will perform Beethoven's New Symphony and Concerto N°2 for piano. With soprano Beatriz Díaz, mezzosoprano Anna Bonitatibus, tenor Johannes Chum and bass Werner Van Mechelen accompanied by the Ópera de Málaga choir.

Malaga. Malaga Cathedral 23 December, 8pm. The Joven Orquesta Barroca will play pieces by Pachelbel, Locatelli and Vivaldi followed by Handel and Bach.

Joe Cocker Tribute
Malaga. 22 December, 7pm. La Cochera Cabaret. Fourteen musicians join together in a concert to pay tribute to Joe Cocker.



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FLAMENCO

Navidad Flamenca

Estepona. 22 December, 8pm. Louie Louie Rock Bar Avda Luis Braille. 15€. David Quirós and Paco Javier Jimeno perform traditional flamenco Christmas songs. call themselves the Mad Dogs.

FESTIVALS

Fiesta de las Migas

Torrox Pueblo. 22 December, from 11am-6pm.

The Sunday before Christmas, Torrox celebrates the Fiesta de las Migas, one of the most popular gastronomic events in the Andalusian calendar. Throughout the day there will be tastings of genuine migas made from wheat flour, water, salt and olive oil. There will also be the local salad, ensaladilla arriera and wine.

Día de Jeva

La Higuera. 25 December, Vega de Antequera.

Every Christmas day since 1987, La Higuera pays tribute to the Virgen de la Purificación in a religious festival. The image of the Virgin is carried from the Ermita de Jeva to an old threshing circle where a mass is held. There will also be live music by traditional verdiales bands and home made cakes washed down with anís.

THEATRE & COMEDY

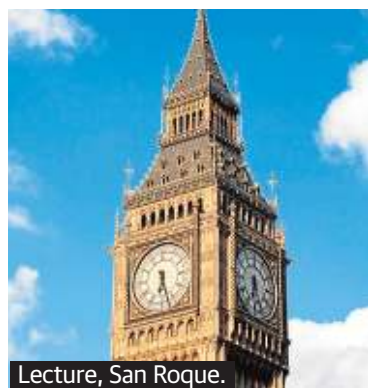
Alice's Trip

Vélez-Málaga. 21, 22, 28, 29 December, Saturdays 9pm, Sundays 7pm. Sala Gades, C/Calvo. 8€ in advance, 16€ on door. An adaptation of the classic story of Alice in Wonderland (in Spanish) by the Fernando Hurtado Dance Company and Fundación Pasos. Tickets: www.ticketts.janto.es/

LECTURES & TALKS

The Arts Society de la Frontera San Roque.

21 December, 11am. San Roque Golf and Country Club. Visitors 12€ 'A Tour of Big Ben' Illustrated talk by Tim Redmond. Includes a complimentary glass of wine after the lecture. For information: 634287821 or delafrontera@theartsociety.org.



Lecture, San Roque.

EVENTS AND TRIPS

Weekend market

Cóin. Behind Bar Los Arcos. Goods including artisan products, fresh vegetables, British food products, craft beer, wine, cheese, baker and general bric-a-brac. Food and drinks available from the venta. Stalls have to be booked in advance on the Facebook page Los Mercado.

Outdoor market

Benalmádena. Second Saturday of each month 11am-6pm. Parque de la Paloma, Plaza de la Fuente. Monthly market selling clothes, accessories, artisan goods and more. Free to enter. In case of rain, event will be postponed to following Saturday.

Monthly market

Periana. Last Sunday of every month. 10am - 2pm. Organised by Periana town hall, the market will have stalls for all types of goods including artisan products, fresh produce, clothing etc. Sellers needed: 630 594 961

Malaga Christmas Lights

Torre del Mar. 20 December. Various departure points. 11€ The coach will visit the nativity scene at La Mosca on the way to see the Christmas lights in Malaga city centre.

Cáceres, Trujillo, Mérida Fuengirola. 17-23 February. Vari-

ous departure points. Full details, contact Fundación Lux Mundi Fuengirola, C/Nueva 3. 952474840. www.lux-mundi.org

O. V. FILM

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Cinesur El Ingenio

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

Last Christmas: 12.15, 20.20.

Frozen II: 12.30.

Jumanji: 12.20 (Mon).

Cinesur Miramar

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

Star Wars: 12.15, 16.30, 19.15, 22.15.

Jumajii: 12.00, 16.30; 19.00.

Last Christmas: 12.00, 16.00.

Frozen II: 12.00, 16.30.

Cines Teatro Goya

For tickets and information call 951196665.

www.cinesteatrogoya.com

Charlies Angels: 15.15 (Fri, Sat, Tues).

Frozen II: 15.00, 17.00 (Tues); 15.15; 17.30 (Sat, Sun, Mon).

Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

Centro de Ocio Plaza Mayor, Avda. Alfonso Ponce de León. Tel: 902 902 103 or visit www.yelmocines.es

Little Women: 17.10 (Wed, Thurs).

Star Wars The Rise Of Skywalker 3D: 12.45 (Sat, Sun).

Star Wars The Rise Of Skywalker: 15.50, 16.45 (Tues); 12.10, 15.20 (Sat, Sun); 18.25, 21.30 (every day except Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón de la Victoria.

Calle Arroyo Totalán Tel: 902 220 922 or visit www.yelmocines.es
Star Wars The Rise Of Skywalker: 16.20 (Fri-Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902 220 922 or visit www.yelmocines.es

The Good Liar: 12.50 (Sat).
Star Wars: The Rise Of Skywalker: 13.00 (Sat, Sun); 20.30 (Fri-Mon).



Alice's Trip, Malaga.

Much more than a humble stable

The Christmas season reveals the Spanish passion for building crib scenes, which become more and more elaborate every year

:: SUR IN ENGLISH

MALAGA. Visitors often take advantage of a trip to see the Christmas lights to take in some of the elaborate nativity scenes open to the public during the holidays. Known in Spanish as a Belén (Bethlehem), each display boasts its own special features, often including models of local buildings and scenery.

In Malaga city alone there are no fewer than 51 scenes open to the public, starting with the municipal display in the city hall and passing through numerous official buildings, churches, religious brotherhoods and private businesses. Scenes can be found in town halls and other indoor and outdoor locations in the area.

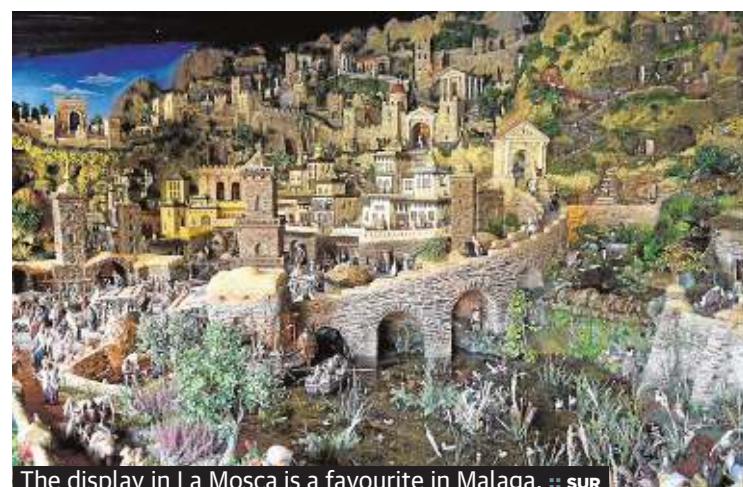
Mollina, where a dedicated Belén museum is open all year round, has renewed its display for the influx of visitors expected this holiday season.



One of the scenes in the Mollina museum. :: A. J. GUERRERO



Part of scene in the City Hall in Malaga. :: BEATRICE LAVALLE



The display in La Mosca is a favourite in Malaga. :: SUR



Replicas of local buildings in the Cueva de San Nicolás, Marbella. :: SUR

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The best festive treats - Spanish style

A look at all-time favourites and new specialities to be found in Malaga province at Christmas

ESPERANZA PELÁEZ

MALAGA. From a food point of view, Christmas nowadays may seem to bear little resemblance to the way things used to be. However, those who are traditionally minded and have a sweet tooth are in luck. You can still find the much-loved mantecados, roscos, borrachuelos, marzipan and turrón, although they coexist alongside some colourful rivals in the shape of chocolate logs and panettones. Something else has changed, though: many consumers nowadays want their Christmas treats to have been produced locally.

In the old days, people used to get very excited about some products which we would consider quite common today, such as the raisins from Malaga, dried figs, fig bread, dried apricot, nuts, crystallised fruits, pine nuts and mandarins and pears which would start to appear in the market at this time of year. These are still popular in many households, and are easily available now.

However, those who feel like upholding some local traditions this Christmas should hunt for the unique cakes and confectionery, such as the delicious almond biscuits called 'tortas de Ardales' which are made by several bakers in the village of the same name, including Productos Ruiz (C/ Portugaleta) and Antiguo Obrador Marcos (C/ Cruz); or the conical 'roscos carreros' from Alfarnate, glazed with icing sugar and found in the Maravilla confectionery shop (C/ Horno, 6) and El Carrero bakery (C/ Comandante Frias, 23); the almond cheese from Atajate, which can only be found at Panadería Rocío (C/ Nueva, 21 / www.panaderiarocio.es); the 'pan de cortijo' of Cuevas de San Marcos, a recipe which was recovered and is sold by Rosario Ginés (C/ Ramón y Cajal, 10 / 690 883 140) or the roscos of Monda, of which there are two types, wine and honey, and are sold by Framancha (C/ Fuente 6-7).

Borrachuelos have never lost their popularity and everyone has their personal favourite, but we can recommend the ones from Confitería Ávila (Carril de La Chupa, 8), which are small and crisp, and Panadería Pinos (C/ Ferrándiz, 16), which are



Christmas treats old and new will enhance any festive table. :: SUR

also very light. For mantecados and polvorones, Antequera is the capital, with companies such as La Perla (www.mantecadoslaperla.com), La Antequerana (www.laantequerana.com), Sancho Melero and La Flor de Antequera, Sabores Caseros

(www.saborescaseros.com) or on a smaller scale, Horno San Pancraccio (confiteriaartesana.com). Nor should we forget the ones made by nuns in the convents, such as the Carmelitas Descalzas in Antequera (C/ Tintes, 1) or Las Mínimas in Archidona

(C/ Nueva, 39). The latter make their mantecados with olive oil and call them 'aceitados'. In Ronda there is the outstanding Daver (confiteriaartesana.com), and, in Malaga city, Montañez is also famous for its roscos de vino (www.roscosdevino.com).

montanez.com).

The Christmas treats from Casa Mira are excellent in terms of quality and variety. The firm makes the Xixona and Alicante turrón, which have their own Denomination of Origin, imperial cakes, pan de Cádiz, marzipan, chocolates, pastelillos de gloria, pastelillos made with sweet potato or fruit and almond turrón, which can be bought from the family-owned shop Dimas Mira e Hijos (Casa Mira, on the corner of Calle Larios and Císter), and Fernando Mira (fernandomira.es). The Almensur cooperative uses local almonds to make guirlaches, marzipan and turrón (almensur.com) and sells them in its shop in Cártama.

Other major names to look out for in Malaga include Daza (pasteleria-daza.com), where at this time of year Purificación Morillo and Antonio Martín make almond and cinnamon mantecados, polvorones and tortas de polvorón, roscos de vino, hojaldrias almendradas, borrachuelos and marzipan, as well as truffles, chocolate rocks, turrón and Christmas logs.

The Christmas logs, which are actually French in origin, are also a seasonal speciality of Cati Schiff at her Dulce & Salado bakery in Fuenigiro. There are classics such as vanilla, coffee, chocolate and turrón, and signature creations like the cakes made with orange, yoghurt and tocino de cielo, black forest gâteau, and Xixona chocolate and turrón. She also makes millefeuilles of pastry in the shape of a Christmas tree and savoury logs to order.

However, for a modern-day Christmas treat, the star just has to be the chocolate turrón produced by Damián Ramos and Sebastián Guerrero at Pastelería Ramos in La Caleta de Vélez. This year's speciality is made with a new type of chocolate called Rubí which is naturally rose-hued and slightly bitter, with lychees, raspberries and rose, but the variety is enormous: you can find Zumbral moscatel and jasmine; goat cheese, PX and pecans; pine nut and salted caramel, torta de Algarrobo; mango; white chocolate, avocado and lime... all in all, an amazing range of sweet treats to suit every taste.





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Aguacate frito INGREDIENTS

1 medium-ripe avocado
1 egg
1g salt
150g breadcrumbs
1 litre sunflower oil for frying

Gambas al pilpil INGREDIENTS

3 peeled prawns per person
1 clove garlic, sliced
2g paprika
15ml white wine
1g salt
10ml olive oil

Pilpil mayonnaise INGREDIENTS

150ml pilpil oil
70ml milk
1g salt

METHOD

Peel the avocado and remove the stone and divide it into six. Dip each piece in the egg beaten with the salt and coat it in breadcrumbs. Fry 1 minute at 180°.

For the Gambas Pilpil:
Put the oil and the garlic slices in a frying pan and heat. Add the prawns and the white wine. Take it off the heat and add the paprika. Remove the prawns to one side and keep the oil for the mayonnaise.

For the mayonnaise:
Mix the oil from the pilpil and the milk and the salt with a hand held food mixer, starting at the bottom and slowly moving up. Keep chilled.

PLATING UP

Put the fried avocado pieces on a plate with mayonnaise and the prawns on top. Serve with the chilled pilpil mayonnaise.

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 Higuero, Fuengirola



ANDREW J. LINN

ORANGE WINE



The name Orange Wine is misleading. While there does actually exist a type of wine in Huelva Province that is officially known as 'vino de naranja', this is only because the recently pressed white grapes are allowed to coddle up to some orange peel for as long as it takes to adopt the desired amber tone and smoothish taste. Otherwise vino de naranja, orange wine, never 'sees an orange or indeed any other fruit that is not a grape.

Don't worry if you have never come across the term. Preparing this article it soon became clear that orange wine has only one possible meaning for 99% of drinkers. We need to go back various centuries, perhaps more, to the time when wine was first made in, it is alleged, Georgia.

Back then all wine was produced the same way, only that in Georgia nothing has changed since then. The grapes are pressed by foot, and then the whole resulting mixture is chucked into a clay pot, a qvevri, sealed, and left for a year. The time is dictated by the necessity to free up the container to receive the new vintage.

Obviously, bearing in mind that skins, leaves, stalks, and other naturally occurring items, are left to mind their own business for 12 months without any sort of filtration or chemical additives, the 'wine' that comes out

of the qvevri, or amphora, is strong, bitter, and to the drinker accustomed to our everyday almost industrialised wines, even undrinkable.

But the colour is amber-tinted orange, so some idiot (legend has it that it was a Brit) hit on the stupid idea of calling it orange wine. Natural wine has its merits of course, devoid of chemicals, and additives such as the usual sulphur dosage.

A Galician cooperative, Martín Codax, has just brought out its version of orange wine, made, it is claimed, as wine was always made in the locality of Solnés. Only 925 bottles are on offer, and the price is as yet unknown, but it is the only Spanish wine made as all wine was made traditionally in every Spanish village for many centuries.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Les Crestes

Wines from the Priorato region of the Pyrenees have a reputation for being high in alcohol and expensive. This young wine of the year is neither, at 14.5% alcohol and around 17€. Mainly Garnacha grape, and aged for eight months in oak, it has a delightfully concentrated taste.





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"A lot of families with a child with cancer are in need of help"

Andrés Olivares President of Fundación Olivares

ÁNGEL
ESCALERA

✉ aescalera@diariosur.es

"I would like Malaga to have a specific centre for paediatric oncology one day," says Andrés Olivares, who set up a foundation after his son died from leukaemia

MALAGA. At times, Andrés Olivares really wished there was someone to give him a hug when he stayed at the Materno Infantil hospital with his son Luis, who was being treated there for leukaemia. After Luis died (it will be 13 years ago in January), Andrés felt that he wanted to help children with cancer and their families, so he set up the foundation which bears his name and started to encourage people to hug others as a symbol of affection and solidarity. With the foundation's tenth anniversary coming up next year, he is planning a series of events, including the world's biggest human chain of hearts.

-When does the tenth anniversary campaign begin?

-We start with the Malaga CF. solidarity football match at La Rosaleda on 21 December, for which the club is giving 5,000 tickets to different associations. We will be giving hearts to each association.

-Have you decided which day you



Andrés Olivares is appealing to people's good nature. :: GERMÁN POZO

will be creating the human chain of hearts in Malaga?

-No, it all depends on the number of hearts we have and when the city hall can make somewhere available for us. It will be some time during the tenth anniversary year.

-When exactly is the tenth anniversary of the Fundación Olivares Foundation?

-On 10 May 2020, and the anniversary year will continue to the same date in 2021.

-What are you trying to do with this human chain of hearts?

-We want to raise awareness about children's cancer. A lot of people are afraid of seeing or hearing that a child might die. What we are trying to do is make people understand that it is something that happens and it can happen to anyone. We're not asking anyone to become a volunteer and visit a child with cancer, but we do want them to know that some families who have a child with cancer don't even have enough money to buy food. It's not just about the illness, but about everything associated with it.

-How do you plan to do this human chain?

-I would love the whole of Malaga to take part, from La Cala, the Carretera de Cádiz and the airport, with everyone holding hands, to the fourth floor of the Materno hospital, which is the Oncology ward for children. I don't think anything like that has been done before. I have never seen it. In fact, our aim is to do something that nobody else has done.

-Are more children being cured of tumours and leukaemia these days? How many cases are diagnosed a year?

-At the Materno Infantil hospital around 60 are diagnosed a year, and in the whole of Spain there are about

1,900 a year. The rate of cure is around 80 to 90 per cent, but there are some children who die afterwards from the collateral effects of the treatments. That is what happened to my son, 13 years ago in January.

-What other activities are you planning in the anniversary year?

-Above all, to visit the schools and talk to the 265,000 pupils in Malaga province and the 35,000 university students. Education is essential in the society in which we live. If we don't teach our young people about solidarity, raise them to be people with a good heart who want to help others, the world will be an unfortunate place.

-Why did you choose Verónica, who is eight years old, as the main image of the campaign?

-Vero is often with us. We have been close to her since she became ill. She is a lively, cheerful little girl with a big smile.

-What stands out of most in the ten years your foundation has been in operation?

-I didn't realise there was so much need. People needing food, housing... we have paid the electricity at one family's home, we have bought another a car, we have paid for patients to have experimental treatments. There is a lot of need associated with children's cancer. We realise that we have grown a great deal in that respect. Also, in recent years, we have been assisting children with complicated chronic illnesses. There are a lot of people who need help.

-Have you set yourselves any targets to continue growing in your solidarity work?

-I would love Malaga to have a paediatric oncology centre one day. It's not that the child oncology department at the Materno doesn't do a good job, it does, but a person isn't just a lung, a liver or a pancreas. You have to go beyond that and treat the person. There is room for improvement in humanising health care. The idea of this centre is in my head and in my heart. I would like it to be somewhere that the children, as well as having their chemotherapy, can live better with their illness.



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Welsh Society raises 1,500 euros for local woman with motor neuron disease

BY TONY BRYANT

BENALMÁDENA. The Welsh Society raised around 1,500 euros for a British local resident suffering from motor neuron disease (MND) during the Christmas Traditions Fair held in Benalmádena last

weekend.

Members of the association rallied together to help Della Hall, a 45-year-old mother of two who was diagnosed with the disorder in 2017.

Della, who has lived in

Benalmádena for 25 years, must now use a wheelchair and relies on the constant support of her husband.

Della's family and friends are hopeful that she will soon benefit from a new treatment currently being tested in the USA that will become available in 2020.

Welsh Society spokesperson Cath Johns said, "We like to raise funds for different charities, but this year we decided to raise awareness for this dreadful disease, while also helping Della have a better quality of life."



Welsh Society stand at the Christmas fair in Benalmádena. BY T. B.

Food safety agency warns sucking prawn heads can cause health issues

This popular Christmas treat can cause a toxic build-up of cadmium in the liver and kidneys, health professionals have warned

BY ÁNGEL DE LOS RÍOS

MÁLAGA. It's something that so many people look forward to during Christmas dinners in Spain: sucking the juices out of the heads of prawns, crayfish and other shellfish. But the Spanish Agency for Consumption, Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN), under the umbrella of the Ministry of Health, has spoiled the party. It recommends "limiting intake" to minimise exposure to cadmium, a metal present in seawater that contaminates the dark flesh of crustaceans, located primarily in the head.

Cadmium is a heavy metal found in nature but as it has many industrial applications, human activity, including the use of fertilisers, has increased its presence significantly.

This metal has no biological function in humans but, although its absorption in the digestive system is



Prawn heads contain high levels of cadmium. BY SUR

low, it tends to accumulate in the body, mainly in the liver and kidneys, for an estimated time of 10 to 30 years.

Cadmium is toxic to the kidney and can cause renal dysfunction, AECOSAN warns. It can also cause bone demineralisation, either directly or indirectly as a result of kidney dysfunction.

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Pupils, teachers and parents from the Pinolivo infant school, ready to start the fundraising race with Chloe and her mother. :: JOSELE

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The infant school the young girl went to is now raising funds for research to slow down the progress of her illness

NIEVES CASTRO

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A research centre in Badalona is working on a therapy to halt the neurodegenerative process of this 11-year-old from Marbella

MARBELLA. Chloe always has a huge smile on her face, but especially so earlier this week when she went back to her old infant school in Marbella, the Pinolivo. This was where she began her education but also, unfortunately, it is where she lived through the first three years of her illness.

Chloe suffers from a very rare condition about which there is little information, but what is known is devastating. There is no cure, the damage is irreversible, it affects the muscular and nervous system, and it is progressive and disabling. It was only a few months ago that researchers discovered the cause, which is a

gene called VPS13D. Chloe is the only person affected in Spain, although there are known to be 12 other cases in the world.

Chloe was back at the Pinolivo school for a fundraising event, a walking race which was very important for her and for those who love her. Pupils, teachers and parents took part in order to raise emotional and financial support for the cause.

"We won!" said one of the children happily, as he finished the race holding the hand of one of his teachers. "We have all won today," she replied.

Jorgelina Borda, Chloe's mother, who took part in the walk pushing her daughter's wheelchair, said the event was also a lesson in life for the young ones, because they are learning something about "the reality of rare illnesses".

Chloe, who is 11 and lives in Marbella, is well aware of that reality. It has had a deep and definitive effect on her life since she was three years old. Her rare illness is associated with a neurodegenerative process which progressively affects her motor system, making mobility, speech and, as a result, autonomy, difficult.

Chloe's mother has spent years seeking help from national and pri-

vate health systems in different parts of the world. A few months ago she launched a crowdfunding campaign and it is now supported by over 100 famous faces, helping to finance research into slowing down the illness.

The research project, which is called 'Investigación para Chloe Co-cofishgo', is being carried out by the Germans Trias i Pujol Research Institute (IGTP) in Can Ruti, Badalona. All the funds raised by donations and events organised by the family go directly to this centre in Catalonia, to show that the campaign is transparent.

The head researcher on the project, Antoni Matilla Dueñas, says the scientists started work as soon as Chloe's mother asked for help. "We haven't stopped. In the first phase, we were able to identify the genetic cause of Chloe's illness. Now we have started the second phase: to discover what biological pathological processes are responsible for the VPS13D gene in Chloe," he says.

This second phase, in which problems were identified in the process of autophagy in Chloe, is almost complete. The team expects to publish the results during the first quarter of 2020 and to start the third phase around the same time, to try to find therapies which will restore the cellular problems they have identified. To do that, they will be working with certain drugs.

"First we will assess the effectiveness of these drugs on Chloe's cells (fibroblasts obtained from skin biopsies) and, in parallel, in a type of zebrafish to obtain results of the pharmaceutical evaluation in a living organism. We calculate that will take us between 18 months and two years. If it is successful, and of course we hope it will be, we can then evaluate the therapy in Chloe," says Antoni.

Donate by text message

For this research to be carried out, each and every solidarity event and direct donation is important. The run organised by Pinolivo was especially significant. "Chloe was a pupil here for three years, and that was the hardest part of her illness, when she was diagnosed and the doctors gave her such bad news. At one time she needed a feeding tube because she couldn't eat. However, at the same time, we saw how her wonderful mother refused to give up and is capable of travelling all round the world to help her daughter and to continue fighting year after year. Now we have had the chance to hug Chloe again and it was very emotional because we were so pleased to see her," says head-teacher Graciela Romero.

Donations for Chloe's cause can be made to a special bank account, and people can also donate by sending a text message to phone number 28099. It works for Orange, Vodafone and Yoigo operators and costs 1.20 euros per message.

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SUR
in English

Silver medals and a hero's welcome for Spain's handball stars

Las Guerreras returned from Japan with their heads held high after a last-gasp defeat to the Netherlands in the World Championship Final

✪ JOSÉ MANUEL ANDRÉS /
MARINA RIVAS

MADRID. They may have lost, but you wouldn't know it from the smiles on the faces of the Spanish women's handball team, who received a hero's welcome on their triumphant return home this week after losing 29-30 to the Netherlands in the World Championship Final.

They were received at the Moncloa palace by acting prime minister Pedro Sánchez in recognition of having exceeded all expectations, only defeated in the last minute by a dubious refereeing decision.

The showpiece final in Japan on Sunday was initially dominated by Spain, with Shandy Barbosa, Mireya González and Lara González all getting on the scoresheet early through counterattacks punishing their rivals' careless use of the ball. The Dutch recovered, however, and went in at half-time with a 13-16 lead.

Spain fought back in the second half, despite the constant danger of Abbingh, and the Malaga-born Sole and Marta López played important roles in Spain's recovery. With minutes to go, Spain were trailing their opponents, Wester having made an incredible save to deny Shandy. She could do nothing, however, to stop Marta López when she ran through and levelled matters after the Netherlands had been dispossessed.

There was one more twist in the tale, however. After an error by Shandy, Wester tried to get the ball moving quickly, but Ainhoa Hernández blocked the ball. The referees did not hesitate in sending Hernández off and awarding the Netherlands a penalty in the dying embers of the game. Abbingh converted to give her country the title.

Despite this late heartbreak, Las Guerreras, or 'warriors' as they are known, can be proud of their achievements. During their run to the final,



Marta López and Sole (centre) received a warm welcome at Malaga train station. ✪ MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Ainhoa Hernández conceded the deciding penalty. ✪ EFE

Spain suffered just one defeat and one draw, against Russia and Sweden, respectively. They qualified second in their group, which put them into the semi-finals, where they beat Norway - a team who eliminated them in the 2011 edition of the tournament in Brazil, where Spain won bronze -

to secure their passage to the final against the Netherlands.

Local heroes

Pride was certainly the dominant emotion on Tuesday when the two local heroes of the team, Marta López and Sole, arrived at María

29-30 SPAIN-NETHERLANDS

Spain: Navarro; Marta López (6), Mireya González (2), Pena (3, 2p), Cabral (7, 1p), Jennifer, Ainhoa Hernández (3) -starting team-, Zoqbi (ps), María Núñez, Ardeius, Eli Cesáreo, Etxeberria, Lara González (1), Sole López (2), Alicia (5, 1p), Almudena.

Netherlands: Wester; Malestein (3), Van der Heijden (3), Snelder (5), Kramer, Abbingh (7, 1p), Smeets -starting team-, Duijndam (ps), Bont (2), Nusser, Van Wetering (1), Amega, Dulfier, Freriks, Housheer, Polman (9).

Referees: Charlotte and Julie Bonaventura (France). Sin bin: Snelder, Kramer, Dulfier, Eli Cesáreo. Sent off: Ainhoa.

Zambrano train station in Malaga.

Around a hundred family members, friends, as well as handball fans from across the province gathered to give them a worthy homecoming, brandishing flags and singing songs.

Sole, who appeared at a World Championship for the first time, told SUR on Wednesday: "All the hard work was worth it. I just hope that it serves as an example to all the young players out there that if you work for it, your dreams can come true."

IN BRIEF

Nerja drop to third after heavy defeat

RUGBY

✪ **SUR.** Club Nerja Rugby have dropped down to third in the Central Division of Andalusian League 2 after a disastrous 0-61 defeat to Club Rugby del Estrecho in Sotogrande on Sunday.

Nerja started the game confident of regaining top spot but that confidence had disappeared by half time when they found themselves 0-15 down.

Estrecho added their fourth try straight after the restart before another seven in quick succession inflicted Nerja's heaviest defeat.

The side now have a few weeks in which to reorganise before their journey to Algeciras on 19 January to take on CR Bahía 89. Their next home game is the following week against Marbella.



WFS B on the back foot. ✪ SUR

Something must give in clash of the unbeaten

WALKING FOOTBALL

✪ **SUR.** The Blue Sky Walking Football League is gearing up for the 'Walking Football Spain derby' between the club's A and B teams tomorrow (Saturday).

With both sides unbeaten so far this campaign, something has to give. A win for either side will put pressure on the early leaders Aston Viñuela (who are also in the process of developing a second team).

Saturday's game will take place at the field in front of the Gran Hotel in Benahavis (kick-off 11am).

Entry is free for spectators who are interested in seeing what walking football is about. With teams across the Costa del Sol, the Blue Sky Marbella Walking Football League is looking for new players (and teams) over the age of 50.

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Malaga forward Armando Sadiku looks on as Escobedo celebrate their second goal. :: AGENCIA LOF

New low as minnows dump Malaga out of the Copa in the first round

Third division Escobedo were the much more ambitious side in the second half as Malaga lacked spark

:: B. CAVIA / B. GUTIÉRREZ
CAMARGO (CANTABRIA). Malaga's atrocious recent run in the Copa del Rey continued on Tuesday as the side fell to an embarrassing 2-

0 defeat away to Third Division side Escobedo.

For the fifth year in succession, the Blue and Whites have been eliminated from Spain's top cup competition in the first round - the fourth time against lower-league opposition.

Tuesday's defeat in Camargo was a new low, however. While losses to Mirandés, Córdoba and Numancia were disappointing, being eliminated by a team two tiers below them, without putting up much of a fight, will go down as one of the most shame-

ful chapters in the club's history.

Coach Víctor used the match as an opportunity to give some of his squad players some game time, but none of Gonzalo, Ismael Casas, Esteban Rolón, Badr Boulahroud or Mohamed Benkhemassa did their cause much good with an abject performance in which they struggled to get close to the home goal with any frequency.

The small, artificial pitch made life difficult for the visitors as they had to be patient and wait for op-

portunities to switch the play. However, Escobedo's greatest strength was on the counterattack, something Malaga's makeshift midfield struggled to contain. The pace of Luis Muñoz helped to avoid disaster very early on when the defender snuffed out Dalisson just as he was about to get a shot away from the edge of the area.

Malaga's best play in the first half came down the left-hand side and Renato had his side's first chance, sending the ball harmlessly over

2-0

ESCOBEDO-MÁLAGA

Escobedo: Rafa Pedrero, Bubú, Mario Blanco, Arjona, Montiel, Quintanilla, Dani Álvarez, Liaño, Pepín (Mario Alejandro, 89'), Dalisson (Jorge Somavilla, 90'), Vitaly (Héctor, 75').

Malaga: Gonzalo; Ismael, Luis, Diego González (Mikel, 46'), Juankar; Juanpi, Rolón (Sadiku, 64'), Boulahroud, Benkhemassa, Renato (Cifu, 82'), Julio.

Goals: 1-0 Quintanilla (51'), 2-0 Dalisson (84').

Referee: González Esteban. Yellow cards for Montiel, Bubú, Dani Álvarez and Juankar.

Venue: Eusebio Arce (2,500 spectators).

the crossbar.

Debutant Julio, who led the line up top, then came within centimetres of connecting with a cross into the area but the scores remained level going into the break.

If Malaga looked the more accomplished side in the first half, the second 45 definitely belonged to the hosts; six minutes after the restart they had the lead. Dalisson lifted the ball into the area for Pepín whose effort was blocked, but Malaga keeper Gonzalo could do nothing to stop the rebound from Quintanilla nestling into the back of the net.

With the tide of the game changing, Malaga coach Víctor Sánchez del Amo turned to his top scorer Armando Sadiku for inspiration. The second goal of the game, however, did not go his side's way. Despite bossing the possession, Malaga lacked a cutting edge. Instead, with six minutes to go, Escobedo sealed their passage to the next round with their second goal; Dalisson capitalised on Luis Muñoz's misjudgment of a long ball and lobbed the ball over Gonzalo who stood no chance.

"There's not much that can be said about this game," said Víctor in his post-match press conference. "They did exactly what was required of them and we weren't able to."

Malaga return to league action on Saturday (kick-off 4pm) when they host Lugo in the final game before La Liga takes its winter break.

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Blue and Whites mired in relegation battle after bore draw

EXTREMADURA 0 MALAGA 0

:: FRANK GAVURIN

A third clean sheet on the trot will not have been enough to bring smiles to many Malaga faces, as the Costa del Sol side brought home a point from a dreary encounter against Al-mendralejo.

The 0-0 scoreline on Sunday was a fair and accurate reflection of a game in which neither side created chances. The match started scrappy, with the addition of Mohamed Benkhemassa unable to add control to Malaga's



Keidi under pressure. :: LOF

midfield, and while the hosts did begin to run the show in the first half, their possession was essentially sterile, and the teams went in level at half time.

Víctor recognised the need for more attacking potency, and

Benkhemassa was unceremoniously withdrawn at the interval, making way for Renato Santos. The introduction of the Portuguese winger did indeed liven up Malaga's play, and they dominated the first 20 minutes or so of the second half, but still failed to carve out any significant goalscoring opportunities.

At the other end, Extremadura's David González thought he had put his side ahead with 70 minutes on the clock, but he was adjudged to have pushed Cifu when jumping to head home.

With six minutes of regulation time to go, Munir pulled off an excellent save from a bouncing header to secure Malaga a point which moves them up to 16th place, but only two points above the relegation zone.

Supporters groups issue ultimatum after cup humiliation

The club's two main supporters' groups threatened to withdraw their support after "undignified" cup exit

✪ BORJA GUTIÉRREZ

MÁLAGA. The Frente Bokerón and Malaka Hinchas, Malaga's two main supporters' groups, have both threatened to withdraw their support for the team and manager Víctor Sánchez del Amo after Tuesday's humiliating defeat to Escobedo, a side two divisions below the club.

The Frente Bokerón tweeted that the "pact" made at the start of the season - of unconditional support for the team, with the understand-

ing that the economic and institutional situation at the club undermined the players - would be finished if the team did not show spirit in Saturday's league game against Lugo.

Malaka Hinchas, for their part, said: "The cup doesn't matter - what really matters is dignity," suggesting the players showed none on the pitch on Tuesday.

Víctor's comments after the game will have done little to ease tensions. The coach stated: "You've got to remember that the Copa has caused us lots of problems. The league is where we're fighting for survival. We did our best in the circumstances, but for us, the Copa is over and we've got to focus on the league."



María Ruiz shields the ball from opponents on Saturday. ✪ ADG

Drama in Gran Canaria as Femenino snatch all three points at the death

Veteran striker Adriana pounced in the 92nd minute to secure victory for Malaga against Spar Gran Canaria

SPAR GRAN CANARIA 0 MÁLAGA 1

✪ ADG

ARGUINEGUÍN. Malaga Femenino closed the year with a morale-boosting last-gasp victory over Spar Gran Canaria.

This ground will have brought back sweet memories for Malaga's players, as it was here they secured promotion to the Primera División in the 2017/18 season. They would

find success on this turf again in Saturday's game, but they were made to sweat to earn it.

It was the home side who made the stronger start to the game, playing a physical and direct game. Malaga were forced back by the home side's aggressive pressing, but they withstood this initial onslaught of around a quarter of an hour.

Malaga began to gain some momentum of their own, both Arantxa and Postigo testing Gran Canaria keeper Aco after a good cross from Postigo, but finding the stopper up to the challenge.

The home side came out revitalised after the break, and Brenda almost beat Noelia with an effort from point-blank range. In a crucial intervention, the Malaga keeper managed to claw the ball off the line and keep her side's hopes of victory alive.

After several efforts from the likes of María Ruiz and Arantxa failed to bear fruit, Malaga's moment did finally come in injury time; when the home side's defence failed to clear the ball in their area after several attempts, Adriana arrived to fire the ball home.

It was a hard-fought victory that will have heartened coach José Herrera, even if his side are still not free-scoring. Malaga do not play now until 5 January, when they face a far sterner test: the visit of league leaders Albacete. They sit in fifth place going into the winter break.

Minority shareholders' case against Sheikh Al-Thani sees progress in the courts

The club's owner is accused of improper management and misappropriation of funds in a criminal case

✪ B. GUTIÉRREZ

MÁLAGA. A Malaga court has agreed to take on a criminal case launched by Malaga CF's Associa-

tion of Minority Shareholders against the club's owner Sheikh Abdullah Al-Thani.

The group, represented by lawyer Francisco Valverde, accuse the Qatari sheikh of improper management of the club and misappropriation of funds. They want Al-Thani and his children, who have until the end of the week to respond, to

be removed from the management of the club.

The court has also requested information from Malaga CF regarding their accounts and asked the public prosecution for a report into potentially placing the club into temporary judicial administration.

This case has become the focus of attention in recent weeks after efforts to encourage Al-Thani to sell his stake in the club have ground to a halt. The minority shareholders have the support of the city hall, as well as the provincial and regional governments though they are yet to formally declare their position.



The Grada de Animación at La Rosaleda stadium. ✪ NITO SALAS

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A LOOK AT LA LIGA

The greatest show on Earth?

The Clásico is still like nothing else in football. It's a carnival, an outpouring of emotion and this year it was a political rally. Sadly, the football didn't match the sensational surroundings on Wednesday

It used to be like the world's greatest fashion show when a new vogue would be unveiled, and the globe's 'Galáticos' would strut their stuff.

Don't get me wrong, 'El Gran Clásico' is still one of the greatest sporting sights, but it appears to have lost some sparkle.

When I attended my first Barcelona versus Real Madrid match in 1996, Bobby Robson looked up to the sky, which was obscured by fans, and said: "Can you believe it? Ninety-eight thousand people, the size of a small town, all crammed in here." He smirked and added: "And at full-time tonight they'll all be calling for my head if we don't win!"

Back then, and pretty much every year since, it has been a collection of the world's greatest talents all brought together on one catwalk. Now, however, I suspect the allure has worn off and they are no longer the 'must haves'.

When Sir Bobby was in charge, he sent out the original Ronaldo for his first Clásico alongside Luis Figo, Laurent Blanc and Pep Guardiola to face Roberto Carlos, Clarence Seedorf and Davor Šuker. It



Most eyes were on the off-field spectacle at the Camp Nou on Wednesday night. :: REUTERS

was a clash of the gladiators. A meeting of the trend-setters.

After this edition, a scoreless draw, the discussion points weren't the performances of outstanding individuals expressing themselves;

it was about VAR and goalline clearances. There was a dissatisfied hum as the players left the pitch.

Lionel Messi is still the world's greatest player but he's also a bit

vintage at this stage. The most desired footballers are now sprinkled around the world. The best forward line and centre-back are all on Liverpool's payroll; Neymar couldn't be re-enrolled and Kylian

ROB PALMER

Commentator, Sky Sports
@robopalmer



Mbappé is resident in Paris.

Over the years we've had the Ronaldos, Figo, David Beckham, Ronaldinho, Rivaldo, Xavi and Andrés Iniesta as the star attractions. Now, both clubs are lacking stardust.

Nil-nil said it all. It was a purely functional game of football. No player stood out, no player had a nightmare; it was all very average, everyone got a seven out of ten. The most prominent players were Gerard Piqué for Barça and Isco for Real Madrid. Both have been around for seasons.

But it hasn't reached this mid-dling status overnight. The clubs have tried to recruit 'the next big thing'. Alas, Philippe Coutinho never worked out, Ousmane Dembélé hasn't flourished and we are waiting to see what Rodrygo is about. Maybe the malaise goes back to signing James Rodríguez and Gareth Bale who never elevated themselves from international class to world class.

I don't want to come over as all "... it was better back in the day", as I'm sure the future will be bright. Maybe Neymar will return, one of the clubs will break the bank for Mbappé or Ansu Fati will prove to be the next big thing.

Don't let me put you off, the Clásico is still like nothing else in football. It's a carnival, an outpouring of emotion and this year it was a political rally. The colour, passion and verve are quite spectacular. Sadly, the football on the pitch didn't match the sensational surroundings.

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Marbella scrape past Guíjuelo to keep Copa del Rey hopes alive

A last-minute winner from Elías ensured David Cubillo's side upstaged Málaga and made it past the second round

MARBELLA 2 GUÍJUELO 1

Julio Rodríguez

MARBELLA. Euphoric Marbella fans invaded the pitch to celebrate with their players as a late goal secured their passage to the third round of the Copa del Rey on Tuesday evening.

The hosts had the better of the opening stages of the game, but it was their opponents from Salamanca who took the lead, with a header from Jesús with half an hour on the clock.

The heavily rotated Marbella side found their way back into the game a few minutes after the break. After an excellent save by



Marbella's Manel running with the ball. :: JULIO RODRÍGUEZ

the home side's stand-in keeper Santomé, the hosts went up the other end and earned a corner, from which Dani Pérez nodded home to level matters.

After Marbella's Manel had a goal ruled out, David Cubillo brought on

Samu Delgado and Óscar García in an attempt to get the all-important winner. The man who would secure victory was in fact Elías, who surprised Talibí with a free-kick to the near post in the dying minutes, to the home fans' delight.

A setback in the league

Tuesday's win came on the back of a disappointing 0-0 draw in the league against Algeciras on Saturday afternoon.

Both sides had chances in the first half, but their goalkeepers were in good form, and the tempo of the game eventually slowed. The second half was largely a dull affair, with the exception of a late chance for Mustafá, which the winger failed to convert.

Coach David Cubillo have been frustrated to have let two points slip and allow leaders Cartagena to pull away, but the dramatic midweek Copa victory will have surely softened this blow.



Marathon runners making their way down the Alameda Principal on Sunday. :: ÑITO SALAS



Martin Cheruiyot. :: ÑITO SALAS



Selamawit Tsegaw. :: Ñ. SALAS

Records tumble in the Malaga Marathon

A record 3,263 participants out of the 3,507 who started the 42-kilometre race finished. The race's men's record was broken by a minute and the women's by four on Sunday

:: PEDRO LUIS ALONSO / MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Records were broken as Malaga hosted its annual marathon on Sunday, with more than 3,500 participants taking to the streets in the winter sun.

Kenyan Martin Cheruiyot beat the men's race record (which was set by Ethiopian Lemi Dumecha last year) by a minute, and improved on his personal best by four and a half. His finishing time was an impressive 2h.10:08. The second and third-placed athletes, Cheruiyot's fellow countrymen Elud Kibet and Moses Gaikarira, also managed to beat Dumecha's record.

At 2h.27:56, the women's winner, Ethiopian Selamawit Tsegaw, also broke the record, this time by an impressive four minutes. Her compatriot Gelane Senbete came in second place, while the third spot was occupied by Kenyan Rebecca Korir.

The highest-placed local in the men's race was Manuel López Méndez, who came in at 2h.44:28. In the women's, Janine Lima, of Ecuadorian heritage but resident in Marbella, came in 19th place.

An impressive 4,150 signed up for the race, which easily beat the previous record of 3,750, although it should be noted that only 3,507 ended up taking part. Of these,

3,263, or 93 per cent, managed to finish the race - a new record.

Watching or taking part were around 7,000 people from 77 different countries, all able to take in Malaga and some of its most emblematic locations, including Calle Larios (complete with Christmas illuminations), the Paseo del Parque and the port.

Many ran in aid of charitable causes. For instance, three people came from Ciudad Real to run on Sunday for Asociación Mil Metas Por Ti, a foundation set up by Davis Martínez and his partner to raise funds for hemiparesis in infants, a motor disorder that their daughter suffers from.

Some ran on their own; one such figure was 65-year-old ex-serviceman Ángel Nicolás Rodríguez, from Seville, who has completed 30 marathons in just ten years.

But if participants took part at different speeds and for different reasons, all crossed the line with the same smile on their face.



An athlete makes his way down Calle Larios. :: MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Runners passing Malaga's lighthouse. :: FRANCIS SILVA



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www.stgeorgemalaga.org
email: chaplain@stgeorgemalaga.org or wardens@stgeorgemalaga.org
Malaga, St George's Church (in the English Cemetery, Av. de Pries) Sunday Holy Communion 11am. Contact: 951 287 382
Velez-Málaga, La Antigua Capilla de S. José, C/. Linares 7. Sundays 10.30am
Anglican Chaplaincy of St. Andrew, Costa del Sol (East)
Chaplaincy Office 952580600.
Los Boliches, St. Andrew's Holy Communion 1st, 3rd Sun. Morning Worship 2nd, 4th Sun. Morning Prayer Mon, Tues, Thurs 9.30am. Holy Communion (BCP) Wed. 9.30am.
Benalmádena Costa, San José chapel, 9.30am; Morning Worship 2nd, 4th Sun; Holy Communion 1st, 3rd Sun.
Calahonda, Ermita de San Miguel, 9.30am. Morning Worship 1st, 3rd Sun; Holy Communion 2nd, 4th Sun.
Alhaurín el Grande: Cemetery Chapel Sun. at 11.30am. All age service 1st Sun; Morning Worship 3rd Sun; Holy Communion 2nd, 4th Sun.
Costa del Sol (West)
San Pedro, Sunday 10a.m. (Holy Communion) Parroquia Virgen del Rocío.
Sotogrande, Sunday 12 noon. (Holy Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays) La Iglesia de Nuestra Sra. de la Merced. Chaplaincy House. www.costachurch.com
Nerja: Sun 12 noon, San Miguel church, Wed. 9.30am. (Church shop, C/Malaga 952 522 460.) Rev. Geoffrey Johnston, 952521339.
Almuñécar: Capilla de Nuestra Señora del Carmen, (Fishermen's chapel) Chinasol. Sun. 9.30am. (not August) Priest as Nerja.
Torre del Mar: St Barnabas IERE, 11am. Morning Prayer 1st and 3rd Sunday, H.C. 2nd and 4th. Lux Mundi centre. 952030461.
Gibraltar: Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Sun 10.30. Tel. 78377.

MUSLIM

Marbella: Mezquita del Rey Abdulaziz. Friday 2.30pm. 952774143.
Fuengirola: Mezquita del Centro Cultural Suhail, Parque Doña Sofía. Friday worship 2.30pm. Tel 952473916.
Malaga: Mezquita, C/San Agustín 11. Friday 2.30pm. 952228595.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Marbella: Santo Cristo del Calvario Church, Avda. del Calvario: Holy Mass in English, 11am. every Sunday. Tel: 952774 899.
Fuengirola: Capilla San José, Las Rampas (Upper Level), Daily Mass (in English): Mon-Fri 11am. Sat 7pm. Sun 11am.
Fuengirola: Lux Mundi, C/ Nueva, 12 Sun.
Arroyo de la Miel: Mass in English Parroquia de la Inmaculada, Sunday 1.30pm.
Calahonda: Ermita de San Miguel, 12 Sun.
Benalmádena Costa: Parish Church of La Virgen del Carmen, Avda. Bonanza. Bilingual mass English/Spanish Sundays 10.30am.
Torre del Mar: Lux Mundi, Avda. Moscatel,1-"I". Saturday. Winter 5pm, summer 6 pm. 952543334.
Chiclana (Cadiz): Nstra Señora de Europa church, Urb. Novo Sancti Petri, RC Mass in English and German, Sunday 10.30am
Pueblo Nuevo de Guadiaro - Sotogrande (Cadiz): Mass in English, Saturday 7pm and Sunday 10.30am at Santuario de la Divina Misericodia
Malaga: Catholic mass in English, Avenida Santiago Ramón y Cajal, Ciudad Jardín. 11.30am Sunday. 952260760.

METHODIST CHURCH

Gibraltar: Methodist Church, 297 Main Street. Sun 11am and 8pm. +350 200 77491/+350 200 40870. Rev. Fidel Patron.

Sotogrande: La Iglesia de Nuestra Sra. de la Merced 1st and 3rd Sundays 11.45a.m. For more info. call 952 895 102.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Mijas international: 10 am Sun Calle Rueda 7 , Los Boliches, 952469392 / 607521032.
Motril: Sun10 am. C/ Jesús del Gran Poder 34. 958 825665.
Malaga: Sun 10.30 am, C/Babel 1.
Algeciras: Sun 10.30 am. C/Sevilla 43. Tel. 956630894.
Nerja: Sun. 10.30 a.m. C/Granada,83. Tel. 607 522 671

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Arroyo de la Miel: Avda Del Cerro de Viento, s/n . Tues. 7.30pm. Sat. 4.30pm. Tel. 952561170.
Fuengirola: Kingdom Hall, Plaza Hispanidad, Service Meeting, Fri 7.30pm. 952469082.
Malaga: C/José Palanca, 20. Service Fri 8pm. Tues 7.15pm.
San Pedro: C/ Amor 6, Fuente Nueva. English: Sun 11am & Wed 7.30pm. Tagalog: Sun 1.30pm & Tues 7.30pm. Kingdom Hall 952788855.
Torrox Costa: Local 17, Urb Costa de Oro. Sun 11 a.m., Weds 7pm. Tel. 952526740.
Torre del Mar: Calle Infantes, Conjuntos Islas del Sol. Scandinavian Sun 6pm, Thurs 7pm. German Sun 11am and Fri 7pm.
Coín: Calle Félix Rodríguez de la Fuente. Weds 7.30pm, Sun 11.30am. 952499239.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH / BAPTIST CHURCH

Los Boliches: Evangelical Church, Paseo Marítimo 77. Sun:Worship and Bible teaching, 4pm. Weds: Bible study and prayer 7.30pm. Tel 952460728
Torremolinos: Evangelical Community Church. Sun service 11am. C/Gregorio Marañón 4. 952384706
Torremolinos: Gloryhouse International Christian Center. African Pentecostal style. Sun 11am C/ Danza Invisible, 7/8, Bloque D, Nogalera. Pastor Moses. 679740825, 951210300
Nerja: Fellowship of the King, Pasaje San Miguel, Sundays at 10.30am. 952 969 058 / 958 658 439.
Nerja: Community Bible Fellowship, C/ Pintada 35, 2nd floor. English/ Spanish Worship, Sunday 10am. 952521776.
Torre del Mar: Cornerstone International Church. C/Solera 2. Sunday 11.30am. Wednesday 6.30pm Bible study.
Calahonda: The Evangelical Christian Fellowship, Ermita San Miguel. Sun 4.30pm. Rev. Peter Riggall, 952 588 160.
Arroyo de la Miel: Arroyo Baptist Church, Sun 4pm. Conjunto Zodiaco, Edif. Aries, C/ Sagitario. Tel. 95244796/952386716.
Calahonda: Baptist Church, Calle San Jeronimo 1, Worship Sunday 11 am with Sunday School. 952832533.
La Línea: Asambleas de Dios. C/San José, 41. Thurs 9pm. Sun 11am & 8 pm.
Marbella: Int. Christian F'ship. Sun 11am Upper room, Congress Centre. 952810391.
Mijas Costa: Iglesias International Costa del Sol, C/José de Orbaneja 10. Sun 11am and 7pm; Thur 7pm Tel:636 422 7
Puerto Banús: Christian Church (The Wave) Worship Service: Sun 11am. The Wave Café: Wed 11am. Prayer: Fri 12pm. 637408194/5 puertobanuschurch.com
Salobreña: Fellowship of the King. Various locations. Sundays at 10am Tel.635 358 808 / 958 645 027
La Viñuela: El Puente Christian Fellowship. Sundays 11am. Under Maroma Inmobiliaria. 952117145 / 952518185
Fuengirola: Living Waters Community Fellowship. C/Pintor Nogales, Las Rampas. Sundays 11am.
Torremolinos: Christian ministry. Healing of traumatic memories. Tel.604199751

Gibraltar: Brethren Assembly, Queensway Quay. Sun 11am, Minister F. Baldachino.
Benalmádena Costa: Elim Family F'ship. Sun 11am. Pastor Howard 647379564 www.elimfamilyfellowship.com
San Pedro: Elim Family Fellowship. Sun 3.30pm. 695 115 496
San Pedro: Faith Baptist Church. Sun 6.30pm, Edif Manantial. Tel: 911820806.
Fuengirola: Ark Christian Fellowship Family Worship. Sun 11am, C/Rio Darro 2, Plaza Juncal. Tel.: 952 592 171.
Fuengirola: Costa del Sol Bible School, Healing Clinic and "The Beauty of Holiness". Rev. Joyce McNaughton 663706806.
Fuengirola: The Way, Christian Counselling Ministry. Tel. 634369414/ 951135441.
Malaga: Believers Loveworld Inc.(Christ Embassy) Sunday11am, Wed 7pm, Sat 5pm. C/Cantimpla 11, Av. de Europa 951955354/672805789.
Marbella: House of Judah (Jewish & Gentile Believers) Bilingual Fri. Worship 7.30pm - NH Marbella Hotel Tel: 605924555.
Mijas Costa: Baptist, Bi-Lingual services Sun 11.30am and 7pm; Thur 7pm Tel:636 422 717 www.libertadmijascosta.com
Heaven's Gate Pentecostal Church Int: Benalmádena: Carril de Sirocco 1, Worship- Sun 11am- 6pm, F'ship- Friday 7.30pm, 602392139
Fuengirola: Christian Family Centre Int. Worship Sun 1pm, Fellowship Tue 7pm Church auditorium, C/Jacinto Benavente, 10. Tel: 605329074
Granada: Avda Andalucía, 53, La Chana, Worship- Sun 6pm, 605329074
Malaga: Avda de Europa, 69, Worship- Sunday 9am, Fellowship- Wednesday 7.30pm, 605329074

DUTCH EVANGELICAL

Fuengirola: Skandinaviska Turistkyran. Ed. M del Carmen. Paseo Marítimo 77 Los Boliches, Sundays 9.30.
Torremolinos: Sun 11.30 in Holland Huis. Avenida Carlota Alessandri 12.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (PRESBYTERIAN)

Fuengirola: Sun 10.30am at Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, C/Nueva 3. Tel 952638245 or 952475474.
Gibraltar: St. Andrew's Church, Sun 10.30am. Tel 20077040.
Torre del Mar: Sun 11am, Legend's Bar, C/Don Cipriano Maldonado Jiménez.

BAHAI

Bahai Information Office, C/Ricardo Soriano, 35, Marbella.
Marbella: 952 90 21 21
Fuengirola: 951 259 742.
Malaga: 952 214 052.
Benalmádena: 952 442 424.
Alhaurín de la Torre: 952411496.
Rincón de la Victoria: 952 402 870.
Gibraltar: +350 200 73287.

SYNAGOGUES

Torremolinos: Beth Minzi, Av. Palma de Mallorca 55; Castillo San Luis, Local 14. Daily services. 952052550.
Marbella: Beth El, Urb. El Real, Km 184. Services, Fri in summer 8.30pm winter 7pm Sat & holidays 10am 952859395

QUAKERS

Malaga: Quakers (Society of Friends). Info: zvi@gotadsl.co.uk

NORWEGIAN SEAMEN'S CHURCH

Calahonda: El Campanario, Av del Cortijo 3. Sun 4 pm, 952939800
www.sjomannskirken.no/costadelsol

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Fuengirola: Sat 10am. Bible study, worship Calle Palangreros, 60. 952456672 / 633716651 ww.adventistasfuengirola.es.

CONSULATES

Great Britain	C/. Mauricio Moro Pareto 2- 2. Málaga	952352300
USA	Av. Juan Gómez 8. Ed. Lucía 1-C. Fuengirola	952474891
Belgium	Avda Ricardo Soriano 20-3C, Marbella	951516019
Denmark	Calle Córdoba 6 404, Malaga	952211797
Norway	Avda Los Boliches, 60, Edf Rosenkranz, Fuengirola	952667955
Canada	C/Cervantes, Edif. Horizonte, Malaga	952223346
Germany	Mauricio Moro Pareto 2, Malaga	952363591
Sweden	Calle Córdoba 6, 5th floor, Malaga	952604383
Ireland	Avda. Los Boliches, Fuengirola	952475108
France	1, Plaza de Santa Cruz, Seville	954293200
Italy	Calle Lagasca, 98, Madrid	912106910
Austria	Alameda de Colón 26, Malaga	952600267
Finland	Calle Blasco de Garay, 7, Malaga	952212435
Saudi Arabia	Mauricio M. Pareto 2 bloque Sur 2º, Malaga	952310358
Greece	Salitre, 16, Malaga	952311847
Iceland	Paseo Marítimo 91, 29640 Fuengirola	952661200
Philippines	C/Marqués de Larios 4, 2º, Malaga	952222757
Hungary	Av. de Andalucía 26 29007 Malaga	952308393

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCIES		
Emergency operator	112	
National Police	091	
Local (municipal) Police	092	
Medical	061	
Fire	080	
Guardia Civil	062	
Sea Rescue	900202202	
Crime report	902102112	
ENGLISH-SPEAKING HELP		
Samaritans in Spain	900525100	
Alcoholics Anonymous	600379110	
Age Care	952933409	
Age Concern (Estepona)	608458555	
ANDALUSIAN HEALTH SERVICE		
Salud Responde (doctors' appointments & advice)	955545060	
ESTEPONA		
Bus Station	955038665	
Taxi Service	952802900	
Tourist Office	952802002	
Town Hall	952801100	
Foreign Residents Dept.	952809031	
FUENGIROLA		
Bus Station	952475066	
Taxi Service	952471000	
Tourist Office	952467625	
Town Hall	952589300	
Foreign Residents Dept.	952589440	
MALAGA		
Bus Station	952350061	
Railway Station	902240202	
Taxi Service	952345693	
Tourist Office	951926020	
MARBELLA		
Bus Station	955038665	
Taxi Service	952774488	

MIJAS		
Town Hall	952485900	
Town Hall Las Lagunas	952473125	
Taxi	952478288	
Tourism Office	952589034	
Foreign Resident Dept.	952589010	
NERJA		
Bus Station	902422242	
Taxi Service	952520537	
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Town Hall	952548400	
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Bus Station	902143144	
Taxi Service	952380600	
Tourist Office	952371909	
Town Hall	952379400	
Foreign Residents Dept.	952374231	
BENALMADENA		
Bus Station	902450550	
Taxi Service	952441545	
Tourist Office	952442494	
Town Hall	952374231	
Foreign Residents Dept.	952442494	
VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA		
Bus Station	952503162	
Taxi	952540016	
Town Hall	952559100	
Tourist Office	952541104	
GIBALTAR		
General emergency	199/112(mobiles)	
Fire/ambulance (emergency)	190	
Tourist Office	(00350) 20074950	
Taxi	(00350) 20070027	

MALAGA PORT INFORMATION

CRUISE SHIP MOVEMENTS (SOURCE: MALAGA PORT AUTHORITY)					
Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Amera	23/12	-	-	08.00	18.00
Aidamar	24/12	-	-	10.00	19.30
MSC Magnifica	02/01	Cadiz	Civiatavecchia	07.00	14.00



THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21 - February 19
This week your priority will be to make others feel warm and fuzzy. How does that make you feel? See? Winners all round..



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
Being part of a group does not always appeal to you. This time it can be different. Just give others a chance to show how much they value you.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
With a strong purpose this week it will be hard for others to change your direction. Why would they? Well, at this special time friends and family can be keen to have you alongside.



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
This is a time of goodwill and caring gestures, so be sure to slip into the right spirit. Someone who has romantic ideas could be finding you a little cool to their approaches.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Getting a more balanced view means taking on board what others say. You don't have to agree with everything but remember to stay practical. See both sides.



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
Are you seeking inspiration? Bounce the ideas and thoughts that you have off others. Who knows what insights they may come up with?



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
Believe it or not, there are those who would just love to stop and have a cuppa! We demand so much of ourselves and others at this time of the year that it can cease being fun.



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
Use this festive time to connect with those who inspire you. Less welcome are those who constantly niggle away at your confidence..



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
You may not be super-busy right now but there is a need to pace yourself a bit more than you have been doing. Romance is not far from your mind, but is this the right time and place?



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
See this week as a time to relax and gather your thoughts and energy. So much has been changing around you that it is not surprising you feel confused.

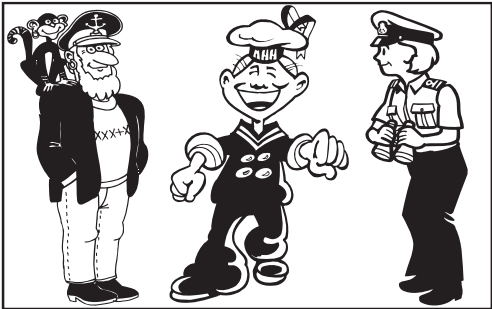
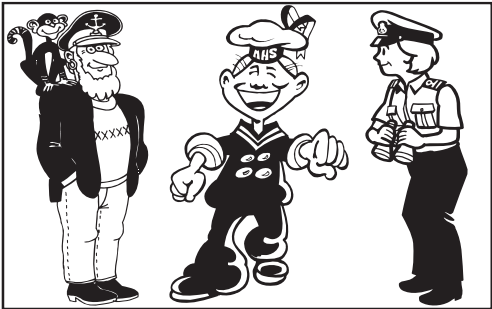


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
Those who do not want big gatherings with paper hats and silly games have much to give. Contact a charity to give festive help to those who need it..

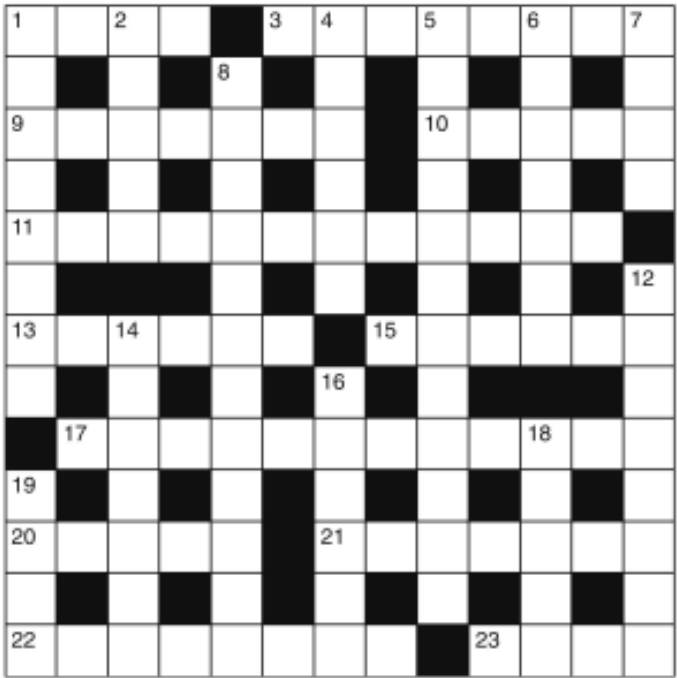


Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
This is a time to put all of your energy into being kind and caring to others and also to yourself. Really think about what is needed now and it will not be presents!

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11388



Across

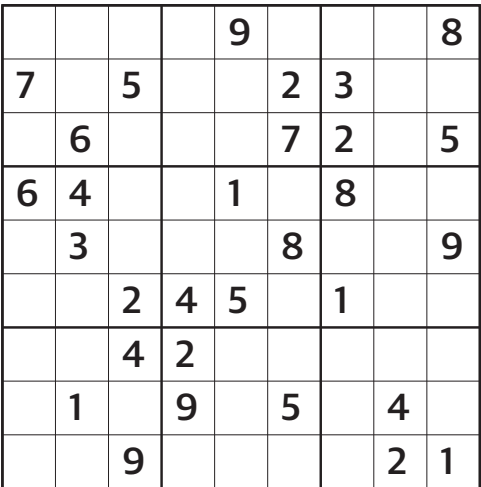
- 1 Handled millinery material (4)
- 3 In a serene mood, produced some noted work (8)
- 9 A lot in a version associated with Indo-China (7)
- 10 Renovate about three bearings (5)
- 11 Exorbitant assessment - it's time to serve a different order (12)
- 13 Literally scramble (6)
- 15 Complain by sending two drinks back (8)
- 17 Brave when suffering from a fatty cardiac condition? (5-7)
- 20 Back among the paraphernalia, valuables to be of use (5)
- 21 Suggest a little work in plain English (7)
- 22 Could it be described as a discredited transaction? (4,4)
- 23 & 7Dn Rusticated when dons went crazy! (4,4)

Down

- 1 Lose one's balance when winter comes (4,4)
- 2 Mislaid a ring inside - not properly fastened (5)
- 4 Chased gold with unusually neat finish (8)
- 5 One will provide transport for a small charge (12)
- 6 Can and must supply a private room (7)
- 7 See 23 Across
- 8 Prepared stiff drinks for both sexes appearing in court! (5,7)
- 12 Negotiating it involved with danger could be an uphill task (8)
- 14 Ignore a girl producing a weapon (7)
- 16 Place rebuilt round the capital of Holland as a base for the services (6)
- 18 So the mix-up is caused by the people over there (5)
- 19 A constituent of oriental cosmetics (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



THE WORDPUZZLER

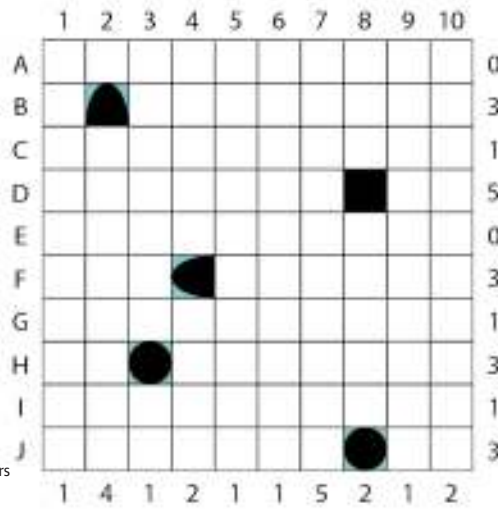
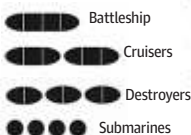


Can you identify the words that may be made from the letters of WORDPLAY from the clues listed below?

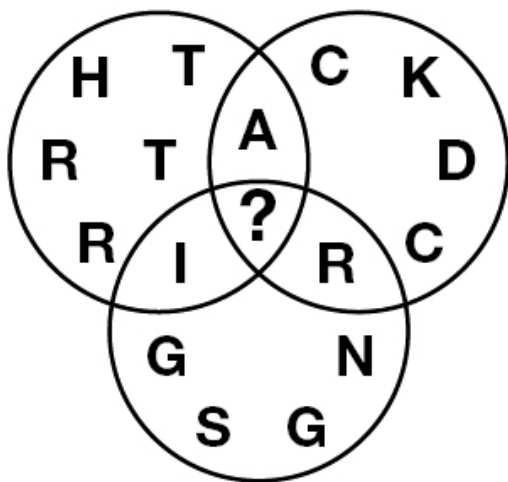
- 1. Hospital room
- 2. Ruse
- 3. Burden
- 4. Cautious
- 5. Walk wearily
- 6. Sketch
- 7. Street
- 8. Unit of length
- 9. Distort
- 10. Fall

BATTLESHIPS

Instructions Find where the fleet of ships (1 battleship, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 4 submarines) are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some have been filled in to start you off.



CIRCLEGRAM



Instructions
Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD

Across

1) Professionals (13)

5) Singer (8)

9) I (2)

10) To achieve (6)

12) Painting (6)

15) Impotence (10)

16) Collection (9)

17) Painter (6)

19) To sell (6)

21) To walk (5)

22) Train (4)

25) Rhythm (5)

27) Museum (5)

29) I loved (3)

31) Picked up (8)

32) I say (4)

33) Early morning (9)

34) Garlic (3)

35) If (2)

38) Readers (8)

40) You (2)

41) Pedestrians (8)

44) They start (9)

45) I tied (3)

46) That (f) (3)

47) To recover (9)

48) Unprotected (12)

Down

1) Police (7)

2) To emancipate (9)

3) Options (8)

4) Thieves (8)

5) Accomplice (8)

6) Nor (2)

7) Never (5)

8) To order (8)

11) Goal (3)

13) To hear (3)

14) I gave back (7)

18) Advert (7)

20) To buy (7)

22) Uncles (4)

23) To remain (10)

24) Your (2)

25) Portrait (7)

26) Security guard (9)

28) Security (9)

29) Raider (9)

30) Brazilian (9)

32) To arrest (7)

36) Spies (6)

37) Tribe (5)

39) Of (2)

42) Warehouse (4)

43) I went out (4)

ANSWERS

Quiz answers

wrapped in long, heavy chains.

dead partner, Jacob Marley

was first visited by the ghost of his

Christmas Carol, Ebenezer Scrooge

Of interest: In Charles Dickens' A

Answer: Jacob Marley.

posthumously.

the Cruel. He was made a king

murdered by his brother, Bolshaus

September 935 when he was

lived from around 907 to 28

Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia. He

'Good King Wenceslas' was actually

Of interest: The figure we know as

Answer: Bohemia

Language Crossword

Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 1 Felt; 3 Composed; 9 Laotian; 10 Renew; 11 Propose; 22 Cash sale; 23 Sent. Down: 1 Fall over; 2 Loose; 4 Orate; Overestimate; 13 Encode; 15 Mummy; 17 Stout-hearted; 20 Avail; 21 Preamble; 6 Sanctum; 7 Down; 8 Mixed doubles; 12 Gradient; 14 Outlast; 16 Chapel; 18 Those; 19 Talc.

Wordpuzzler solution

Sudoku solution

Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is O. Harriott, Craddock, Grigson, all celebrity chefs.

Battleships

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN THIS?

A bronze tribute to an ancient culture

Last week: Mijas Costa

This metal sculpture of birds on top an oxidised pillar is on a roundabout on a junction of Avenida de Mijas in Las Lagunas.

THE SUR IN ENGLISH CORNER

Season's greetings!

Many foreign residents in Spain take advantage of the Christmas holidays to spend the festive period in their home countries with their families. After all, for many of us, there's nothing like Christmas back home, when the same rituals are carried out every year; some traditions are very hard to live without. However Christmas in Spain is also very special. Some prefer to spend the holiday season here simply to make the most of the mild climate. We can certainly ex-

pect to see a great deal more sunshine than most other European countries. There's also something special about the Spanish Christmas though, when you look around you at some of the local traditions: Christmas carols with a flamenco touch, nativity displays that go way beyond the crib scene, street parades and concerts... and of course your copy of SUR in English as usual every Friday. Happy Christmas!



Two of the hospital staff who looked after Luna until her owner had recovered. :: SUR

The Clínico takes on a pet

Staff took turns to care for a dog when her owner had to be admitted to hospital

The owner, a British tourist who was travelling around in a motorhome with Luna, was suddenly taken ill and went to the Emergency Department of the hospital for help

IGNACIO LILLO

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MÁLAGA. It sounds a bit like a Christmas story, one of those which have a moral attached to them, but in this case it is real. It happened last weekend at the Clínico (Virgen de la Victoria) hospital in Málaga.

A British pensioner called Peter was travelling around Andalucía in

his motorhome, with his dog Luna, from whom he is inseparable, for company. He has made the passenger seat into a type of cot in which Luna curls up while he drives.

Suddenly, Peter started to feel unwell and decided he ought to go to hospital. He parked where he could find space at the Clínico, although it was a place where parking is not permitted, and called for help. Staff on the door of the Emergency Department went to his assistance, and he was admitted so that tests could be carried out to see what was wrong with him.

Every day the workers would take photos and videos of Luna so Peter could see she was all right

Despite being very ill and in pain, the patient kept saying over and over again that he had left his dog on her own in the vehicle; that she needed to be looked after and he didn't know anyone in the area who could help. One of the hospital staff got in touch with Julia Cobaleda, coordinator of the volunteers at the Sociedad Protectora de Animales, to see if they could do anything.

In the end, though, that wasn't necessary. A group of nurses, auxiliaries and maintenance staff at the hospital organised shifts to visit Luna, take her for a walk several times a day, feed her and give her water. As the dog is 12 years old and has allergies, her carers kept her on the same diet as her owner did, based on rice and chicken they cooked themselves. "She didn't eat much because she was missing her owner," they say, but she was never left on her own.

Everyone fell in love with Luna, because she "is so sweet and really affectionate". To keep Peter calm while he was in hospital, the volunteers took photos and videos with their mobile phones each time they visited her, and then showed them to him. "He was so worried about her. That dog is his life," they say.

The team of helpers took their responsibility so seriously that they even contacted the Local Police and put signs up asking them not to move the motorhome, which was parked in an area designated for motorcycles, while Peter was in the hospital, because of the special circumstances.

The tests showed that Peter had an inflamed gallbladder, and he was released from hospital after three days. As soon as he was able to stand up again, he thanked the staff for all the help they had given not only to him, but also to his dog, and rushed off to see her. Together, they have now resumed their life on board their travelling home.



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HIGH-END *furniture*