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## in English

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SPORT

## MALAGA CF THE FIRST TEST

The club announced  
five PCR positives after  
players underwent  
Covid-19 tests on their  
return to La Rosaleda  
**P38**



## "We've lost everything, but we're still alive"

Dozens of British residents on a mobile home site near Mollina saw their properties and belongings go up in flames on Sunday. Fire completely destroyed 40 properties, leaving fewer than 20 still standing. **P2&3**

Victims went back to the site on Monday to assess the damage. **ÑITO SALAS**

## Holiday property owners look for long-term tenants as tourism fails

The pandemic and the UK's quarantine measures have burst the bubble

The owners of as many as 4,000 holiday apartments and villas are now looking for long-term tenants for their properties as the tourist industry struggles to keep afloat on the Costa del Sol. The UK's introduction of quarantine for travellers from Spain led to mass cancellations, shattering many owners' hopes of recovering some business this summer. Before the coronavirus pandemic hit Spain, in Malaga province there were 40,000 properties registered as tourist lets, with many more being prepared to join the market. **P6**

cellations, shattering many owners' hopes of recovering some business this summer. Before the coronavirus pandemic hit Spain, in Malaga province there were 40,000 properties registered as tourist lets, with many more being prepared to join the market. **P6**

## Over 100 Covid-19 cases reported in one day in Malaga province **P4**



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Local workers help look for lost belongings. **ÑITO SALAS**Residents at the site on Monday morning. **ÑITO SALAS**The mobile homes in Mollina, near Antequera, were reduced to charred debris. **ÑITO SALAS**

# "We've lost everything, but we're lucky nobody died"

The Spanish and British communities in Mollina rallied round to help the more than 70 people evacuated from the Lazy Days Pueblo Fiesta static caravan site, where 40 homes were totally destroyed

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ



**MOLLINA.** A woman waits impatiently for two workmen to open her safe, or what's left of it, a charred box. When they manage to open it, it's impossible to distinguish the majority of items inside, now reduced to ash.

She starts to cry while they put her belongings on the ground, with the hope of being able to salvage something from

the catastrophe.

She is just one of the 79 people evacuated on Sunday afternoon from the Lazy Days Pueblo Fiesta mobile home park in Mollina, near Antequera in inland Malaga province, where a devastating fire left more than 40 homes burned to a cinder.

After being forced out by the flames, those who had no family or friends to take them in were accommodated at the Euro-Latin American Youth Centre, Ceulaj, also in Mollina, where they received numerous donations of food, clothes and other essentials from the local people.

"There are no words to describe what they've done for us," say Jim and Diane Wilson, who said they only bought one of the static vans on the site a couple of weeks ago.

"We arrived three days ago. Our house is okay, but there's no water or electricity, so we can't go into our place," they explain.

Despite the devastation, they feel very "lucky". The important

thing is that nobody died, they say, but point out that there are some very elderly people affected.

"There's one man who is 92 years old, and he has nothing left, everything's just flat," says Diane.

The couple have been provided with the medication they need for themselves and their dog.

"The Spanish people and the English community have been fantastic," says Jim.

The Lazy Days site, known locally as the 'English campsite', is made up of prefabricated homes, the majority of which are, or were, occupied by British nationals.

"A lot of us speak English and we are helping the people who can't communicate well [in Spanish]," says a worker at Ceulaj, who was joined by volunteers to organise a huge table of donations of all sorts of items from local people.

"We've brought personal hygiene items, such as sponges and

**Residents whose homes were reduced to charred debris by the flames returned to salvage what they could of their belongings on Monday**

**Owners stressed how the local Spanish and British communities had been "fantastic", providing clothes and other items after they fled their homes**

shower gel," says one local woman.

In fact the list of products and objects made available to the evacuated residents was so great that the town hall had to ask people to stop sending clothes.

"The response has been incredible, and now there are so many clothes, they don't need any more," says a local council-

lor, who added that a minibus had also been put at the disposal of the residents so they could go to the small town.

After selecting what they need from the table the affected residents sit in a patio at Ceulaj to get some fresh air, many still in shock after Sunday's traumatic experience.

"It's terrible, we're devastated. There's nothing left," they explain.

The scorched caravan site, just a few minutes away from the centre, was still giving off a strong smell of ash on Monday.

Civil Protection volunteers return to the area where the mobile homes once stood to accompany their owners, as they took photographs in order to claim for the damages. They also still have some hope of being able to recover something among their belongings.

"We've lost everything," says Peter Thacker, who, with his wife, takes photographs of the damage caused to his car and home, now totally burned.

"We've been living here for a year. We've lost all the important things," he explains as he searches for his glasses among the debris, along with a Civil Protection volunteer.

When he finds them, he opens the case to inspect them. There's nothing to recover; he throws them back into the charred debris.





One of the vans on fire on Sunday evening. **SUR**



Items donated for the residents. **Ñ. S.**



At the Ceulaj centre. **Ñ. S.**

## Report concludes blaze started in an empty property, but says exact cause will be hard to establish

**FERNANDO TORRES / EP**

**MALAGA.** The fire that destroyed a total of 40 mobile homes in the Lazy Days Pueblo Fiesta campsite in Mollina on Sunday broke out in an empty property.

This is the initial conclusion of the Malaga provincial fire-fighting consortium (CPB) whose report will be used in the investigation being carried out by the Guardia Civil in Antequera.

According to official sources, on Monday morning there was no clear hypothesis regarding how the blaze began and, given the state of the burned mobile homes, it may well not be possible to establish the exact cause.

The sources said that more than 30 firefighters worked non stop on the site from 4pm to 2am.

Their work was “especially complex”, said the consortium’s president, Manuel Marmolejo, adding that other fires in Humilladero and Ronda also broke out on Sunday evening.

The fire was brought under control by 7pm that evening. By that time, though, only 18 vans were left standing.

According to the firefighters, the blaze reached excessively high temperatures due to the materials used in the construction of the static caravans.

Exploding gas cylinders also made the job more dangerous for the firefighters.

### Accommodation

Around 70 people, most of the British, had to be evacuated from the site and many were accommodated at the nearby Ceulaj Euro-Latin American Youth Centre which belongs to the central government. Two people were injured, neither of them seriously.

On Wednesday, 33 residents from the site were at the Ceulaj centre, thanks to coordination between the government delegate in the province, Teófilo Ruiz; the mayor of Mollina, Eugenio Sevillano; and the British consul, Charmaine Arbouin.

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# Malaga has 100 new daily cases and most are young people

Regional officials say half outbreaks are in family groups now, with small, controlled numbers, and 80% of people affected are under 45 locally

IVÁN GELIBTER / NURIA TRIGUERO / SUR

MALAGA. On Thursday this week, and for the first time in a few months, Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, recorded 100 new positive Covid-19 cases in the previous 24 hours. This was a 20 per cent increase on Wednesday when 80 positive PCR tests were recorded.

It was a similar situation in the whole Andalucía region, where regional Health ministry data showed 422 new cases on Thursday, the biggest increase since 5 April.

Andalucía had 38 positive cases per 100,000 people active through PCR test on Thursday, well below the national average of 96.8.

The province of Almeria is in the worst position in the region. This area recorded one more death and 128 positive cases in the previous 24 hours on Thursday this week.

Just over half of new outbreaks regionally are being reported in family gatherings, with few cases each, although officials urged people to try to meet family outdoors, not share cutlery or plates, keep groups small and wear masks when not eating.

There were five new outbreaks in Malaga province on Thursday linked to bars and clubs, said officials.

## First local death in a month

Also on Thursday, for the first time since 9 July, Malaga province recorded one death due to the virus, bringing the total since the start of the pandemic to 290 locally. There were five new hospital admissions announced on Thursday in the province.

The majority of local outbreaks in Malaga province are still be-



This Malaga laboratory is capable of processing 2,400 daily tests . SUR

ing recorded in the resorts of the western Costa del Sol.

## Hospitalisations still low

While recorded cases locally are creeping higher, experts were pointing out that the number of hospitalisations is not as yet increasing much, due to lower average age of the patients diagnosed in recent weeks, compared with the first phase of the pandemic in the spring.

According to figures published by the regional health authorities (up to Friday 7 August), of 539 people who returned positive PCR

lab tests in the previous 14 days, the largest age group was 30 to 44 (202 cases, 37.5% of the total).

The next group in size was formed by 15 to 29-year-olds (198 cases, 36% of the total) and 25 children up to 14 were also diagnosed. This shows that nearly 80% of the new cases of contagion are under the age of 45.

In the over-65 age group, 26 people tested positive in the two weeks up to Friday 7 August.

**Page 16** : Spain has worst Covid-199 case figures in Europe again.

## Local health service carries out nearly 2,000 lab tests a day for Covid-19

ÁNGEL ESCALERA

MALAGA. The proactive detection of SARS-CoV-2 through testing is playing a key part in slowing contagion. Increased local testing is also helping identify more patients, including those with no symptoms that previously went undetected. The most reliable test is known as the PCR.

The microbiology units of the public hospitals in Malaga province are currently carrying out over 2,000 tests of this type a day, according to SUR investigations, although the regional health department doesn't give data on a provincial level. This number has been increasing since the pandemic started.

The Hospital Regional in Malaga has a lab capable of processing 2,400 PCR tests and software there can help plot local outbreaks using geolocalisation data. The first real test of this automated operation came after the outbreak at the Red Cross shelter in Malaga city in June. The hospital is already considering increasing its capacity if the number of reported cases grows.

The robotic equipment is called Opentrons Covid-19, and was donated by CovidRobots. It includes eight automated machines carrying out different stages of the analysis.

Currently the Hospital Regional is doing some 1,000 PCR a day, including samples sent in from outlying, area hospitals in Antequera, Ronda and Vélez-Málaga as well as local health centres in Malaga province. However, the three area hospitals mentioned also can carry out their own analysis of PCR in an emergency.

Malaga city's other main hospital, Clínico Virgen de la Victoria, is carrying out around 500 analyses a day on its equipment and there is also analysis under way at Marbella's Hospital Costa del Sol.

The PCR is a diagnostic test that can detect a fragment of genetic material from a pathogen. The process to carry it out correctly is relatively complex and needs specially trained staff to analyse it.

In total, some 2,000 PCR tests were being carried out daily this week in Malaga province's health service facilities.

## Regional rules tighten for care homes and bulls

The Junta de Andalucía has asked for evidence that smoking increases risk of contagion before making any decision on new measures

SUR

SEVILLE. The Junta de Andalucía regional government slightly tightened its Covid-19 health and safety measures this Thursday but stopped short of banning smoking on bar terraces, as other regions are discussing.

The decision came after the Junta's latest fortnightly strategic pandemic meeting, held on Thursday (13 August).

The two main new measures announced were a toughening of rules for seniors' residences, after a rise in cases, and on crowd capacity at bullfights, following complaints over images of a crowd at a fight in Cadiz province.

Included in the new measures for residences are the suspension of visits, holidays, excursions and other exits in centres where a case is detected within

28 days of the last one, whether suspected or real.

As the summer bullfight season progresses at some venues, the Junta de Andalucía has forced organisers to keep one and a half metres between attendees and hold the event capacity at 50 per cent.

The regional Health minister, Jesus Aguirre, said over the risks of smoking close to somebody, "We've asked our Smoking Prevention Plan experts to prepare a study to see if there is scientific evidence."

The Junta de Andalucía said this week that the coronavirus pandemic in the region was "under control". Officials understand, however, that "it's necessary to keep taking measures" to keep it that way, and called for "responsibility" among young people.

"Seventy per cent of admissions [to hospital] in Andalucía are people between the ages of 20 and 51," said Andalusian government spokesperson and regional cabinet minister Elías Bendodo in an interview given to Onda Cero radio on Tuesday morning.

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# Owners of thousands of holiday apartments search for long-term tenants as tourism crashes

A report reveals that between 6% and 10% of holiday lets are moving from tourism to the residential market due to Covid-19

PILAR MARTÍNEZ



MALAGA. The pandemic has burst the holiday rental bubble that had been forming at great speed before the crisis. A report published by the Andalusian association of tourist accommodation (AVVA) states that as many as 4,000 properties registered as tourist accommodation in the province of Malaga will move into long-term rentals due to the current tourism crisis.

The study states that between six and ten per cent of owners are looking for tenants outside the tourism industry.

One owner, who only wished to be identified as Jaime, said he would wait until after the summer, although the quarantine imposed by the UK on travellers from Spain has blown his plans to recover some lost income during the peak summer season.

"Bookings were relatively good



The average tourist renting a holiday property on the Costa del Sol is now Spanish. NITO SALAS

for August, all things considered, but since the UK's decision [to impose quarantine] all I'm getting are cancellations," he said.

He warned, however, that now is not the best time to be looking for long-term tenants either.

"We've all helped to increase the supply of flats for rent and so prices are falling, at a time when there is a downward trend in any case due to the financial situation that the majority of families are going through," he said.

The president of AVVA, Carlos Pérez-Lanzac, said that along with

the owners who have already decided to move to the residential market, there is another large group who have opted to leave their properties empty for a year in the hope that the recovery of the tourism industry will be fast.

"People have also chosen this alternative for fear of the Urban Rentals Law, which establishes a contract period of five years; they are also afraid of being in a situation of tenants not paying and the long legal process for eviction," he explained.

He added that sources from the real estate industry had said that rental default had increase by 350% in the traditional market.

For those choosing to stick to holiday rentals, the scenario is not good. Hopes placed on the summer have been shattered, with last-minute cancellations increasing. And that is without the usual competition from holiday homes owned by foreigners, many of whom have decided to spend the summer in their own properties due to the

## THE FIGURE

# 40,000

tourist properties are registered in the province of Malaga, half of the total official count in Andalucía as a whole.

health crisis, rather than renting them out and travelling elsewhere.

Pérez-Lanzac said that occupancy of holiday lets in July was 36%, bearing in mind that only around 70% of registered properties were operational. Last year, with 100% of properties on the market, occupancy rates were between 79% and 82%.

Forecasts for August say that among the properties still up for holiday rental, occupancy will be between 40% and 45%.

Offering flexibility in the current situation has turned into a double-edged sword for property owners.

They need to encourage tourists to make bookings, but this also allows them to cancel up to 48 hours before their arrival date at no cost.

"This volatility complicates our work a great deal. There's no margin for reaction," said Pérez-Lanzac.

With few bookings, panicking owners have started to drop their prices. This summer it is up to 30% cheaper to rent a holiday home on the Costa del Sol than last year.

This figure could be even higher for longer holiday rentals.

"We have to encourage people not to panic because we are now in August and there's still the last part of the year to come," said the AVVA president.

It is this scenario that is pushing owners to turn to the long-term residential rentals sector. AVVA has said that key real estate sources such as Idealista or Pisos.com report that Malaga province has gone from having 700 flats available for long-term rent to 2,000 due to the tourism crisis.

The pandemic has also significantly changed the profile of the average holiday rental customer on the Costa del Sol. The majority are now Spanish tourists, who book at the last minute.

In terms of international visitors, Pérez-Lanzac described a new trend of groups of friends or relatives from outside Spain making bookings just three days in advance, when this type of rental would normally be decided six months ahead.

There is also a larger number of reservations being made by professionals who come to the area for a couple of weeks for work reasons, something unheard-of in the month of August. "This gives us hope that this type of client will increase from September and help soften the damage caused in the summer," said the AVVA president.

## Malaga Airport has lost more than eight million passengers up to July this year

In July the Costa del Sol was the fourth busiest airport in Spain, but with 74% fewer passengers

ALBERTO GÓMEZ

MALAGA. Together, Spain's airports lost around seven million passengers in the month of July, compared with the same month last year, according to the latest fig-

ures released by Spanish operator Aena.

The year-on-year difference is greater in tourist destinations such as the Costa de Sol, with Malaga Airport counting 575,724 passengers in July, 74.2% down on the same month in 2019.

The Costa del Sol did manage to keep its place as the fourth busiest airport in Spain last month, however, behind Mallorca, Madrid and Barcelona and ahead of rival destinations such as Ibiza, Ali-

cante and Gran Canaria.

Looking at the first seven months of 2020 as a whole, Malaga Airport has lost more than eight million passengers, compared with the first seven months of 2019.

The scenario could not be more different from this time last year, when the tourism sector was celebrating an increase of almost four per cent in the number passengers using Malaga's airport in July, as many as 2.2 million.

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# Sewage will not stop being released into the Guadalhorce river until 2023

The metropolitan plant, the plans for which are on public display and that has not yet been put out to tender, will take three years to build and put into operation

FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ



MALAGA. The time when sewage is no longer released into the Guadalhorce river is getting closer, but it is still going to take

at least three years before the biggest river in the province no longer receives waste from Alhaurín el Grande and Cártama. Once Coin is connected to the Bajo Guadalhorce treatment plant (which currently serves Álora and Pizarra) in the autumn, these will be the only two municipalities in the area with no sewage facilities.

This problem will be overcome by the metropolitan treatment plant which is being constructed by the Junta de Andalucía. As well as treating the sewage from these two towns, this will also ease pressure on the one on the Guadalhorce indus-



Sewage released into the river at Cártama-Estación. NITO SALAS

trial estate, as it will serve Alhaurín de la Torre and the Malaga districts of Santa Rosalía, Maqueda, Santa Águeda, Castañetas and Campanillas, as well as future development to the north and west of the city.

The project, which will cost about 130.2 million euros, is being financed through the extra charge which has been applied to consumers' water bills since May 2011. It is expected to take

three years to build and set into operation, but could be shorter depending on the conditions of the contract. Even so, the most optimistic scenario would be for it to begin functioning in 2023.

The plans will remain on public display until 9 September, and then the project will be put to tender. The contract is expected to be awarded by the end of this year.

## Details

The sewage plant, which will be called Málaga Norte, is to be built on a site north of the airport and will be able to treat 70,000 cubic metres of waste a day (the equivalent to a population of 280,000). It will also incorporate a tertiary system so recycled water can be used to irrigate green zones or agricultural plantations.

The plans also include 7.3 kilometres of pipes between the new plant and the one on the Guadalhorce industrial estate. The plant will be built in an elevated location (18 metres above sea level) to ensure it is not affected by possible flooding from the Guadalhorce river.

Although the Junta de Andalucía will be financing the works, it will be the councils affected (Málaga, Torremolinos, Alhaurín de la Torre, Cártama and Alhaurín el Grande) who will pay for it to be set into operation and its maintenance, either by forming an organisation for this purpose or, as Málaga council has suggested, this could be carried out by the municipal water company Emasa and each municipality would pay an extra charge for the service.



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# A loyal guardian for a new life

## ALH. DE LA TORRE

The Pepos Andalucía association offers dogs for protection as well as legal and psychological advice for victims of domestic violence

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ

"I am a new woman, this has helped me a lot," explains Sara (not her real name), one of the clients of Pepos Andalucía, an association created in Alhaurín de la Torre to help victims of domestic violence through protective dogs, legal and psychological advice. At the moment the association has nine clients who live with their new tenant. "This dog is my life, with it I feel much calmer and safer," said Inés (not her



The clients of Pepos Andalucía, with their protection dogs. A. JIMÉNEZ

real name). "We need more institutional support, we stretch our budget as far as possible and have trained dogs waiting to go to new homes," explained Sebastián Rayo, trainer and founder of the association.

Some of the clients, who come from different areas of the pro-

vince, have been attending for two years, others have started recently, encouraged by other companions.

The women are keen and determined to help others. "We want the association to become better known in order to help other women. It is not easy to report [vio-

lence], because that's where the real struggle begins, but we have to do it," they said.

Besides face-to-face training sessions, all of the women are in contact with Rayo through Whatsapp, in a group called Spartans. "We support each other and we can tell each other how we feel,"

they explained.

Pepos Andalucía currently has four psychologists, a social worker and coach, a protection expert and four trainers. In order to place a protection dog with a client, the team carries out a preliminary study with the psychologist to see if a dog will fit into the family environment and the home. After this, the dog is provided with all the necessary equipment: special muzzle, harness... as well as a microchip and vaccinations.

There are training exercises during the week, in addition, the entire team meets on Saturday for more defensive training, where trainers use harsher words and gestures to generate a reaction in the dogs. "We try to recreate a risk situation for them, so they don't get stuck if the time comes," says one of the trainers. The association is currently looking for institutional support in order to welcome more clients and make itself known further afield. One of its next steps will be to create a website.





The expert dog handlers, pictured at Malaga Airport, helped to look for survivors in Beirut. **ÑITO SALAS**

## Sniffer dog rescuers return from volunteer mission to Lebanon

After the huge explosion in Beirut's port last week, members of the GERCCMA charity, including Malaga firefighters, flew out to help

**SUR**

**MALAGA.** A group of local firefighters and rescue workers from Andalucía returned to Malaga Airport on Monday after flying out to Beirut to help find survivors after the huge explosion there last week. The mem-

bers of the specialist sniffer-dog rescue charity, GERCCMA, and of the CPB Malaga provincial fire brigade had offered their services to the Lebanese authorities for the crucial hours after a disaster that are still available to reach anybody trapped in rubble.

One of the group, Jair Pereira, said on social media that the men had returned "having given everything".

After delays getting to work while paperwork was sorted out to allow them to enter Lebanon, the men from Malaga, Seville and Granada provinces helped the international rescue operation until last Sunday.

Pereira was grateful for the support the volunteers had received on the ground from local residents in Beirut but regretted that nobody had been found alive by the Spanish team. "Too much energy in the explosion," he explained.

He added that the Lebanese navy had moved them to a military base last Saturday for their safety as anti-government demonstrations grew in the country. After meeting with the Spanish embassy and other international groups, they decided to fly back the next day.

Some 200 people are reported to have died in the blasts caused by stored explosive material in Beirut port last week.

### Dog rescue charity

The GERCCMA charity was founded in 2010. It brings together volunteer specialist handlers of dogs experienced in the Arcon method of canine training in order to find people trapped in rubble, missing persons or hidden explosives.

The group's members have been involved in other humanitarian missions to disaster zones around the world. [www.facebook.com/GERCCMA](http://www.facebook.com/GERCCMA).



Rubén Segura and Óliver Gómez outside police HQ in Malaga. **ÑITO SALAS**

## Two National Police officers revive a month-old baby: "There was no time to hesitate"

The workmates were on the way to a bar where a customer was trying to leave without paying when a local called over to them for help

**FERNANDO TORRES / JUAN CANO**

**MALAGA.** They were driving along the road parallel to the seafront in the Pedregalejo district of Malaga close to 2am last Monday when they were called out to a bar where a customer was trying to leave without paying. But as they passed by an outside terrace a man beckoned them by chance for a totally different reason.

Rubén Segura and Óliver Gómez are specialist officers with the National Police who this week were covering for colleagues on the beat.

"The man who stopped us said that a woman had come out of a house with a baby in her arms asking for help," they told SUR outside their HQ in Malaga.

"We saw a baby a little over a month old completely still, and not responding," explained Rubén. "The mother said that the baby hadn't been breathing for a while, and it was turning purple."

Their combined total experience of over 30 years immediately came into play. "The situation was critical; four or five minutes can make all the difference with a baby," said Rubén. Óliver had taken over from the father and was giving the child a cardiac massage while Rubén checked an ambulance was on its way. The baby soon started to breathe again.

"The parents started to thank us, they wanted to hug us."

The officers went back to their regular patrol and a busy night.

### 112 REPORTS



The boat in port on Sunday. **SUR**

**MALAGA**

## Robbers use a canoe to try to steal from ship

**F. TORRES / J. CANO.** Seven people were surprised on Sunday afternoon trying to steal from a boat in Malaga's port that has been docked there on court orders since 2015. Port police found the robbers after they had apparently reached the vessel with the aid of a canoe and a surf board from nearby San Andrés beach in the Huelin district of the city. A chase back onto the beach followed with some members of the gang swimming back to the sand.

**MARBELLA**

## Police seize 596 fake items at Banús market

**C. MÁRQUEZ.** Local Police in Marbella have seized 596 items of fake branded goods from the famous Saturday market by Puerto Banús. The majority of the items were handbags showing the Louis Vuitton and Goyard labels, although other luxury names are among the find. The items were confiscated in routine operations. Six people from four stalls are under investigation. Officers reminded the public that it could be an offence to buy fake goods.

**MIJAS**

## Customer ploughs her car into garden centre

**A. JIMÉNEZ.** A customer at the La Vega garden centre, on the Coín road in Las Lagunas, had tried to leave without paying moments before mistakenly driving her car into the premises last week, according to on-lookers and shop workers.

Witnesses said the woman had visited the centre before and was known for offending staff and shoppers. When police arrived she continued in a distressed state but relaxed by the time an ambulance came.

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# Historic Vélez building included in holiday flats expansion plan

The family that owns the Casa de las Titas tourist apartments says that, apart from during summer, most guests are from the UK and Germany

EUGENIO CABEZAS

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. The owners of La Casa de las Titas apartments in Vélez-Málaga have applied for a licence to extend the existing building to incorporate two further properties.

La Casa de las Titas first opened in 2008 with eight holiday apartments and in 2010 the family-owned company acquired two more buildings, including the neighbouring nineteenth-century Casa Pastor, which is located on the corner of Plaza del Carmen in the town's historic centre. This listed property has features of artistic value such as wall paintings and wrought-iron fittings.

The family is now waiting for the licence to carry out the renovation and extension project whose plans were drawn up by the architect behind Vélez-Málaga's historical cen-



The old Casa Pastor is included in the accommodation project. E. CABEZAS

tre protection and reform plan (PEPRI), Salvador García.

With a planned investment of one million euros, the scheme will include the creation of 10 new apartments as well as a function room, incorporating the two neighbouring nineteenth-century buildings.

The family claimed that the current Casa de las Titas can't meet visitor demand at popular times

of the year or cater for large groups.

They added that while in summer most guests are Spanish, at all other times of year bookings mainly come from foreigners and in particular German and UK visitors.

The company also runs dramatised evening tours of Vélez-Málaga in which actors dress up as historical characters to explain the town's story.

## HERE AND THERE



La Carraca dunes are on Cenicero beach in El Morche. SUR

TORROX

## Environmentalists say beachgoers are damaging dunes

E. C. An area of sand dunes known as La Carraca in El Morche, Torrox, is under threat due to the large numbers of people crossing them to get to the beach, an environmentalist organisation reported last week.

GENA-Ecologistas en Acción has said that the construction of several apartment blocks nearby, as well as the creation of the Senda Litoral coastal walkway, has increased numbers of visi-

tors to the beach. Both the provincial government and the town hall have taken measures to prevent people from walking across the dunes, including cordoning off the area and putting up signs, but the organisation says extra police presence is needed and more notices informing of fines that could be issued.

Torrox town hall has called for more support from the general public to help conserve this delicate area.

La Carraca is one of the three remaining dune systems on the Malaga coastline, along with Artola in Marbella and Torre de Benagalbón.

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

## Fishing fleet to stay in port in support of calls to rescue colleague's body

E. CABEZAS. The fishing fleet based at La Caleta port in Vélez-Málaga has said it will not go out to sea today, Friday, as a sign of support for the family of missing fisherman Mohamed El Maimouni. Protests were held last weekend to call for the government to use a ROV Comanche rescue robot to retrieve the body of El Maimouni, 54, missing since the trawler he worked on sank on 8 July. His three fellow crew members survived.

El Maimouni's body is expected to be with the wrecked trawler at a depth of 1,500 metres around 14 miles from Alboran Island, some 50 miles from the coast.



Protesters at La Caleta port. E. C.

The head of the local fishermen's organisation, María del Carmen Navas, said that the Ministry of Public Works told them that it would be "technically impossible" to reach the wreckage due to the rugged seabed terrain. Navas is calling for a more detailed explanation.

"We just need to know whether our father's body is in the boat," said his eldest son.

AXARQUÍA

## Passion fruit set to be the next big subtropical crop

A. P. Passion fruit is the latest subtropical fruit to be taking off in the Axarquía, with a fourfold increase in the crop since 2018. According to the company BioAlgarrobo, which started testing the fruit's viability in Spain two years ago with a Colombian variety, there is a lot of demand in Europe. The company started with 4,000 square metres of passion fruit plants in 2018 and now has 15,000 square metres.

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

## Ambassador role for popular Vélez guitarist

J. R. Vélez-Málaga guitarist Rubén Portillo, who is popular among Spanish and foreign flamenco aficionados in the town, has been nominated by Almáchar town hall to act as an ambassador for flamenco in the Axarquía. The proposal will go to all the town halls across the area to vote on. Almáchar town hall said it was in recognition of Portillo's national and international work to promote the Axarquía.

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Boa is one of the biggest nightclubs on the Costa del Sol. **NITO SALAS**

## Boa club in Benalmádena closed down for failing to comply with Covid-19 rules

### BENALMÁDENA

**IVÁN GELIBTER.** The Boa nightclub (formerly Kiu) was closed down by Benalmádena town hall last week for at least two weeks for

failing to comply with Covid-19 health and safety regulations.

The events that led to the decision to close the popular club in Plaza Solymar (often known as 24-Hour Square) took place on 25

July. According to the official report, at 1.45am staff at the club were reminded of the Covid-19 regulations and Local Police officers even inspected the premises, although there were few customers inside.

At around 5.40am, however, the premises were inspected again. The official report states that officers found that the accessible space had been reduced as rooms had been closed off, causing all the customers to congregate in one part of the club, where there was a DJ act with dancers and smoke machines.

Investigators said that this could constitute a “public health offence”; the premises were evacuated and the case put in the hands of a Torremolinos court.

The court was told that Boa had reserved an area for a dance floor, or similar, which was being used by “numerous customers”. Furthermore, said the report, the management had not taken the “appropriate measures” to ensure safe interpersonal distance nor asked customers to wear masks.

### IN BRIEF

#### ARENAS

### Controversy over village drinking

**E. CABEZAS.** The mayor of the tiny Axarquía village of Arenas has been accused by the opposition of taking a “lax” attitude towards health and safety regulations to curb Covid-19.

The criticism came after late on Saturday night around 30 young people were found drinking in the municipal football ground which they had accessed without permission.

The mayor said that he had learned of the event the next morning as he had been around the village until 12.30am and seen nothing untoward. He said that this was an isolated incident and surveillance would be stepped up. Arenas does not have its own Local Police force.

#### MÁLAGA

### Police break up party on industrial estate

**E.P.** Local Police officers in Málaga stepped in on Tuesday night to break up a party where Covid-19 health and safety regulations were not being observed.

On a routine patrol at around 4am on the El Viso industrial estate, officers noticed a large group of people in the street, drinking alcohol and not observing social distancing or wearing masks.

When they saw the patrol car, the partygoers ran into a nearby premises and locked the door, refusing to let officers in.

Four more Local Police patrols were called in. They found around 60 people inside where a DJ was performing.

Organisers admitted that they had rented the industrial unit and charged for admission. Drugs were also found on the premises.

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# "My desire is to help the church grow as a place of prayer, hospitality and service"

## Father Louis Darrant St George's Church

Father Louis is seen as a symbol of renewal and hope for St George's Church and the English-speaking community of Malaga

TONY BRYANT

MALAGA. Like all churches throughout Spain, St George's Church in Malaga is beginning to emerge from lockdown and is welcoming back its congregation. The Anglican church has also recently welcomed its new priest, Father Louis Darrant. The 43-year-old priest was officially received by the Archdeacon of Gibraltar, who said that his appointment was a "symbol of renewal and hope", both for the church and for the English-speaking community of Malaga.

Born in Plaistow, East London, Father Louis studied at the University of Aberdeen, a period he remembers with fondness. Following his training at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield, West Yorkshire, he returned to London, where he was ordained at Southwark Cathedral. He served his curacy at St John the Divine, Kennington, before moving to Essex to serve as rector of St Mary's Church in Maldon.

The new chaplain is no stranger to Spain, as prior to arriving in Malaga, he served as priest in the town of Vinarós, on the Costa Azahar.

Now enjoying the delights that Malaga has to offer, the spirited cleric is learning Spanish and is immensely attracted by Spain's rich cultural and artistic heritage.

Father Louis took time out from his busy schedule to talk to SUR in English about how "delighted" he is to have been appointed to serve as chaplain of St George's Church.

**Can I call you Louis?**

Absolutely: I always say call me



Father Louis Darrant wants to deepen the friendship between the Anglican and the Catholic Church. **SUR**

what you feel most comfortable with. The title (father) is about remembering the role I have for the community that I serve.

**Did you have a strict religious upbringing?**

No, people find the faith in all sorts of ways. My parents are hugely important to me and have influenced the kind of priest I am without being church people themselves. My parents actually realised I would become a priest before I did.

**When did you first realise that you wanted to become a priest?**

I worked as a labourer for my father and I was the worst labourer ever. I just wanted to hang around and chat to people. It's always been that way, I have always chat-

ted to people about their problems. I would mix with people from all walks of life and I found them so interesting. It was this that taught me not to judge people, and I soon realised that I would make a much better priest than a labourer.

**What appeals to you about working with the English-speaking community of Malaga and the Costa del Sol?**

My parents lived on the Costa del Sol, so I feel very at home in this part of Spain. I look forward to exploring the life of the city and beyond. My desire is to help the church grow as a place of prayer, hospitality and service for all people in the city and the surrounding region.

**How are you settling in?**

I can't tell you how happy I am to come to Malaga: it's a dream job. I love St George's. I am really enjoying getting to know them, they have been some welcoming.

**What difference do you hope to make at St George's?**

I think there are tremendous possibilities for developing St George's so it can make a really positive contribution to the local community. Not just the English-speaking community, but further afield, because I feel we can be ambassadors.

**Will you be making any changes?**

The best changes are made as part of a team, but I think the reality is that there has been enough change already in getting people

back into the church after the lockdown. Any other changes would be done by working as a team. That is how you build trust, energy and goodwill.

**Has St George's adapted to the 'new normal'?**

Yes, absolutely. All of us are now getting used to wearing a mask in church and observing the proper protocols to keep everyone safe and healthy. One of the first things I did was to develop our online presence. A number of people have reconnected with the church because of our online services, which we have been broadcasting live on YouTube.

**Do you intend to have relationships with other local Spanish churches?**

A big part of my life in Spain is to be an ambassador of the Church of England, as well as, in an unofficial sense, for my country. I feel there is much we can do to deepen the friendship between the C of E and the Catholic Church.

**Do you think the church has adapted to the 21st century?**

Well, it's still here and that's one of its great qualities, because you can turn to the church at any point in your life and know that you will be welcomed and supported. The C of E, like all communities, is working out how to change with the times, and how to best support people in whatever situation they find themselves in.

**Do you support same sex marriage?**

Absolutely, without a shadow of a doubt. LGBT people are very welcome at St George's. As things stand, I am not permitted to marry a same sex couple, but there are many other ways in which I can support and help the couple understand God's blessing for their life together, which is the most important thing.

**You have been described as a 'vibrant new priest'; is this how you see yourself?**

(Laughing as he replies) Vibrant, well if that means alive, then yes, very alive. I think it is important how you set the tone, because it's about what kind of atmosphere you create as the priest. It is not about having all the answers or believing the right things. It's about doing the best where you are planted.

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# An incubator in the sand on a Marbella beach

**Loggerhead sea turtle. 64 eggs have been moved to Marbella after a female laid them on the sand in Los Boliches**

CHARO MÁRQUEZ



**A** pregnant mother arrived silently on Monday night last week on the Los Boliches beach in Fuengirola. In the darkness she made a hole in the sand and laid 73 eggs. She carefully covered them up and left.

The mother was a loggerhead sea turtle. The future of her offspring was left at the mercy of the tides and the hundreds of people who go every day to the busy beach. There is no other record of a loggerhead turtle laying eggs on the Costa del Sol for the last 80 years.

The news of this important, even extraordinary event, soon reached the Andalusian marine sustainable management centre (CEGMA), who arrived to take care of the eggs in collaboration with Fuengirola town hall, the Local Police and the emergency services.

Immediately the experts realised that the nest was too close to the shore, and that the eggs were in danger, and the decision was made to move them. After studying the ideal place for them they decided to set up a new incubator in the sand on a Marbella beach.

Moving the eggs was complex,

explained Eugenio Montes, environment advisor at the Junta de Andalucía and in charge of the operation. Of the 73 eggs, 12 were taken to Bioparc Fuengirola, given the park's experience in reproducing reptiles, to guarantee the survival of part of the family if in the end the project on the Marbella beach doesn't work.

"When they hatch we'll know whether it's been successful. If we'd left them on the beach in Fuengirola the chances of survival would be zero," said Montes, who expressed his gratitude for the understanding of Fuengirola town hall.

The eggs were removed one by one, and their position was

**The temperature of the sand will determine the sex of the young. Females develop at higher temperatures**



The area cordoned off on the beach where the turtle eggs are protected and monitored. JOSELE

photographed before they were placed into a container to be moved.

"These initial moments are critical for the development of the embryo," said the expert, who explained that each egg must be placed in the same position as it was when it was laid by the mother, to allow it to grow and so that the temperature and humidity levels remain the same.

Members of the Civil Protection organisation in Marbella prepared the new site for the nest which has been cordoned off and protected from attacks by birds, rodents and the biggest danger of all, human beings. The nest will be carefully monitored.

Loggerhead turtles can be found in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This year there has been an increase in eggs being laid on the east Levante coast

## 50-60

is the time it will take for the eggs to hatch. The young turtles born at Bioparc will be released in the sea. Their siblings on the beach in Marbella will depend more on the natural conditions, although they will be monitored.

## 73

eggs were laid in total on the beach in Los Boliches

## 12

have been taken to Bioparc Fuengirola

of Spain and the Balearic islands. The Junta experts had expected to find the odd nest on the Almería coastline, but not on the Costa del Sol.

One of the possible explanations is the rising temperature of the Mediterranean Sea which is being more tropical.

The second, according to Montes, is that the mother had been feeding off the Málaga coastline and decided that this would be a good place, due to the quality of the water.

Incubation time for this kind of turtle eggs is 50 to 60 days. A committee of experts will decide what to do once they have hatched.

The baby turtles born at Bioparc will be released into the sea. The experts will do all they can to ensure that the family will be reunited in the sea, but Mother Nature will have the final say.

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# Istán's 'holy' chestnut tree caught up in family dispute

## ISTÁN

An 800-year-old tree is on private property and some of its owners have turned down an agreement to protect it

CHARO MÁRQUEZ

Plans are under way for the ancient chestnut tree known as the Castaño Santo in Istán to receive protected status as a Natural Monument of Andalucía. These have come up against an obstacle, however, due to a disagree-

ment among the owners of the land on which it stands.

The 800-year-old tree is on a site that belongs to several members of the same family. They are divided into two sides: one that owns 66% and is in favour of the tree being declared a monument, and another, with 34%, that does not accept the offer the Junta de Andalucía has put on the table.

The Junta has said that it will clear an adjoining site to make a car park for visitors. The local council will take on the maintenance of the tree (it has recently been attacked by gall wasps), bury the roots that have surfaced and

put up a fence to protect it. All the owners have to do is allow the authorities the use of the land, which will still be their property.

The mayor of Istán, José Miguel Marín, pointed out that with this offer "everyone wins".

The tree is unique, not just because of its age. It measures more than 27 metres across the top and the circumference of the trunk is 21 metres.

Known as "holy", visitors have often scattered their loved ones' ashes at its base. Others have taken away handfuls of what they consider to be 'holy' earth. As a result, and due to the disagreements with the owners the chestnut is in need of care and protection. The authorities are hopeful that the two sides of the family will reach an agreement soon.



The present poor condition of the Castaño Santo. **SUR**



PAIH has been collecting signatures in the town. **SUR**

## Residents sign petition to call for new hospital to open

## ESTEPONA

**CHARO MÁRQUEZ.** Residents in Estepona have formed a group to put pressure on the authorities to open the new hospital in the town.

Known as the PAIH (Plataforma para la Apertura Íntegra del Hospital de Estepona) the group has started a campaign to collect signatures on a petition to call for the Junta de Andalucía to open the hospital as

a matter of "urgency".

The group has stressed "the great health needs of the area, now more than ever, due to Covid-19 and the new outbreaks".

The group has called for the support of the town halls in the areas that will be served by the new hospital, whose construction was completed last year.

PAIH plans to continue collecting signatures in Benahavís, Casares, Estepona and Manilva.



**JOSELE**

## Road reopens after ten months

Central Calle Málaga in Marbella re-opened to traffic this week after ten months of works to renew underground pipes to prevent flooding. The new, improved street is semi-pedestrianised.



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# Spain has worst figures in Europe again as crisis management comes under scrutiny

By midweek, the country had 95 active cases per 100,000 people, compared to 24 in France, 17 in the UK, 13 in Germany and 8 in Italy

## SUR

MADRID. A month and a half on from controlling the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Spain was back in "critical" condition again this week, with the worst contagion data in western Europe.

According to an independent recount by press agency AFP published on Tuesday, Spain had an average of 4,923 cases a day over the previous seven days, more than all of France, the UK, Germany and Italy combined.

In midweek, Spain had 95 active cases per 100,000 people, compared to 24 for France, 17 for the UK, 13 for Germany and 8 for Italy.

In its fresh daily data published on Thursday afternoon this week, the Health ministry announced 2,935 Covid-19 cases proven in the previous 24 hours, with the usual



In the spotlight again. The government's pandemic expert, Fernando Simón at a press conference this week. EP

mismatch in total, cumulative numbers. Of these, nearly 3,000 24-hour cases, 842 were in Madrid, 545 in the Basque Country and 418 in Aragon. This was a considerable increase on the daily figure of 1,690 on Wednesday.

There is community transmission which "is not perfectly under control" in some areas, the Health ministry's pandemic expert Fer-

nando Simón had recognised on Monday.

The national government is defending its work, saying that many more cases are detected as the number of tests go up. It adds that over half of the new cases are asymptomatic and that hospital admissions and death rates have dropped considerably.

A Madrid think tank claimed

this week that Spain had had the worst cooperation with its private healthcare sector in Europe during the pandemic.

It said that the decision early on in the pandemic to centralise control of all health resources on the Madrid-based Health ministry meant local private centres weren't able to respond efficiently and the sector has been harmed.

## Galicia region bans smoking on bar terraces and street when less than two metres from others

### SUR

SANTIAGO. The regional government in Galicia, northwestern Spain, has banned smoking on the street and bar terraces where it isn't possible to maintain a distance of two metres from others. The tough anti-Covid rule comes as the number of cases in the region has been increasing and medical experts are calling for other regions to follow suit with the ban.

The Galician move came into force on Thursday, after the government said a mask can only be removed in strictly limited conditions. The acting president of the region said that tobacco smoke was a contributing factor to the transmission of coronavirus, with a "high risk of contamination and infection" in close contact with other people.

Experts on respiratory conditions say an infected smoker exhales significantly more invisible droplets than a person talking normally.

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## Pablo Iglesias faces opposition calls to quit power over 'scandals'

Two high-profile investigations are under way into coalition partners Unidas Podemos, but this party claims it is all political conspiracy

### SUR

MADRID. Opposition parties are increasingly calling for the resignation of second Deputy Prime Minister, Pablo Iglesias, as his party, Unidas Podemos (UP), becomes mired in legal disputes.

Radical left-wing UP is the minority coalition partner with the PSOE Socialists and this week government spokesperson, María Jesús Montero, PSOE, defended the unity of the coalition, "This is a strong and cohesive government," she said.

Two legal fronts against UP have emerged in recent weeks. Most recently, courts started investigating allegedly opaque financial accounts and overpayments. Three party directors are being formally investigated

although the UP has officially complained and says the investigating judge is acting in bad faith.

According to UP, the case is a political persecution organised by right-wing Vox, "It's more than clear there's political interest behind it, a no-confidence vote that needs its salad dressing," said UP's Rafa Mayoral, adding that the aim behind it was "to get Podemos out of government".

In addition to possible illegal financing, another judge is looking into accusations surrounding the lost mobile phone of a colleague of UP's Iglesias. In a complex storyline with several twists, the phone was supposedly found, compromising content not returned, then returned, a memory card copy of its contents hidden and another copy destroyed before it could reach investigators.

The conservative PP party said this week that they thought Pablo Iglesias's "time was up" and other parties called for a statement to parliament.



Pablo Iglesias recently





King Felipe, Princess Leonor, Infanta Sofia and Queen Letizia in the Mallorcan village of Petra on Monday. AFP

## Royal family combine work with annual holiday on Balearics visit

**SUR**

PALMA. King Felipe and Queen Letizia began their traditional short holiday on Mallorca last weekend, accompanied by Prin-

cess Leonor and the Infanta Sofia. This year however, as well as days relaxing at Palacio Marivent, their official island residence, they are paying more visits than usual to different parts of the Balearics to

highlight charity work on the islands and the importance of tourism for the local economy. The King has also met with the Prime Minister and leading local politicians during their stay.

## PM says it is up to Juan Carlos I to reveal his own whereabouts

After initial speculation that the ex-monarch was in Portugal or Dominican Republic, evidence emerged he may have flown to or via Abu Dhabi

**SUR**

MADRID. The location of Juan Carlos, King Emeritus and father of Felipe VI, was still unknown on Thursday evening, over ten days since it was first announced he was leaving Spain.

PM Pedro Sánchez said that it was a private matter and it was down to the Royals or Juan Carlos I to say where he now was.

After news was released of Juan Carlos's departure, in order to distance the Crown from a financial scandal in his private life, speculation was rife last week as to where he may have gone.

Despite first suggestions that he had gone from Galicia into Portugal or flown to the Dominican Republic, a new theory emerged last Friday.

The ABC newspaper claimed that a private plane had taken the



Juan Carlos in UAE (maybe). NUIS

former monarch to Abu Dhabi via Malta and that Juan Carlos had stayed in a luxury hotel there owned by the rulers, with whom he is friendly. Online newspaper Nius published a photo of him supposedly leaving the plane in Abu Dhabi (UAE). Some said he was on his way to New Zealand.

The UP party has kept up its pressure on PSOE coalition partner Sánchez over the future of the monarchy. UP minister Alberto Garzón said, "The point isn't whether Juan Carlos is a good person, but how and, above all, why he was able to do what he did," referring to allegations of multimillion-euro commissions.

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# Extra payout planned for when jobless benefits have run out

550,000 people whose rights ended during the crisis are affected, but unions have warned not to forget those 1.6m whose benefits stopped before

EDURNE MARTÍNEZ

MADRID. People who have run out of entitlement to unemployment payments during the Covid-19 economic crisis will get a special payout of 430 euros a month for three months, the government has said. Ministers hope to reach agreement with unions and business leaders so that 550,000 people who are expected to find themselves in this situation shortly will be able to benefit.

The 430.27 euros, which could start being paid out from October onwards, will apply to those who haven't benefited from ERTE furloughing measures. The amount is based on 80 per cent of the IPREM level, the government's minimum wage indicator. The measure is expected to cost 710 million euros.

"During the pandemic, some of the people who were unemployed used up their entitlement to payouts or support and haven't been able to find work due to the emergency situation," said the Ministry of Work.



A woman waits by a job centre in Madrid. EFE

Claimants won't have to prove they are below a minimum income level, as can happen with other subsidies of this type.

The large UGT union has pointed out that those who were officially unemployed or had run out of rights to benefits during the crisis were at a disadvantage, compared to those that were on ERTes, as the latter haven't had to have paid a minimum amount

into the system to benefit and largely haven't had their payments taken from the pot of benefits they are entitled to.

A spokesperson also stressed that there are another estimated 1.6 million people who had used up all their accumulated benefit rights before the crisis due to the length of time out of work, or never had any entitlement, and that these shouldn't be forgotten either.

## Owner of La Cañada mall is named seventh richest in Spain

SUR

MARBELLA. Forbes magazine has named Tomás Olivo as the seventh richest person in Spain. Marbella-based Olivo is owner of the company called General de Galerías Comerciales (GGC), which runs La Cañada shopping centre in the resort as well as several more across the coun-

try. Forbes describes Olivo as, "the king of Spanish shopping centres".

Olivo, who has also recently increased his stake in Malaga-based Unicaja bank to around 5 per cent, has a personal wealth of 2.1 billion euros according to Forbes. His company, GGC, had profits of 169 million euros in 2019, according to accounts data

submitted to Spanish markets. In 2018 it had 31 per cent more profit, at 245 million euros.

Olivo's company increased its property portfolio value in 2019 by 285 million euros to 2.56 billion euros.

Olivo, as well as being seventh richest person in Spain, is the wealthiest in Malaga province.

The richest person in all Spain is Amancio Ortega, the founder of clothing giant Inditex, which includes Zara. His fortune is valued by Forbes at 55 billion euros, making him also the tenth richest person in the world.

THE EURO ZONE  
MARK NAYLER

## Bad for business



Podemos, the coalition government's junior partner, is going through a rough patch. This week, a Madrid judge ordered several of its senior members to appear in court for questioning, in response to allegations of financial wrongdoings made by one of the leftist party's former lawyers. Even if the accusations turn out to be unfounded, it's still extremely bad publicity for a party that has risen to prominence with a tough stance on corruption. Accusations of shady financial activities damage the reputation of any prominent individual or organisation, but they'll have an even greater impact on Podemos, which claims to be free of all the usual vices.

The allegations have been made by José Calvente, who was Podemos' data-protection lawyer until last December, when he was fired after one of the party's female employees made sexual harassment allegations against him. Those charges were dismissed by a judge last month, who ruled that there was no evidence of "any objectively intimidating, hostile or degrading situation" having taken place. One wonders whether Calvente's accusations of misconduct, centred around his "suspicions of under-the-table payments" (as he told El País last December), are nothing more than a retaliatory strike against a former employer.

But another explanation for Calvente's finger-pointing has been offered by Podemos' former compliance lawyer, Mónica Carmena. Carmena was also fired in December 2019, and said afterwards that her and Calvente's departures

were linked to Podemos leaders being aware of their investigations into the party's finances, and of the "serious harm" they could cause its reputation. This suggests that Calvente's and Carmena's sackings were preemptive strikes, made with the intention of getting them out the door before they could rummage around in the filing cabinets any more.

According to Podemos, Calvente's allegations are an attempt to "create a trial by media that lasts for months, and that then legally comes to nothing". It has a point: we shouldn't presume that there's anything in Calvente's accusations, and should regard the party as innocent until proven guilty. We should, of course, try to do the same with Juan Carlos - although his flight from Spain is hardly a convincing indication of innocence. Similarly, firing lawyers just as they're examining your party's finances might seem more than coincidental; indeed, it could be taken as an indication that they're onto something that you'd rather keep secret.

Since its formation in 2014, Podemos has deliberately distanced itself from Spain's venal Old Guard, as represented by the Popular Party and the Socialists. In order to credibly maintain that distance, it's vital that no one within the ranks is found guilty of underhand activities. In other words, Podemos' squeaky-clean public image depends upon Calvente's allegations being false - much as the Spanish monarchy's future hinges on whether there's any basis to the suspicions surrounding Juan Carlos.

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# Gibraltar hopes for ambitious EU relationship post-Brexit

The government insists it is preparing for all eventualities after the transition period, including no agreement between the UK and EU

DEBBIE BARTLETT



GIBRALTAR. Deputy chief minister Dr Joseph Garcia, who holds the Brexit portfolio for the Gibraltar government, has chaired a meeting of the Brexit Strategic Group to discuss further the situation should the UK and EU fail to reach an agreement by the end of the transition period on 31 December.

In a press release issued after the meeting, Dr Garcia stressed that this does not mean that the Gibraltar government is not expecting an agreement to be reached, but it has a duty to prepare for different possible outcomes. Indeed, he said, "the Government is confident that a good



Work continues on the post-Brexit situation in Gibraltar. **sur**

economic partnership can be agreed that will greatly benefit Gibraltar in the context of our involuntary departure from the EU and that such a partnership can produce an area of shared prosperity for the whole of the region around Gibraltar also".

One particularly interesting fact among the information from the meeting is that work is ongoing regarding the possibility of an ambitious future relationship between Gibraltar and the European Un-

ion, including Spain.

The deputy CM said the first formal round of discussions between Gibraltar, the UK and Spain took place in Malaga on 9 June in a positive and constructive atmosphere, and chief minister Fabian Picardo subsequently met the Spanish Foreign Minister Arancha Gonzalez Laya in Algeciras on 23 July during her Brexit-related visit to the Campo area.

Nothing about Brexit is certain, but in Gibraltar the work goes on.

## IN BRIEF

### CRIME

#### Spain hands over robbery suspect

D.B. A Moroccan man who was subject to a European Arrest Warrant was handed over to the Royal Gibraltar Police by their Spanish counterparts at the land border on Monday.

Hakim El Laghmich, aged 34, is suspected of conspiracy to commit robbery and is wanted in Gibraltar in connection with the Southeast tobacco warehouse robbery at New Harbours in June 2017, when a total of 1.5 million euros in cash was stolen. This follows previous arrests of three other individuals who were charged with conspir-



The suspect in Gibraltar. **sur**

acy to commit robbery. The Gibraltar Supreme Court issued a European Arrest Warrant in his name on 18 October 2018, and he was subsequently apprehended in Spain.

### TRAVEL

#### Gibraltar wins MedCruise award

D.B. Gibraltar has won an award for 'the Western Mediterranean MedCruise port showing the greatest commitment during the pandemic' from the MedCruise Association, which is the second largest cruise market in the world.

The Minister for the Port, Gil-

bert Licudi, said in response that Gibraltar has worked hard to ensure that cruise vessels have been serviced safely and efficiently during these challenging times.

Cruise ships without passengers have continued to make technical calls into Gibraltar and these and crew changes have been carried out in a way that has protected both the local population and crew members alike.

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LETTERS  
TO THE EDITOR

## Miserable urban planning

With regard to SUR in English July 31st to August 6th - Marbella Fútbol Club and urban planning.

I read the announcement with growing disgust. A new stadium with infrastructure may be nice to have - but there are much more urgent things to do. I always wonder why and how permissions are given for such opulent plans - there are enough other problems which were never covered. Think about the Hospital Costa del Sol which has not been continued for years.

Finished in "36 months" - but without any starting date. I've known this board for nearly six years. Nothing happens, half-ready buildings are decaying and there was months ago a promise to revive the concrete building for administrative purposes at the other side of the access road. Nothing happened. I know that these are different budgets and owners, but there should be at least one urban plan. Even the parking space at the roundabout was not finished. But they are planning a new stadium! Is it pure craziness?

Unfortunately, this is not all. Marbella, the pearl of An-

dalusian high-end tourism neither has a train station nor any hope to ever be connected to the Cercanías system.

The bus system is a disaster - the local buses might be ok but longer distances are a problem because of punctuality and reliability. It was - painfully enough - forgotten to reserve land for any rails. However, look at Bangkok - Thailand is not among the richest countries worldwide. They developed their city train system at the "second floor" - much more economic than digging tunnels. But at present, the whole train project to Malaga is dead and the town of Estepona must do it with a local bus transport system to the West of five buses a day. Tourists should come - but they all need a (rented) car because the public transport is close to zero. Where is the "Green" or the "Garden" mentality? Under these conditions, the next problem is parking - Estepona had some open places which one after the other went lost for doubtful construction plans. Who is giving the permission for such miserable urban planning?

Questions and no answers or answers without any substance.

CHRISTIAN HORIG

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## A Rum deal

Meanwhile, over in the Hebrides, the Isle Of Rum (what a great name that is) is offering affordable accommodation and a full time job to suitable applicants in a bid to bring a bit of zing back to its tiny shores.

Currently, there are only thirty inhabitants living there and just three little Rumanians attend the school, which must make sports day a bit of a challenge for the headteacher/secretary/caretaker/dinner and lollipop lady (I imagine they're all the same person and she's called Mrs McTavish).

There's a shop on the island but no pub, apparently. They might want to take a look at that particular shortcoming in their business plan; I'm sure the winters can seem pretty long and bleak in that part of the world without a pint glass to cling to.

I always love this kind of initiative. Instead of sitting around in their enormous jumpers and wellies, stroking their greying beards, lamenting their island's potential decline, the good people of Rum have taken it upon themselves to look for a solution. They're building some eco-friendly houses for potential newcomers which will be ready in a couple of months if all goes to plan. Jobs in a fish factory, tourism and education are on offer it seems, though with only three children in school that last option looks a bit limited. Maybe they need three personal tutors, I'm not sure.

If I had a young family, I'd be really tempted to give it a go. As a matter of fact, I quite like the rain which must surely be a prerequisite for any applicant. As it is, I'm not sure I could offer much to the people of the island

unless they wanted me to play Wild Mountain Thyme on Friday nights in the pub that doesn't exist. Yet.

There must be other Hebridean islands in a similar predicament and maybe they'll follow suit if Rum starts to turn things around and good luck to them.

However, there's always something especially inspiring about the ones who are the real pioneers and take the first bold steps, forging ahead into the unknown, chests out and fingers crossed. It's far easier to follow in footsteps than create them.

So, if you fancy a change and a bit of high octane social distancing, why not look into it further? I can just see it now, on the SUR in English letters page, five years from now:

Sir,  
It's brilliant here. Still no pub though.

## IDÍGORAS



**SUR** in English

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THE BOTTOM LINE  
IGNACIO LILLO

## Neighbourhood ecologists

From the terrace where I'm writing I can hear them go past, and the sound mixes with that of the cicadas, which came out in force when the sun appeared after the storm, and are enjoying their own particular version of Tinder.

Every time the swifts fly past I smile, as I know that they'll have caught a mosquito, and there's nothing much worse in the summer than the mosquitoes, especially those tiger ones that have decided to reproduce in our plant pots and gardens.

At dawn and at dusk around a dozen of them get together, and I imagine they are fighter planes from the Second World War chasing the enemy, concentrating, meticulously alert to avoid hitting the ledge and landing on their own legitimate nests with millimetric precision. After such a feast on insects it amazes me how they manage not to land on the nest of a grumpy nextdoor neighbour.

In was precisely a large colony of swifts like these that had decided to build their

nests on a ruined building in Malaga's Plaza de Olletas. It was precisely due to those circumstances that those wise little birds sensed that there they would not be disturbed and could happily rear their young.

Of course they didn't know that precisely this summer, after so many years with the building left neglected, its owners would get a demolition licence; and the building was due to be pulled down this week.

That was until a group of local residents, aware of the importance of the species for the balance of the ecosystem, leapt into action.

Their warning was heard by members of the association SOS Vencejos (SOS Swifts), who in turn told officers at the Junta de Andalucía's endangered species recovery centre, CREA, what was

about to happen.

Finally, after being informed of the situation, the developers decided to postpone the demolition for as long as it takes for the young swifts to be able to fly to Africa, where they'll spend the winter.

To help protect nature we don't really have to look very far; we only have to open our eyes to what's around us: the chameleon that calmly strolls across the road; the injured bird that can't fly; or as in this case, the nest about to disappear.

Next summer, when they come back, the colony of swifts of the Fuente Olletas neighbourhood will have to find somewhere else to nest, but at least their young that hatched this year have been saved.

And all thanks to one group of concerned local residents, our neighbourhood ecologists.



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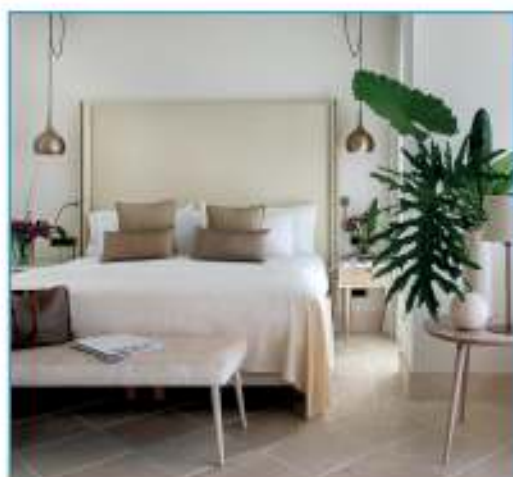


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## IN THE FRAME

# The Swede who found paradise in Carratraca

**Pelle Lundborg.** A businessman turned his back on a successful career in the videogames industry for a new life in the Andalusian countryside

JAVIER ALMELLONES

One fine day Pelle Lundborg was persuaded by his friend Pedro Fernández to go hiking in the rugged Sierra de Alcaparain. From high up, looking down at the view, he noticed a large farm with numerous olive trees, which appeared to have been abandoned.

That is the beginning of the tale of this Swedish man who exchanged the stress of life in a multinational videogames company for the peace of the countryside in Malaga province. Pelle decided to buy that farm at the foot of the mountains, opposite Carratraca, and make a new start.

Behind him lay a very stressful time, filled with the tension and anxiety of major professional success. Years before, he had founded the Nordic Games company which, with two others, created We Sing, the famous karaoke game which has entertained millions of users all over the world.

That company then merged with another to create the Embracer Group, of which Pelle is just a shareholder today. However, thanks to its revenues he does enjoy a certain economic comfort. Nowadays he lives in La Cala de Mijas, but is continually supervising his land in Carratraca.

After two decades working in the competitive videogames sector, this Swede decided to make a new start in life. From a company listed on the stock market with 4,000 employees all over the globe, El Sueco, as he is known in Carratraca, moved body and soul into the rural world.

As well as the stress, Pelle wanted to turn his back on an illness which had left him practically out of the game for two years. Although he just says he

“wasn’t very well”, it wasn’t easy to live with a condition that affected him physically and psychologically. “There was a time when I was just lying on the sofa for hours and hours watching Netflix series,” he says.

The lure of the Andalusian countryside helped him to overcome that apathy. It only took an abandoned olive grove for him to acquire ‘another life’ in Carratraca.

There, Pelle has created Finca Solmark, which has 16 hectares of land, and developed a vocation for growing those battered olive trees he had seen with his friend Pedro from the top of the Sierra de Alcaparain. Those trees have begun to produce high quality extra virgin olive oil again, and now there are different types of avocado as well. He plans to plant the Reed variety soon, which will mean he can have avocados all year round.

The farm also includes a house for holiday lets, which has already been rented by quite a few Swedish guests; Pelle may have changed his life, but he still has many contacts in his native country and elsewhere in the world.

However, Finca Solmark, as the accommodation is also

## A ‘kilometre zero’ philosophy

There are only five chairs from Ikea in the holiday house at Finca Solmark. The rest of the furniture has been made by carpenters from Carratraca, just like everything else Pelle ‘El Sueco’ has done to his property in the past few years.



Pelle Lundborg now produces olive oil on his farm in Carratraca. RICARDO PASTOR

called, welcomes all nationalities. Although the Spanish and Swedish flags fly there, it is open to anyone who wants to immerse themselves in authentic rural living.

The name Solmark was chosen for a reason. It means ‘land of sun’.

“That’s what the area where I grew up in Sweden is called, close to Linköping,” he explains.

He has many happy childhood memories. His mother, who was passionate about mycology, passed her love of nature on to him. From his father, a well-known translator, he inherited his facility for languages. And from both, a love of learning.

And through this continual quest for knowledge, Pelle Lundborg now knows what it

“There was a time when I all I did was spend hours and hours lying on the sofa and watching Netflix”

is like to produce his own ecological extra virgin olive oil - of the marteña variety - whose name pays tribute to the illustrious past of the land on which his trees grow. He has called it Mainake (after the ancient Greek settlement thought to have been located in the Malaga area).

This ‘liquid gold’ from Finca Solmark is primarily made for sale in Sweden, where olive oil is still an exotic, little-known product.

“A Swedish person barely consumes a litre a year; we still have a great deal to teach them,” says Pelle, showing the Andalusian side of his character.

People in Sweden don’t much like the strong, bitter taste which is a positive attribute in oil made from olives that are harvested early. For that reason this Swedish businessman, although he sends his olives to be milled in November, doesn’t bottle the oil until April at least.

What’s more, many people who live in his immediate area are now starting to copy his example. Pelle Lundborg’s enthusiasm for his new life seems to have lit a spark among his neighbours in Carratraca, where the green shoots of an unexpected agricultural and rural renaissance are now beginning to emerge.

Everything is in line with his particular ‘kilometre zero’ philosophy. This Scandinavian businessman is committed to using materials and people from Carratraca or the immediate area.

“Why would you want to look elsewhere if people do things well here and it helps the local economy?” he asks, but it is a rhetorical question.

Pelle has even become a

bit of a guide to good restaurants in the area. His clients and many of his contacts ask him where they can eat. Depending on how many people there are and their preferences, he recommends Venta El Cruce (Ardales), El Trillo, El Martillo and the legendary Fonda Pepa, among many other restaurants that he knows well and enjoys visiting himself.





Miguel Torres and Paula Echeverría.



Actress Loles León and singer Miguel Poveda.

## Celebrities turn out for Starlite gala

Marbella's Starlite festival has been different this year; Covid stole the majority of the international artists from the bill and the event was shortened. Numerous Spanish celebrities still turned out last weekend for the festival's glitzy annual fundraising gala.

# Banderas, sixty years of hard work and glory

**Birthday.** The Malaga actor celebrates his six decades of life in quarantine, after announcing that he has tested positive for coronavirus

IKER CORTÉS  
REGINA SOTORRÍO

Actor Antonio Banderas was 60 years old on Monday, but he certainly didn't get to celebrate the round number in the way he would have expected up to a few months ago.

Instead he marked the day by announcing that he has tested positive for Covid-19 and that he will be quarantining until he recovers.

"I'd like to add that I'm feeling relatively well, just a bit more tired than usual, and confident that I'll recover as soon as possible," he said in a statement. He added that he would use his time in self-isolation to "read, write, rest and continue to make plans".

Banderas, who says he has reached the age of 60 "full of hope and excitement" for the future, came to a turning point in his life in January 2017 when he suffered a heart attack.

"I saw death was close, there was a point when it felt like I was going. Is it just going to end like this? How stupid, I thought," he said to SUR last year.

That was a wake-up call, a warning that he was living life too fast, but also a revelation. The actor, who hadn't stopped in 35 years of career, packed up and came home to his Malaga, to start a new quieter period of his life.

Just two years after that heart attack, however, Banderas played one of the best parts of his life; the alter ego of filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar in *Pain and Glory* (2019). The film brought him not just his first Spanish film academy (Goya) award for Best Actor - until then he only had an honorary Goya - but also an Oscar nomination this year.

Banderas's return to Malaga however came with a new project close to his heart, the creation of his own theatre in the city he grew up in.

The Soho CaixaBank project opened last autumn with the musical *A Chorus Line*, which in September will embark on the tour of other Spanish cities that was held up by the coronavirus lockdown.



Banderas, with his Goya. REUTERS

Meanwhile Banderas celebrates his 60th birthday with the satisfaction of having fulfilled a dream but with the responsibility of keeping it going.

The pandemic interrupted the theatre's spring programme and as yet no date has been given for new performances at the theatre. It has however one date on its agenda for next year - the scaled-down 2021 Goya awards ceremony to be presented by Banderas and the head of his SohoTV production company, María Casado.

First though the actor could find himself with yet another trophy. *A Chorus Line* is a candidate for the Best Musical award in Spain's Max theatre prizes, due to be given out at a gala in Malaga on 7 September.

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The Tablao Los Amayas has room for 100 clients.



The stage at Taberna Flamenca Pepe López, never empty for so long.



The Tablao Ana María en Marbella plans to perform in the street.

# Pandemic leaves flamenco forlorn

**The temples of flamenco in Malaga are sending out a cry for help.**

**Their strong reliance on foreign visitors, of whom there are very few now, is putting these emblematic 'tablaos' at risk**

REGINA SOTORRÍO



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Until five months ago there would be about 60 people every night of the week. A couple of Fridays back, however, six artists danced, sang and played the guitar for just two clients. "We can't go on like this. I'll carry on for a couple of weeks but if things don't improve we will have to close again," says José López Amaya, who runs Tablao de Los Amayas in Malaga city (Calle Vélez-Málaga, 6). "It's like a cascade, we're falling one after the other," admits Roque López, of the historical Taberna Flamenca Pepe López en Torremolinos (Plaza de la Gamba Alegre). In Malaga these flamenco bars were already finding things difficult, but now the pandemic could cause their definitive demise.

These 'tablaos' are crying out for help in a desperate situation, with no income and numerous expenses, despite flamenco being

classified as an Intangible Heritage of Humanity by Unesco.

"I don't know how they could let this be lost," says José López. If we were in the USA they would do everything they could to look after us," insists Roque López.

These businesses are raising their voices separately and now together for the first time in the new Asociación Nacional de Tablaos Flamencos de España (ANT-FES), a collective which is fighting for the survival of a sector which is suffering all over the country.

The problem is their strong de-

**They used to open every day, all year round and with dozens of spectators. Now, "there are no customers, they've wiped them off the map"**

pendence on foreign tourists. With no cruise ships in port, hotels half full at best and the recent quarantine imposed by the UK on people arriving from Spain, there is nobody to occupy their typical rush-seated chairs.

"There are no clients. They have wiped them off the map," says López Amaya, who is only opening on Fridays and Saturdays at present. The Taberna Pepe López (formerly Jaleo) still doesn't know whether it will open at all this summer. "If there is no market, what's the point?" asks Roque López. His iconic stage has never been so empty since its inauguration in 1965.

"I don't know what I'm going to do. All I can think about is everything I have to pay," says Isabel 'La Chata', visibly nervous. She runs the Tablao Ana María Los Chatos in Marbella. She says that there, the problem isn't a lack of tourists.





'La Yedra'. She and her family can keep going for the moment, because they are the performers as well as the owners. "We're really only opening for sentimental reasons, but if it carries on like this we will have to close," she says.

#### Reinvent yourself

"Reinvent yourself" and attract local people, that is the strategy being tried at Tablao de Los Amayas, with discounts of almost 50 per cent for residents (29 euros with dinner, a drink and the show). Not even that is working. "So far, only the parents of one of the waiters have come." Very few local people have been able to get over the idea that "these things are just for foreigners".

"And that's not the case. When people do come, they love it," says José López Amaya. Some local people do book with Tablao de Ana María in Marbella, "but they all want us to give them a special price," she says.

The situation is so serious that for the first time in their history, the few tablaos that remain have joined forces in a national association run by Cristina Hoyos, Blanca del Rey and Luis Adame. They are calling for "urgent measures" for a sector which employs 90 per cent of the flamenco artists and normally attracts nearly six million people a year. Famous establishments such as Casa Patas and Café de Chinitas in Madrid have already closed down, along with four oth-

ers, and the bleeding continues throughout the country, with barely 40 tablaos still in operation.

In Andalucía, the Junta has set up a line of assistance of between 8,000 and 15,000 euros for these businesses, but few have applied. In the conditions there is no mention of tablaos, only of 'theatre halls, music, dance and flamenco', so many are unaware. "Few people realised, it's too confusing," says Roque López. Also, to be eligible a tablao has to have room for more than 75 people and some are too small, such as Ana María which only has space for 60.

"We need those with an ERTE to continue to March 2021, not to have to pay the social security for the self-employed and grants to help us pay our bills," says José López Amaya. For the owner of Taberna Pepe López there is another fundamental issue: unfair competition.

"Flamenco has been prostituted and people are putting on so-called flamenco shows all over the place with no controls," he says. In the summer there are often cheap shows in village squares and hotels employ students to entertain their guests. "So clients go away thinking flamenco is two girls dancing to recorded music. You have to see flamenco in a tablao, with guitarists and real singers," he insists. "We will carry on somehow, one way or another, but at least let them leave us in peace".

## "Where am I going to go? I want to be here, where I have always been"

The flamenco 'tablaos' provide employment for a large number of artists, but now they have nowhere left to perform

#### REGINA SOTORRÍO

MALAGA. They call him Javi de El Jaleo, "because I have been here for more years than the door has," jokes this guitarist. He is 51 and has worked at Taberna Flamenca Pepe López, formerly called Jaleo, for 36. Until early March, that is. "Now I have spent four months with no income at all," he says, this time sounding serious.

Javier González lived on what he earned from the tablao. In a sector in which stability is noticeable for its absence, he was able to make a living with no need to look for extra work in clubs or at festivals.

"I have travelled all over the world and played for a great many people. But it's comfortable working in a tablao, where you have everything you need. And where am I going to go? I want to be here, where I have always been," he says.

At the moment, there are few

other options, as Salva Cortés is also aware. He combines his work at Pepe López with performances with the Antonio de Verónica and Saray Cortés company. Apart from the provincial government's 'Flamenco para enmarcar' programme at the Centro María Victoria Atencia, there are very few places to perform. Most summer festivals have also been cancelled so there are very few events on the calendar. "And an artist can't eat on two or three shows a month," he says.

That's why dancer Moisés Navarro feels "privileged". He works two days a week as artistic director at the Tablao de los Amayas, with his sisters Fátima and Amara. He used to be there every day, but "the way things are at present", he feels fortunate. He was excited about reopening after lockdown, but feels scared and uncertain about what is to come.

"We are not expecting things to get much better until next year," he says, and warns that things could get worse with the proliferation of online festivals. "We're not doing this right. It isn't in our interests. Shows need to be performed live," he insists.

"There are some, but they don't want to be indoors, they only want to sit outside somewhere. If the virus doesn't kill us, the heat will... or starvation," she says. Her only hope of salvation is the permit given to her by Marbella council to hold performances on certain days this month in the square where her 'tablao' is located (Plaza Santo Cristo). She will only open the cosy salon inside if people reserve in advance, so she can guarantee that the artists will be paid. Businesses of this type are not cheap to run: her rent alone is 1,960 euros a month.

At Kelipé Centro de Arte Flamenco, which combines tuition with shows, they are "living off our savings". From the end of June the flamenco theatre has been open from Thursdays to Sundays in Calle Muro de Puerta Nueva in Malaga city. "But hardly anyone comes, 12 people at the most," says Susana







## WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

14 AUGUST 1598

## Seville's Casa de la Lonja opens for business

The building, which has been known as the General Archive of the Indies since the 18th century, was originally a centre for merchants to trade their goods

Many people will have heard of the Archive of the Indies in Seville city, a very famous building, but perhaps not so many are aware that its history dates back to 1598, during the reign of King Felipe II, when it was built as a market where merchants could exchange their goods. It was known then as the Casa de la Lonja de Mercaderes, and was inaugurated on 14 August.



Inside the archives. EFE

After Columbus discovered the Americas in 1492, Seville was awarded the monopoly on trade and the number of merchants operating in the city increased considerably as a result. As the existing facilities became too small, the traders began using the steps of the cathedral to transact their business because of its proximity to the port, but this had caused conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities and it was decided that they needed premises of their own.

The building, which has been a Unesco World Heritage Site since 1987, was designed by architect Juan de Herrera and is unusually Italianate in style. The construction started in 1584, and, although it was ready for occupation in



The Archive of the Indies was built as a market. SUR

1598, work continued well into the 17th century before the structure was fully complete.

The Casa de la Lonja was two storeys high, built around a large central courtyard of stone with wide proportions, with arches fastened to pillars with half columns.

Within 100 years, Seville port had begun to silt up, trade decreased and the building was barely used and falling into disrepair. In 1785, King Carlos III decided that it should be repaired and used to store all the documentation about the administration of the Span-

LANGUAGE  
FOOTNOTE

Construcción	Construction
Lonja	Market
Comercio	Commerce
Territorio	Territory
Comerciante	Trader
Mercader	Merchant
Descubrimiento	Discovery
Catedral	Cathedral
Cuadrado	Square
Contenido	Content
Arquitecto	Architect
Impuesto	Tax
Ladrillo	Brick
Piedra	Stone
Cúpula	Dome
Edificio	Building
Arco	Arch
Puerto	Port
Escalones	Steps

ish colonies which, until then, had been held in Simancas, Cadiz, and elsewhere in Seville, and so it became the General Archive of the Indies.

Today it still contains 43,000 files with about 80 million pages and 8,000 maps and drawings. It is open to the public and is free of charge to visit.

**Bilingual crossword inside back page**

## Gema Hassen Bey Paralympic medallist and coach

## "It's hard to learn to be calm: if the body doesn't move, the mind flies around"

She already knows that sport is a battle. She learned that early in life, and continues to overcome challenges. The latest: to go up Kilimanjaro in her wheelchair

ANA PÉREZ-BRYAN

A car accident when she was four forced her to learn everything all over again, in a wheelchair, but if anyone thought that was going to inhibit her, they were wrong: on the contrary, Gema Hassen Bey has never stopped.

Not even the year she spent gazing up at the hospital ceiling after a spinal operation deterred her. There, horizontal, she made her plans and now she is reaping the rewards: journalist, actress, composer, paralympic athlete in fencing (five Olympics, three medals) and coach.

Her latest challenge is to climb Kilimanjaro in her adapted chair, so the peak becomes more of a collective legacy than a personal

feat. Gema remains that girl with special needs: to live and to improve. Hence the revolution.

– **Are you a warrior with a sword?**

– Of course. With a sword and a foil. I believe life gives you big challenges, and in my case, after the car accident, it wasn't easy. Although it also gave me the weapons to fight for my goals. I fence and I don't believe that is coincidental. It is practically a way of life which enables me to achieve my dreams.

– **What is your armour made of?**

– It's a combination of fragility and strength, because I believe both of those are necessary. That's how I understand life. My friends say I am a 'killer', but it's not like that. I'm aware of my fragility and that's what makes me strong.

– **You face a Kilimanjaro every day. Explain that to me.**

– Many people do, and especially in a wheelchair. It seems incredible that man can go to the moon and we have problems getting out to buy bread.

– **Now the real thing is coming. How do you feel about it?**

– Well, once again I am practising resilience because it is a very dif-



I. AIZPURU

ficult challenge. It's not just a case of going up a mountain, but also generating prototypes as an athlete and social entrepreneur. The latter is very complicated because

of a paternalism I have to fight against: the people to whom I present the project think that, because I'm in a wheelchair, they are the ones who have to help me. But what I say is that it is a creation of alliances in which we all help each other equally. I want to be part of the process, and make this a legacy for those who come later.

– **And while you were training you were diagnosed with breast cancer...**

– Yes. When the doctor told me, I said "OK, OK, but do the operation so I can go up Kilimanjaro." The answer was that for a year I would only have enough strength to think about myself, but within two and a half months I had recovered and they gave me the go-ahead soon after. I treated my convalescence as another peak to climb. And do you know what? I realised that I had already done everything that had passed through my head before.

– **Talking about mountains, how many times have you opted for the mountain going to Mohammed and not the other way round?**

– Many times. In fact, with the lockdown we have all been a bit disabled in a way. And I have experienced it as well with my operations: it was hard work to learn to stay calm, to know that if the body can't move the mind flies around.

– **What does a medal taste like?**

– I remember the first one, because it was a demonstration that the impossible is possible and that

success is being in the competition. It also taught me that athletes have to focus on the path, not the result.

– **And failure?**

– It is just as intense. Sometimes I have been the best in the world and at other times the worst, and you learn from both things. In fact, if you were to ask me to choose one object from my five Olympics...

– **Which would it be?**

– My sword, without a doubt. The medals have just been a moment on the road, but my sword has always been with me.

– **Neither olympics nor mountains, but not closets either. Was it hard to open that last door?**

– I always say I fight so hard because everything is difficult for me: woman, in a wheelchair, with a strange surname (it is of Turkish origin), my sexual orientation... coming out of the closet caused me problems in the last year of fencing. Nobody tells you that you are rejected because of your sexuality, but suddenly I went from being a princess who had to be looked after to an amazon that became a threat. That's why when they asked me to do something against homophobia in sport I decided to take the step and say I was bisexual.

– **You can climb a mountain but not get onto a float in a Pride parade. That's a bit shocking.**

– Just a bit! I'm not going to stop until I see an adapted float. Meanwhile, I'll look for a nice-looking girl or boy to help me get on.



DENISE BUSH



## GARDENING

# Smilax aspera

Mediterranean smilax is an evergreen climbing plant that can be found across Southern Europe as well as in Asia, China, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Myanmar. Other common names include rough bindweed, prickly ivy and sarsaparille.

In its native habitat, it can be found along river banks and in gullies, often in coastal locations.

Although an unlikely garden plant due to its backwards-facing spines and long tendrils with which it wraps itself around other plants and structures for support, it can be used to create an impenetrable barrier and

has sweetly scented yellow-green flowers hidden among the heart-shaped, leathery leaves. The racemes of blooms form in the leaf axils and after flowering has finished, contrasting bright-red berries form, slowly turning black as they mature in the autumn.

Smilax is dioecious; plants are either male or female, so although both flower, both are needed to produce the attractive berries.

An ideal location for this prickly climber would be in full sun or partial shade and in well-drained soil. Although drought-resistant when established, Smilax will be healthier if watered regularly during the hottest months. It can tolerate short cold periods, down to about -10°C.

The genus name Smilax comes from the Greek word meaning 'poison' but this plant is not poisonous; according to Dioscorides, it was considered an antidote to poison. The young shoots are eaten raw or cooked in some Asian countries and the roots used to make soft drinks and a tonic or stimulant. The ripe fruits are squeezed onto the skin to cure skin disorders. Aspera comes from the Latin to mean 'rough', probably referring to the spines.

Propagation by seed can be a very slow process as germination can take years. Dividing or taking cuttings of semi-ripe wood is a better method of creating more plants.



Smilax aspera with berries and flowers (insert). WIKIPEDIA / WIKIMEDIA

## READERS' PHOTOS



ROSALIND CAPLAN

## Back from the dead

Reader Rosalind Caplan sent in this photo of a stunning orange Hibiscus and says, "In December I cut this Hibiscus back so hard I thought it was dead! It's never had so many flowers as this year. The little Surfinia blends nicely I think."



RICHARD ASFOUR

## A good year for Plumeria

This photo of a Plumeria was sent in by Richard Asfour who says, "This Frangipani is in a pot by my patio. For the last few years it has only had two flower spikes - this year produced nine. I wonder, was it the wet spring we had this year or the tomato feed I gave it?"

## PHOTOS

### Calling all gardeners

We know many of our readers have lovely gardens, or enjoy growing plants on their terraces or balconies and some like to take photos of plants they see when out and about. Why not share them with others? Email

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

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# A view on trendy tomatoes

Identifying a genuine bull's ball is not as simple as it seems

**TALKING POINT**  
**ALEKK M. SAANDERS**



**T**here's a lot of talk at this time of year about bull's balls. In case you're wondering, this name was given to a local variety of outdoor grown tomatoes: the 'huevo de toro' in Spanish.

In recent years, tomato euphoria has flooded the Costa del Sol as the huevo de toro became an upward trend. Unsurprisingly, authorities rush to pose for the cameras holding bull's balls and famous chefs say they cut them in a special way to keep their near-perfect taste and texture.

Celebrities are keen to get hold of these tomatoes at any price. For example, last year, the renowned flamenco dancer Sara Baras bought bull's balls for 3,700 euros at the charity tomato auction in Coin.

As for ordinary locals, they seize every chance they can get to boast about this 'home grown' product by saying: "Este tomate no sabe a tomate" (This tomato does not taste like tomato), implying that only a bull's ball has the perfect flavour.

However, not everyone here knows how a real bull's ball tomato tastes and looks, and many can't distinguish this prominent variety from others that are also grown in the Guadalhorce valley.

Most of the Malaga-grown tomatoes are sold in fruit shops on the Costa del Sol. From my personal experience, when I ask for just huevo de toro, I usually receive something big, pinkish and fleshy, but each time apparently different. No, it doesn't mean that we are being cheated, most likely that the sellers are not aware either.



A genuine bull's ball. **A. S.**

And so some shops are inadvertently introducing us to the extended Malaga tomato 'family', which includes a Yellow King (Rey Amarillo) and a Crimean Black (Negro de Crimea), as well as around another forty sub-varieties.

Nevertheless, last week, I decided to find out the truth and clarify the difference between a bull's ball and... just bull.

In order to satisfy my curiosity, the Coin farmer who sells

**A greengrocer found just five genuine bull's balls in a box full of what seemed to be 'all the same' tomatoes**

fruit and vegetables in Arroyo de la Miel found just five genuine bull's balls in a box full of what seemed to be 'all the same' tomatoes. He even explained that the huevo de toro tomatoes can be recognised for their resemblance to the intimate parts of a bull. My attempts to choose similar tomatoes in other boxes were not successful because in the end, instead of bull's balls, I was picking up bull's hearts. As I was told, "corazón de toro" (oxheart) is almost the same but different, so another (sub)variety.

So, I understood, to be more professional in your knowledge of Malaga tomatoes, you should either go to a cattle shed to get an idea of the shape of a bull's testicles, or take the opportunity this Saturday and Sunday (15-16 August) to go to the Mercado Sabor a Málaga Tomato Huevo de Toro 2020.

The bull's ball tomato market will be held in the tomato capital of the province, Coin. For the last few years the town has invited locals and foreigners to its annual traditional fruit and vegetable auction and contest for the best huevo de toro tomato. For the first time, the tomato event will take place in Mercado Agroalimentario del Guadalhorce on La Trocha industrial estate in order to maintain the strictest safety and hygiene standards.

The money raised from the auction, to be held on Saturday at 1.30pm, will be donated to the Red Cross. The event, which includes cooking demonstrations by top chefs, can also be watched live via YouTube and Zoom.



## TAPAS choir supports local charity

TAPAS (The Andalucía Performing Arts Society) chairman Betty Ross joined choir members recently to hand a cheque for 750 euros to Un Sí Por La Vida, a cancer charity based in Alhaurín el Grande.

**PET CARE**  
**ERNY HARRISON**

## Your pet and your swimming pool



**L**ife in Spain has so much to offer that it is difficult to make a list of your favourite things. Barbecue evenings, relaxing in the sunshine and of course the swimming pool.

When we first came to Spain we didn't put a swimming pool high on our list of priorities, but we soon changed our minds.

For readers who have a pet there is one important thing to consider: swimming pool steps. If you have a metal ladder of access please replace it with steps. An upright metal ladder makes it impossible for your pet to climb out. It is a small job to put in some concrete and tiled steps and if your cat or dog falls in it will save its life. Contrary to general belief, cats can swim if necessary, even if they don't like it.

Now that the swimming season is with us, have a good look at the safety of your pool. A cover for the winter is a splendid idea and of course any precautions you take to protect your own pet will also benefit other animals that might wander in uninvited.

To keep your pool spic and span you will need chemicals. Chemicals and pets don't go together. To avoid your dog drinking chlorinated water put some drinking bowls with fresh water around the pool and teach your dog to drink from them.

Should you allow your dog the use of the pool? There are good reasons why you shouldn't. It is unhygienic, can clog up your filter system with dog's hair and chlorinated water is bad for your dog's coat. But then our Labrador came along...

It was not a matter of shall we or shall we not... He doesn't give us any choice. As soon as the swimming pool is operational he is the first one in. There is no stopping him. Open the front door and he rushes to the pool and in he jumps. To see him enjoying himself so much is such a pleasure that we have blown caution to the wind. A good hose down when he comes out keeps his coat in good condition and so far the filter system is coping every well. Have a lovely swimming season!



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# Art unlocked

Broken habits... fresh sensations

REVIEW  
GEORGINA OLIVER

Is it just me, or... does sweating all day long beneath a face mask put the dampers on our other senses: sight, touch, sense of orientation and direction? Sorry if this sounds like a gag, but... I find myself bumping into things and people (at the supermarket, for instance), and (far more alarming) having to take extra special care before crossing the road - to say nothing of another curious post-lockdown phenomenon: my inner GPS appears to have gone haywire.

Out and about

Having returned to Malaga after many years, I had taken to the city like a fish to water, navigating its alleyways with the confidence of a London cabbie. So why did I lose my bearings on that stifling afternoon I picked for my first cultural outing since the state of alarm was lifted? Had my over-logged brain, accustomed to virtual visits, deleted all of that streetwise knowledge - rendered "non-essential" for almost three months? Did I need a refresher course? Dunno, but... guess what? For some reason, I got it into my head that the Museo Picasso Málaga was within steps of the Thyssen museum, as opposed to a stone's throw from the Cathedral. What a relief to step into the Buenavista Palace's cool stately patio - after going round in circles for half an hour!

However well we may think we know the works of the most famous 20th century artist on Earth, born in Malaga in 1881 - a household name, familiar to schoolchildren, from an early age - seeing them in the flesh is always invigorating. Hence, my urge to start afresh with Diálogos con Picasso, the 2020-2023 version of the museum's permanent display, spanning eight decades of virtuosity bearing Pablo's signature; also from its vaults, a selection of family portraits, photographed by Roberto Otero (1931-2004), completes the picture, or rather the dialogue.

Beyond the mask

My next outing - a visit to the Pompidou Centre, aka "El Cubo" - was less hair-raising, if somewhat eerie. With museum attendance at its lowest ebb (Museo Picasso Málaga has cancelled its autumn crowd-puller focusing on the Surrealist artist Meret Oppenheim, as a direct consequence of this), milling around exhibitions in the company of a handful of masked museum-goers borders on the surreal. The trick is to turn up early, before the heat sets in; at 10:30am, an hour after opening time, the silence was palpable. Not a sound, other than the muffled rubbery squeak of museum attendants' sneakers. One of them returned my eye-twinkle, saying, "You are our first visitor."



Something altogether peripheral stopped me in my tracks. G.O.

Art for art's sake won't do; artworks have to be relevant to what we've been through, to that locked-in locked-out feeling experienced during the lockdown

Has the public lost its appetite for art? Not necessarily. However, seafront cafés do have an unfair advantage. You can't eat, drink and wear a "mascarilla". Maybe, it's neither about masks nor about social distancing. Could this apparent slackening of interest be a by-product of the lockdown, a spin-off of the pandemic? "Hurricane Corona" is a life

changing/threatening event of maximum amplitude; Covid makes us see life in a different light, and this affects our attitude to art. Don't get me wrong, the new display at the Picasso Museum, encompassing more than 400 exhibits - many instantly recognisable art history landmarks, such as a variation on the theme of the Demoiselles d'Avignon - is a curatorial feat. Kudos to the Museo! Yet, something altogether peripheral stopped me in my tracks: a translucent criss-cross esparto blind gracing one of the Palacio's windows. Couldn't take my eyes off it. In the same spirit, a couple of latticed sculptural environments conceived by Cristina Iglesias struck me as the stand-out artistic statement in From Miró to Barceló: A Century of Spanish Art, the Pompidou Centre's recently unlocked "renewed permanent collection". Looking at an XXL canvas by Joan Miró and at Miquel Barceló and Josef Nadj's Paso Doble video from within these fretted maze-like metal structures was a magical experience. Nailed it, I think. Art for art's sake won't do; artworks have to be relevant to what we've been through; to that locked-in locked-out feeling experienced during the lockdown; we knew that "The Beat Goes On", with or without us, but being confined has driven the point home. The shimmering semi-abstract palette of Nicolas de Staël - often intimidating human presence, instead of defining clear-cut figures - benefits from the current crowdlessness. The Pompidou Centre's temporary exhibition space is the ideal setting for De Staël's intensely intimate oeuvre, and establishing a one-on-one dialogue with each of his paintings is a unique sensation.





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Ellos, los Detritus  
by Lekuona. ÑITO SALAS

## The art of masking identity

**Exhibition.** Disturbing, hidden, disguised and transfigured faces make up the new temporary exhibition at the Carmen Thyssen museum

The similarities between the worlds inside and outside the paintings were unimaginable five months ago. Back then, everything was ready at the Carmen Thyssen museum in Malaga for the opening of the new temporary exhibition. This was the result of two years of study, focusing on the modern identity in painting, its concealment and transformation; but the pandemic came and halted the project due to open on 24 March.

Now it has finally seen the light, the faces of those contemplating these works by Goya, Ensor, Gutiérrez Solana, Maruja Mallo, Picasso, Modigliani and Julio González are covered, just like the faces looking out at them. The paradoxes of coronavirus.

Masks. Metamorphosis of Modern Identity, at the Carmen Thyssen Museum Malaga until 10 January, delves into the representation of the human face through 103 works of art travelling from romanticism to avant-garde.

The father of modern art, Francisco de Goya, opens the exhibition sponsored by Fundación Unicaja. Prints such as What Madness! lead us to a gallery of disturbing, disguised faces that make up the first section of the collection, entitled Disparates de Carnaval (Carnival Madness). Here the mask is still the heir of its classical conception, in the Commedia dell'arte, and is used as an object to hide an individual's true

REGINA  
SOTORRÍO

► **Sculpture.**  
Head of  
Apostle by  
Jorge Oteiza.  
ÑITO SALAS



Masks from other cultures share space with modern works. ÑITO SALAS



Chico in Top Hat by Walt Kuhn. ÑITO SALAS



La Commedia dell'Arte by Mariano Andreu. Ñ. SALAS

self.

This is the idea behind James Ensor's Theatre of Masks, with a frame that was designed deliberately to look like a stage.

The atmosphere gradually becomes darker and more mysterious with the grotesque figures by José Gutiérrez Solana - Carnaval en un Pueblo (Carnival in a Village), Murga Gaditana (Cadiz Street Musicians) - and the strange ambience that surrounds Eugenio Lucas Velázquez's Sermón de las Máscaras (Sermon of the Masks). There's something of Goya in all of these, that fascination for monstrosity; however the artist who points to Goya most directly is Nicolás de Lekuona. He died in the Spanish civil war at just 24, but left behind interesting works such as Ellos, los Detritus, where he focuses on the masks that Goya left piled up in one of his prints.

The next section, Máscaras Sobrenaturales (Supernatural Masks) contains the most ambitious part of the exhibition. Pablo Picasso's Étude pour Trois Femmes, on loan from the Paris Picasso Museum, is a highlight; as is the impressive The Mask Negro by Fernand Léger; and Paul Gauguin's sculpture Head of a Young Girl. Rostros Transfigurados (Transfigured Faces) is the final part of this journey through

### EXHIBITION

► **Title.** Masks. Metamorphosis of Modern Identity.

► **Venue.** Temporary exhibition gallery at the Carmen Thyssen museum, C/ Compañía, Malaga.

► **Dates.** Until 10 January.

► **Opening hours.** Tuesday to Friday, 9.30am to 2.30pm and 5 to 9pm. Saturday and Sunday, 9.30am to 9pm. Monday closed.

► **Admission.** 10 euros (concessions 6 euros).

identity, and this is where ambiguity comes into play. Figures are not clearly defined, and the faces merge with the masks to the point where it's impossible to tell where one finishes and the other starts. Chico in Top Hat by Walt Kuhn is one example, and the work chosen as the image of the entire exhibition.

This is, as defined by the exhibition's co-curator Luis Puelles, of Malaga University, a "strange [exhibition], full of compliments and discoveries". It is "honest - it doesn't sell what it doesn't have" and "unprejudiced, with great names, but above all great works of art".

These works have been loaned from 46 different collections; the show had to be "rebuilt" during the lockdown to be able to keep it on the museum's agenda, despite delaying the opening by four months.



## EXHIBITIONS

### Art Marbella

**MARBELLA.** From 24 September until 3 October. Palacio de Ferias y Congresos.

Art Marbella will be holding its sixth international modern and contemporary art fair. This year it will co-ordinating with Marbella Design for the first time.

### Galeria Justo / Giner

**MARBELLA.** Until 10 September. La Ermita industrial estate, C/Madera, 9. Before 1881 is an exhibition by Julio Anaya Cabanding. Open in August only by previous appt. Email: gale-ria@justo-giner.com Call: 951507053

### Studio Exhibition

**GAUCÍN.** Until end of the summer Sat and Sun, 11am - 2pm only. La Huerta, C/Convento.

Jennifer Waterhouse, Christine Spencer Green, Silvia Franco and Chris Klees show their work in their studios. The exhibition includes painting, sculpture, ceramic and photography.

### JJosé María Córdoba

**FUENGIROLA.** Until 20 September. Weekdays 6-10pm except Mondays. Museo de la Ciudad, C/María Josefa Larrucea.

The exhibition Odiseo consists of paintings and drawings created by José María Córdoba and influenced by James Joyce's books.



Nicolas de Staël, Pompidou

### Abrazo de Oso

**ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE.** Until mid-September. Weekdays 6-10pm except Mondays. Finca El Portón.

More than 20 artists from different countries have participated in the project Abrazo de Oso to create an exhibition presenting a diversity of styles with a theme of someone or something hugging an animal of their choice. The art is for sale and half the money raised will be donated to the Patitas Andaluzas and Equinac associations.

### David Sancho

**ALHAURÍN EL GRANDE.** Until September. Sala de Exposiciones, in the Municipal library.

Antequera artist David Sancho has travelled widely and has captured the colours of some of the countries he has visited on canvas. The exhibition includes works he completed after visits to Istanbul, Morocco and India

as well as some of the Jardín Botánico La Concepción in Malaga and of his home town, Antequera.

### The Russian Museum

**MALAGA.** Edificio Tabacalera, Avda Sor Teresa Prat.

The two temporary exhibitions currently held at the museum are Rompiendo el silencio. El cine mudo en Rusia and Andréi Tarkovsky. Maestro del Espacio. Russian silent films have become universal icons over time. The second exhibition is about Andréi Tarkovsky, one of the most influential Russian artists of the 20th century and forerunner of innovative techniques in the cinema of the time. In conjunction with this exhibition will be a series of silent movies, with some of the most iconic Russian, Italian and American films available until 4 April 2021.

The new annual exhibition features true-to-life works from the past

three centuries. From still lifes of the 18th century to everyday scenes painted only a few months ago, the museum has created a tour consisting of 163 works in a succession of rooms. Until April 2021.

### Nicolas de Staël

**MALAGA.** Until 29 November. Centro Pompidou, Muelle Uno.

Born in St Petersburg in 1914 but exiled in France, Staël exhibited for the first time in 1944. His abstract works reflect an austere and sombre time which gradually incorporate more light and colour towards 1952 when he adopted a more figurative style of painting.

### Centro Pompidou

**MALAGA.** Muelle Uno.

The semi-permanent exhibition is entitled De Miró a Barceló. Un siglo de arte español. Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel were precursors of new ways of seeing and creating and their legacy still lives on. This chronological journey through a century of Spanish art shows that the generation of contemporary artists has kept alive the spirit of the avant-garde with extraordinary energy.

### Lola Guerrero

**MALAGA.** Until 8 September. Sala Alfajar, C/Císter.

Fragilidad-Es is the name of the new, seasonal exhibition at the Alfajar gallery in Malaga. The artist, Lola Guerrero, reflects the fragility of nature in

a series of delicate ceramics.

### Centro de Arte Contemporáneo MALAGA.

C/Alemania. The CAC Málaga reopened with an exhibition called Opus Nigrum by the Mallorca artist Pep Girbent. The display includes drawings and paintings inspired by film clips.

**Until 30 August.** The CAC has an exhibition by Seville artist Juan Lacomba entitled Aquí A Lo Lejos consisting of 175 works on display.

**Until 25 October.** American artist Nan Goldin is the author of a sequence of video clips entitled Siren in Espacio 5 of the gallery.

**From 4 September until 6 December.** Ergo Sum is the first solo exhibition by Bosco Sodi in Spain. It consists of 30, large, black, monochromatic paintings and several golden sculptures.



Lola Guerrero, Alfajar, Malaga



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## EXHIBITIONS

## Cela - Picasso

**MÁLAGA.** Until 4 October. Museo Casa Natal Picasso. The exhibition entitled Trozo de Piel demonstrates the relationship between two geniuses, Pablo Picasso and Camilo José Cela. It consists of documents and photos symbolising the shared affinities and passions of the two friends.

## Diálogos con Picasso

**MÁLAGA.** Museo Picasso Málaga. The exhibition Diálogos con Picasso. Colección 2020-2023 includes 120 works by the artist among which is the cubist sculpture Copa de absenta (1914) and the painting Susana y Los Ancianos (1955). [www.museopicasso-malaga.org](http://www.museopicasso-malaga.org).

## Thyssen Museum

**MÁLAGA.** Until 13 September 9.30 - 2.30pm. 7 - 9pm Tuesday to Friday. 9.30am - 9pm Saturday and Sunday. During a brief stay in a sanatorium, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec created 39 drawings in crayon about the circus. These works were conserved after his death by his friend Maurice Joyant and reproduced in two stages using a photographic technique in 1905 and 1931. The reproductions were bound in two folders entitled Au Cirque. Thirty-nine prints of these drawings are on display in the museum until 13 September.

## Pepa Caballero

**MÁLAGA.** Until 12 September. Estudio de Ignacio del Río, C/Lorenzo 29. The exhibition consists of colourful paintings by the late Granada artist Pepa Caballero.

## Museo Revello

**MÁLAGA.** Closed Mondays. C/Afligi-



Brinkmann, Casa Gerald Brenan

dos. Félix Revello de Toro is a distinguished Malaga artist. Around 117 of his works are on display in the museum which regularly holds workshops and art classes for children and adults etc. More information call: 952062069 or email: [museorev-ellodetoro@gmail.com](mailto:museorev-ellodetoro@gmail.com)

## Sueños Etiopes

**MÁLAGA.** Until 4 September, Cultural Exhibition Space, Malaga City Hall. Twenty photographs taken by Cristina Muñoz Gaspar, volunteer for the Fundación Harena, capture the youth of a Muketuri, small town in Ethiopia.

## Ángeles Caídas

**MÁLAGA.** Until 20 September, Archivo Municipal, Alameda Principal, 23. Artists Paco Aguilar, Pilar Bandres, David Burbano, Carmen Campos, Pablo Caro Revidiego, Juanjo Fuentes, Isabel Garnelo, María Gkaliata, Julia Holtman, Mister Kaikus, Ismael Kachtihi, Roy Laguna, Marta O Nilsson., Eryk Pall, Cayetano Romero, Javier Roz, Tina Sánchez, Sara Sarabia, Cristina Savage and Marta Troya

have collaborated to present this exhibition of their work which includes canvases, ceramics, videos and photographs.

## Enrique Brinkmann

**MÁLAGA.** Until 5 January, 2021. Casa Gerald Brenan, Calle Torremolinos. Artist Enrique Brinkmann has an exhibition of 12 of his works entitled Estrellas para Brenan, Obra Gráfica, a personal tribute to the writer. Brinkmann has exhibited in the MOMA in New York as well as many other museums and art galleries around the world.

## 18X2. Coleccionismo Institucional de Málaga

**ANTEQUERA.** Until 30 September. Tues - Sun 10am - 2pm and 7pm - 9.30pm. MAD, C/Diego Ponce 12. The exhibition unites 36 works from the Diputación de Málaga and the Fundación Unicaja collections.

## Francisco Martín Molina

**NERJA.** Monday to Saturday 10.30am - 2.30pm. C/Pintada 27. The exhibition of art by Francisco Martín Molina has re opened to the public. More information on Facebook: Exposición Francisco Martín Calle Pintada.

## Painted satellite dishes

**ALMUÑÉCAR.** Until 31 August. The facade of the Town Hall. Members of Arte Sur Almuñécar are displaying 15 satellite dishes which they have decoratively painted and have suspended from the facade of the town hall.



Ángeles Caídas, Malaga

## LIVE CONCERTS AND MUSIC

## Al Fresco

**LA CALA DE MIJAS.** Plaza del Bulevar. Free. 15 August, 9.30pm. IV Festival Internacional de Folclore. 22 August, 9.30pm. The Skafeinados play the greatest Ska and Reggae hits. 29 August, 9.30pm. Adriana 'La Pimienta', flamenco fusion.

## Zarzuela

**MÁLAGA.** 15 August, 8.45pm. The English Cemetery. 10€. The Malaga tenor Rodrigo Domínguez, soprano Elena Ramos and pianist Tania Moya, will offer 40 minutes of some of the best known works of Spanish operetta. [www.cementerio-inglesmalaga](http://www.cementerio-inglesmalaga)

## European Youth Orchestra, The Malaga Concert

**MÁLAGA.** 17 August, 8.30pm. Teatro Cervantes. 24€. Directed by Pablo Heras-Casado, the orchestra will play pieces by Henry Purcell, Aaron Copeland, Igor Stravinsky and Ludwig van Beethoven. The Malaga Concert forms part of the European Music Gallery Festival 2020. Tickets: [www.teatrocervantes.com](http://www.teatrocervantes.com)

## Moraga Sound

**MÁLAGA.** Until 30 August. Auditorio Playa Virginia, Auditorio Parque Héroes de la Batalla de Teatinos, Skate Park Rubén Alcántara, Auditorio Eduardo Ocón. A series of concerts and dance performances including flamenco, funk, rock, jazz, hip hop, punk, folk, Indie and reggae organised by Malaga town hall. <http://www.malaga.eu/>

## Municipal band

**ESTEPONA.** Every Sunday in August, 9pm. Plaza del Reloj. To celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Banda Municipal de Música de Estepona there will be a concert every Sunday in the square.

## Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

**MÁLAGA.** 16 August, 12pm. Museo de Málaga. Proyecto Dasein will perform Arnold Bax's The Trío Elegiac (flute, harp and viola); Bohuslav Martinu's duet for violin and cello; André Jolivet's Petite Suite for flute, viola and harp and Joseph Jongen's Concert a Cinq for flute, viola, cello violin and harp.

## Málaga Inquieta

**MÁLAGA.** Until 16 August. Plaza de Toros La Malagueta. More than 50 Malaga musicians will participate in a series of 10 concerts in the bull ring including Pasión Vega, La Mari from Chambao and La trinidad Airbag. Entry is free but by ticket: [www.malagaentradas.com](http://www.malagaentradas.com)

## Starlite Festival

**MARBELLA.** Until 29 August. Nagüeles quarry. A shortened version of the festival this year with many of the original stars booked such as Tom Jones, Lionel Richie and Bonnie Tyler rescheduled for 2021. Doors open at 8pm, concerts start at 10pm. Tickets and information: Ticketmaster and El Corte Inglés.

15 August. Renowned flamenco dancer Sara Baras.

18 August. The voice of Latin pop, David Bisbal.

21 August. Flamenco singer Miguel Poveda.

22 August. Spanish pop - rock star Luz Casal.

26 August. Spanish pop legend Melendi.

## Marenostrum

**FUENGIROLA.** Until 5 September. Castillo Sohail. The Marenostrum 'Edición Limitada' festival offers more than 35 musical, cabaret and comedy performances. Find more information at <https://marenostrumfuenjirola.com/>

## Tango Malaga 2020

**MÁLAGA.** 18, 19 September. Teatro Echegaray. 15€. Osvaldo Jiménez and Proyecto Tamgú perform classic tango music and dance. [www.teatroechegaray.es](http://www.teatroechegaray.es) or [www.unientradas.es](http://www.unientradas.es) Call: 952



Skafeinados, La Cala Mijas

076262.

## La Costa de la Música

**MARBELLA.** Saturdays 10pm until 29 August. Auditorio del Parque de la Constitución. 5€. The series of concerts include performances by África G.Project, Marcos Grimaldi & E-Gipsy, Pilar Esteban 'LaPili', Eneko Alberdi and la No Solo Blues Band, La Negra Mayté and Delola. Tickets: [www.entradas.com/](http://www.entradas.com/), at the box office (Tues-Sat 7-10pm) or call: 902646289

## Alhaurín Festival

**ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE.** 14, 15, 21 August and 11 September. Finca El Portón. Eight concerts by Spanish musicians including El Kanka, Arco and Annie B. Places are limited. Tickets on the webpages Oh Salvaje and King Ocio as well as from post offices. <https://ohsalvaje.com/conciertos/>

## Carmen Linares

**GRANADA.** 15 August, 10pm. Teatro de Generalife. 35€. Joining Carmen Linares in an evening of flamenco and copla are Arcángel and Marina Heredia.

## THEATRE AND DANCE

## Lorca y Granada

**LOS JARDINES DEL GENERALIFE.** Until 29 August. With the Manuel Liñán dance company. For more information, tickets etc: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/lorcaygranada/>

## Magical Nights at La Concepción

**MÁLAGA.** El Jardín Botánico La Concepción. 15, 22 August, 4, 11 September, 9.30pm. Theatrical presentation of "Jardín Botánico: El origen" which explains the history of the gardens (in Spanish). 18€ adults, 15€ concessions. Guided nocturnal visits 14, 21, 27 August, 3, 10, 17 September from 9.30pm for 7.50€. Reservations: 951926180.

## CHARITY

## A night of music and comedy

**SOTOGRANDE.** 15 August, from 7pm. Centro Comercial Sotomarket, Local 3C. 15€. The event is to raise money for the

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#### Concert for Cruz Roja

**BENALMÁDENA.** 29 August, 6pm. Municipal Auditorium. 20€.

A five-hour Festival of Legends concert to raise funds for the Cruz Roja (Red Cross). Features tributes to Bon Jovi, Frank Sinatra, The Beatles, Neil Diamond, Queen, The Bee Gees, Elvis and Tina Turner. Bar and food. Limited seating. Tickets: El Corte Ingles and Eventbrite or call 609488572. [www.thefestivaloflegends.com](http://www.thefestivaloflegends.com)

#### ACE Charity Golf Tournament

**LA CALA DE MIJAS.** 13 September, Miraflores Golf Club.

Texas Scramble format, teeing-off at 8.27am. The Tournament will be followed by a two-course lunch with live entertainment and a Charity Raffle. Fees are 80€ per player (includes green fee, buggy, lunch). Non players 25€ for lunch. Reservations: [pr.spain@ace-charity.org](mailto:pr.spain@ace-charity.org) or call: 606145359 / 647 647671.

#### VISITS / ATTRACTIONS

#### Guided tour of the Cemetery

**MÁLAGA.** 4 September, 5pm. The English Cemetery. 6€.



Proyecto Tamgú, Teatro Echegaray

Visit the first Protestant cemetery on mainland Spain and discover the stories hidden behind the gate of Avenida de Pries, 1. <https://cementerioinglesmalaga>

#### O. V. FILMS

SUR in English advises calling cinemas to check for any last minute time changes. lunchtime and late night screenings weekends only.

#### Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

**MÁLAGA.** Centro de Ocio, Plaza Mayor, Avda Alfonso Ponce León. Tel: 902902103. [www.yelmocines.es](http://www.yelmocines.es)

**Military Wives:** 20.00 (Tues).

**The Secret Garden:** 18.15 (Tues).

**Nekrotronic:** 22.20 (Tues).

**Inception:** 21.00 (Tues).

#### Yelmo Cines, Rincón

**RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA.** C/ Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922. [www.yelmocines.es](http://www.yelmocines.es)

**Military Wives:** 19.30 (Tues).

**The Secret garden:** 22.25 (Tues).

**Inception:** 21.00 (Tues).

#### Yelmo Cines, Vialia

**MÁLAGA.** Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902220922

**Military Wives:** 20.05(Tues).

**Color Out Of Space:** 22.00(Tues).

**The Secret Garden:** 22.20(Tues).

**Inception:** 20.45 (Tues).

**The Way Back:** 22.10 (Tues).

#### Cine Albéniz

**MÁLAGA.** C/ Alcazaba, 4. Tel: 902360295. [www.cinealbeniz.com](http://www.cinealbeniz.com)

**Military Wives:** 17.30, 19.45, 22.00.

**Sabrina:** 22.00 (Thurs).

**The Peanut Butter Falcon:** 19.00.

#### Cinesur Miramar

**FUENGIROLA.** Avda de la Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.

**Scooby:** 18.00.

**The Hunt:** 17.40.

**Madame Butterfly (Sidney Opera House):** 21.00 (Tues).

#### Cinesur Ingenio

**VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA.** Avda Juan Carlos, 1. Tel: 667773187.

**Madame Butterfly:** 21.00 (Tues).

## Tribute to one of the most flamboyant pop stars in the history of modern music

The Purple Revolution is a live stage show and musical tribute to the life, showmanship and the pure musical genius of Prince

#### TONY BRYANT

**FUENGIROLA.** The Salon Varietés Theatre in Fuengirola is to host a tribute show to one of the most flamboyant pop stars in the history of modern music. The Purple Revolution is a live stage show and musical tribute to the life, showmanship and the pure musical genius of Prince, widely regarded as one of the greatest musicians of his generation.

Thomas Henry is considered one of Europe's best Prince tribute acts and, along with his band, he recreates Prince's most popular music from hit albums like Purple Rain, Sign of The Times and Diamonds and Pearls. Thomas has been recreating the music of Prince for more than 15 years. His incredible vocal range reproduces the



Thomas Henry will bring his Prince tribute show to Fuengirola. SUR

far-reaching falsetto voice that made Prince one of the biggest selling musicians of all time. The spectacular stage show, which offers all the energy, pizzazz and charisma of the real thing, has been applauded by both critics and fans alike.

Tickets for the concerts,

which will take place from Thursday 3 until Sunday 6 September, cost 18 euros and must be reserved by telephone (952474542) from Monday to Friday between 11:00 and 14:30.

Masks are obligatory in the theatre and full social distancing measures will be in place.

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# "Skin needs to be clean and hydrated so the mask doesn't cause damage"

**Leandro Martínez** Director of Dermatology at the Regional Hospital

This specialist says he and his team are seeing more patients with skin problems caused by masks, and warns that "a good mask is no use at all if it isn't used properly"

ANA PÉREZ-BRYAN

MALAGA. The scientific community generally agrees that masks are essential to prevent the transmission of coronavirus, and so do politicians and most people. However, it is also the case that prolonged or incorrect use, combined with previous skin conditions, can cause problems. Dr Leandro Martínez, the director of the Dermatology Clinical Management Unit at the Regional Hospital, discusses these matters in this interview.

**–What did you think of the decision to make masks obligatory in Andalucía?**

–It is the main tool to reduce contagion. When two people are wearing masks the possibility of one infecting another is minimal. Keeping a distance and using a mask are the only ways to prevent transmission, and if distance can't be maintained then using masks is the only other option, at least while there is still a high probability of contagion, and at the moment there is.

**–Do you think they should have taken this decision earlier?**

–I think there was a certain logic to them doing it when they did.

When outbreaks start occurring you have to step up protective measures.

**–Masks protect, but they can also damage the skin. What are the main problems with them?**

–We are seeing two things. One is the consequence of irritation, when it harms or damages the skin. We're seeing that in people who wear a mask for long periods of time and in areas where there is most friction, such as the bridge of the nose, the ears and sometimes on the cheeks. It is damage caused by rubbing, just like a shoe can rub your foot. It happens because the mask is not properly adjusted, or is worn for a long time. In that case, you should use a different type of mask or adjust the parts that go over the ears so they are longer, or put a dressing on to protect the nose. Secondly, we are seeing that some dermatological problems are getting worse through wearing a mask, bearing in mind three variables which are the type of skin, especially sensitive skin, the type of mask, which should be officially approved and made with natural fabrics, and the time they are worn. If I wear a mask for 14 hours and I have these conditions, they are going to get worse.

**–And what are the conditions that get worse?**

–For example acne, especially in the area covered by the mask because it creates a hot and damp ambience; processes similar to acne such as rosacea, which is characterised by the apparition of pustules and red blotches; or



Leandro Martínez. SUR

## QUOTE

TRANSMISSION

**"When two people are wearing masks, the possibility of contagion is minimal"**

very common processes such as seborrheic dermatitis, which affects the areas at the side of the nose. Also perioral dermatitis, around the mouth.

**–Why do they get worse?**

–Undoubtedly because of the occlusion caused by the mask, that dampness. That gets even worse when the mask itself gets damp and we have to keep wearing it. And also bear in mind that we are in a process where everybody has been subjected to stress to a greater or lesser extent, and all these dermatological problems

get worse with stress.

**–Have you noticed an increase in consultations?**

–Yes, there has been, and that is strange because sometimes the patients are a bit disorientated and when you show them what the problem is they say they should have realised it would be the mask.

**–And what solution is there, because we have to wear masks?**

–You have to choose a breathable mask made in the most natural fabric possible, but you also have to know how to use it properly. The same thing occurs with sun creams, they are no use if they are not used properly. Masks have to be washed regularly if that is possible, not just left anywhere, and you have to care for your skin. When you get home, before going to bed, you need to be a bit more meticulous than normal about cleaning your skin. It has to be clean and hydrated if the mask isn't going to damage it. And of course if you have dermatitis or another problem, you have to treat it to get rid of it.

**–Do masks affect the part of the face they cover?**

–Of course, in fact one general piece of advice is that you shouldn't use make-up on that part of the face, or at least choose oil-free make up so it doesn't create an occlusive effect, because you have to remember that if you put make-up on, cream and then the mask, that creates occlusion. People with sensitive or reactive skin, or with an existing problem, have to be careful.

**–What about lipstick?**

–I haven't actually seen many problems caused by lipstick, because nowadays most tend to hy-

drate and that's a good thing.

**–In skin conditions such as labial herpes, do the masks protect or affect them?**

–In this case the mask can actually be a good thing because one of the things that triggers labial herpes in the summer is the sun, and the mask protects against that.

**–Masks made out of different materials and patterns are becoming popular. Do people need to be careful with those?**

–You should always use officially approved masks, although it all depends on what you are looking for. If you want a 'hygienic' fabric mask, which most of these designer ones are, and you want to look after your skin because you are going to be wearing a mask for a long time, it should be made with the most natural materials possible. It is best to avoid synthetic fabrics and keep an eye on how the skin reacts when it comes into contact with the mask.

**–What about children? Their skin is normally more delicate.**

–I think about 'atopic' children the most. In their case it is best to use masks made from natural fabrics and hydrate the area well with a light cream, although that is good advice for all of us. It's not a bad idea to put a little cream on before the mask, but always letting it be absorbed first.

**–Do hand sanitisers also cause problems?**

–Yes, there are people who are washing their hands excessively or using too much hydroalcoholic gel, and that can cause damage to the lipid mantle which protects the skin. You need to use gels which don't have a high alcohol content and use cream after washing your hands. Oh, and dry them very well too, because the damp can cause irritative dermatitis. In fact, we are seeing more problems and lesions to the hands from hydroalcoholic gels and compulsive hand-washing than those associated with the mask and damage to the face.



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# Gruelling challenge helps ensure that children with a rare disease can study at home

Despite the intense heat, a dedicated Belgian athlete completed the challenge to reach the peaks of eight of Malaga's highest mountains in aid of AEFAT

TONY BRYANT

MALAGA. Ultra-runner Jennifer Lewinski has recently completed a gruelling challenge in order to raise funds for AEFAT, a non-profit association that is made up of families and friends of patients with ataxia telangiectasia (AT).

Despite the intense heat, the dedicated Belgian athlete completed the challenge to reach the peaks of eight of Malaga's highest mountains in as many days. These included Los Reales, El Grajo, Ciclo, Chamizo, Lucero, Navachica and Torrecilla. Jennifer, who now lives in Malaga, was accompanied by a group of runners from several provinces of Spain for the final challenge at La Maroma, the highest peak in the Sierra Tejeda (Axarquía).

The objective of the challenge, held between 1 and 8 August, was to raise money to adapt the computers of 30 children so that they can continue their education at home to protect them from contacting the coronavirus.

The project, which will be developed by specialist company BJ Adaptaciones, will cost approximately 30,000 euros. At the time of going to press, AEFAT were still waiting to confirm the



Belgian athlete Jennifer Lewinski at one of her summits. SUR

final total Jennifer had raised.

AT is a disease that usually appears in early childhood and it affects the functions of different organs and causes the inability to coordinate movements. Sufferers are among those considered to be at high risk of contracting the coronavirus.

Jennifer, who was introduced to AEFAT during the Zurich Marathon in Malaga, told SUR in English that she was a little concerned about the challenge,

but that she had succeeded through sheer determination.

"I am passionate about sport and I wanted to contribute my grain of sand to help these young people. I was afraid I wouldn't complete the challenge.

"The heat and tiredness accumulated over eight days in a row was harsh, but the motivation of the cause and the support I received during these days was greater than that," Jennifer said.



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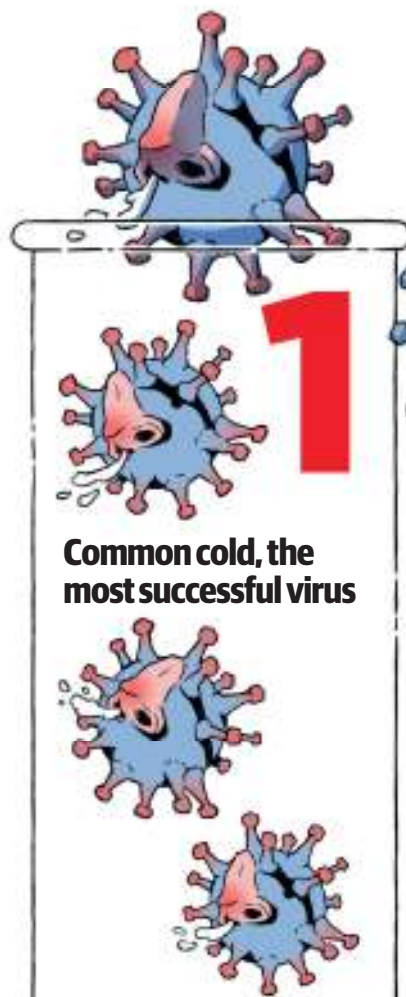
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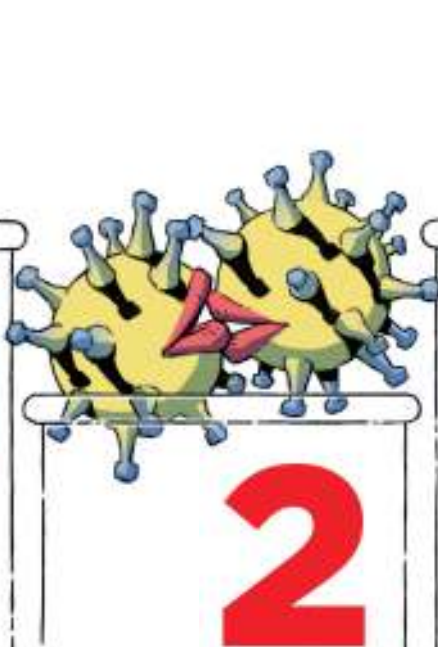
# Ten things you don't know about viruses.

They are the Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde of the planet; they can be deadly, but are also vital



## Common cold, the most successful virus

Throughout our lives we will spend the equivalent of a year in bed with a cold. A whole year! Which is why we can say that the rhinovirus, which causes colds, is one of the most 'successful' viruses. Its symptoms are even described in the oldest medical tract - the Ebers papyrus - written in Egypt 3,500 years ago. In Ancient Greece, Hippocrates attributed colds to variations in mood, and at the beginning of the last century they thought they were caused by early morning walks. As Carl Zimmer explains, even though this virus is very simple - it has ten genes per unit compared with the 20,000 of human beings - "even today we still have no cure for the common cold".



## 'Sex' between flu viruses

On occasions, there is an unpleasant encounter in our bodies: two different flu viruses coincide in the same cell and, sometimes, end up mixed together. "This is the viral version of sex," says Carl Zimmer. What is the result? Well, the same as when two people conceive a baby: their genes mix and result in another 'creature' with its very own characteristics. This means the flu achieves "a new viral disguise", and the immune system of humans is not prepared to repel it. As Zimmer explains, flu and its resources follow us around but are ahead of us in many ways. The only thing we know for certain is the origin: "It comes from birds, which are carriers of all the known strains of the human flu virus," he says.



## They can also cure!

We hear the word 'virus' and immediately think of disease, but in fact many of them help us to overcome illnesses. At the beginning of the last century, before antibiotics were discovered in the 1930s, a Canadian military doctor, Félix d'Hérelle, discovered there were viruses which ate bacteria (in his case he tested this with the Shiguella, which is responsible for dysentery); in other words they are bacteriophage, known as 'phages' for short. He successfully tried the 'phages' with other conditions caused by bacteria, and even created medications. "The idea of using living viruses as medicine concerned many doctors at the time," says Zimmer, and when antibiotics appeared on the scene the use of phages decreased. However, everything is reversible... since 2008 'phages' have been programmed à la carte to 'kill' certain bacteria.



## The ocean...? Full of viruses (good ones)

Some studies estimate that every litre of sea water contains as many as a billion viruses. The figures are quite startling. But this has not been known for very long. Until the 1980s it was believed that the viruses in sea water came from waste from the land. "These figures don't mean that swimming in the ocean means a death sentence. Only a minute fraction of these viruses can infect humans," says Zimmer, reassuringly. Their 'victims' are usually fish, marine animals and, above all, bacteria and single cell microbes. Their task is 'good': "They determine the ecology of the oceans, leaving their mark on the Earth's global climatology and they have been playing a crucial role in the evolution of life for thousands of years." So do we feel a bit better about them now? And how can such tiny things do that? For example, photosynthesis genes have been found in the viruses themselves. "An approximate calculation is that about ten per cent of all photosyntheses are carried out with viral genes," says Zimmer.



## We are alive thanks to viruses

There are thousands of viruses in the human genome. They are not just something we 'catch' outside. And some of them, like the Phoenix, infected humans - or entered them - more than a million years ago. And some are even older: there is a type of retrovirus (ERV-L) present in us which has a fundamental importance in the formation of the placenta. It is believed it infected an ancestor common to all mammals 100 million years ago. "If they removed our genes which derive from viruses, we would die in the uterus," says Zimmer.



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## Smallpox, the only virus to have been eradicated by man



Viruses are super-survivors. They find ways to mutate, hide, jump from species to species... so in most cases humans have had to settle for trying to cope with their effects. With one exception: the smallpox virus, "which in the last 3,000 years may have killed more people than any other illness on Earth," says Carl Zimmer. It is the only human virus to have been eradicated. Smallpox, which causes respiratory problems and repulsive pustules, devastated many countries in ancient times: every time it reached somewhere new, it was like a massacre. In Iceland it killed 20,000 of the 70,000 inhabitants in the year 1241, and when it reached the New World at the hands of the Spanish, it is estimated that it ended the lives of 90 per cent of the indigenous population of Central America in a few decades, a type of "biological weapon" from the invaders. After several trial and error processes and a type of vaccine created in the 18th century, the World Health Organisation started to vaccinate in 1965, creating a 'fire-break' until the virus was beaten. The last case occurred in Ethiopia in 1977. With other illnesses, such as malaria, similar attempts failed. And polio has almost been eradicated, but is still present in some countries.



## Aids had been with us for 50 years



Aids, caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), had spent more than half a century infecting people "secretly" when the first cases were detected in 1980 and 1981 in Los Angeles, says Carl Zimmer. After being discovered, it infected 60 million people all over the world. Half of them died. Scientists were going crazy. Where had this virus come from? "It took them three decades of searching for traces of the origins of HIV. The first clues came from sick monkeys," says Zimmer. And it seems that the virus had 'jumped' between species several times before adapting for humans, as a new guest. The researchers, engaging in scientific archaeology and delving into mysterious deaths in the past, came to the conclusion that in the previous decades there had been victims of variations of HIV (they analysed stored samples), such as a patient in Kinshasa in 1959. "By the time the scientific community officially recognised the existence of HIV the virus had already reached the category of a hidden global catastrophe," says Zimmer.

SOLANGE VÁZQUEZ



In just a very few months, most of us have done an accelerated master's degree in viruses. We now talk about infections, incubation periods, immunity and antibodies in the same way we used to talk about the weather.

It seems we have acquired a little of the general culture, but viruses (especially the coronavirus

which has caused this pandemic) are still great unknowns even for scientists. Every now and then a new one occurs, like SARS-CoV2, which leaves them astounded and obliges them to untangle its secrets in record time because it is so lethal.

But it is not easy to de-code them and find a way to combat them. In fact, the only virus that affects humans which has been eradicated has been smallpox - until now considered the greatest killer of humanity - and HIV continues to be a challenge for researchers. However, as the renowned scientist Carl

Zimmer says in his book A Planet of Viruses, which was published in 2011 and has now been re-released with new information - "viruses are exquisitely lethal, but they have also conceded to the world some of their most relevant innovations".

Because viruses lead to illnesses, indeed, but there is another aspect of which most people are hardly aware. Here are some of the secrets and curiosities about this deceptively primitive form of life, which show that "creation and destruction are going hand in hand once again".



8

## Birds and mosquitos... flying viruses



"In the summer of 1999 the ravens began to die." It sounds like the start of a horror story. That is how the West Nile virus arrived in the USA. It was already known in Asia, Europe and Africa. The researchers found it in many species of birds... but how did it spread to humans? It did so thanks to a very effective vehicle: mosquitos. Sixty-two species of that insect can carry the imported virus, and contagion is difficult to prevent: it doesn't even need people to be near others to become ill with this type of encephalitis. According to the experts, the future will give wings to the viruses transmitted by mosquitos, because it will be hotter and more humid than at present, an ideal habitat for these insect transmitters.



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## Jumping from species to species as far as humans

There has been a relationship between humans and animals in the transmission of viruses which cause epidemics in nearly every serious outbreak in recent years. Ebola, for example, is present in bats, who then transmit it to gorillas and chimpanzees, and it is only a small leap from them to us. In 2013 it devastated Africa and spread to the West. And from the coronavirus family, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) also originated in bats, which passed it to civets, commonly found in Chinese markets. That was early in the year 2000. Ten years later there was another coronavirus, MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) which originated in... African bats! How did that happen? The bats transmitted it to camels in North Africa, which are exported to the Middle East.



## Look for them in animals



Given the origin of the most recent major pandemics, the scientific community proposes "anticipating" and searching for pieces of genetic material of potentially lethal viruses in animals before they jump to humans. "But the fact that we live on a planet of viruses makes this a massive task," says Zimmer. Scientists from the University of Columbia, for example, captured 133 rats in New York "and discovered 18 new species of virus, very closely linked with humans". And in India they have found 55 unknown viruses in flying foxes.



**The richness of colour**

From pale yellow to black, Malaga D.O. wines express in their range of colours their great richness and complexity.

**Two grapes, 17 wines**

Malaga is the Spanish D.O. with the most types of wine (17) made from only two grapes, Moscatel and PX.

**Unique processes**

The sun-ripened grapes, the blending of wine, alcohol and syrups are key to the uniqueness of the wines



## Discover some of the best wines from Malaga

**T**wo grapes, Moscatel and Pedro Ximénez, were the economic engine of an entire province. Until 1878, when the phylloxera plague devastated the 112,000 hectares of vineyards that covered more than a seventh of Malaga's surface area, its exceptional raisins and wines reached every corner of the planet. Today, Malaga's vineyards occupy a total of 4,000 hectares, of which barely 700 are used for Muscatel and PX, and not only for traditional wines, but also for whites under the Sierras de Malaga DO and sparkling wines.

In recent years, Andalusian wines have been winning over oenologists, sommeliers and consumers, and yet many of the historic Malaga wines are still awaiting the recognition that the naturally sweet ones have already achieved. These are oenological jewels whose image has been damaged by fraudulent imitations and sometimes by packaging that is too focused on typology and does not do justice to the quality of the content.

SUR has met with three experts to take a look at these wines. José Manuel Moreno Ferreiro is the secretary of the Regulating Council that today groups together the Málaga appellation (created in 1932, one of the oldest in Spain),

**Unique blends. SUR tastes traditional Malaga wines with some experts in search of ideas on how to enjoy them at the table**

**ESPERANZA PELÁEZ**



▲ Francis García López. Organiser of tastings and sales representative.



Sierras de Málaga (set up in 2001 to regulate red, white and rosé wines) and Pasa de Málaga. Paco García, director of El Lago (Marbella, 1 Michelin star), is one of the sommeliers who is helping with the promotion of these wines by including a select section on the menu of his restaurant.

Francis García López, apart from having grown up in the now defunct Gomara family winery, is a wine representative and tasting organiser.

"Málaga is and has always been an oenological laboratory, and one of its singularities is that Málaga wines are not only about grapes and terroir, but also about blends; the use, in certain cases, of over-ripe or raisined grapes; the addition or not of winery products such as syrup; and, finally, the ageing process. This leads to a very complex classification. We have 19 legally recognised types of wine. In Montilla there are 12, in Jerez, 11. Preserving this uniqueness is our battle," says José Manuel Moreno. Paco García adds: "It is a world as exciting as it is labyrinthine".

Broadly speaking, traditional

Malaga wines can be either base or blend wines. The base wines (seco, dulce natural, maestro and tierno) are used to make different blends. To the blends of certain types of wine, syrup (boiled must) can be added, and the final result depends on the ageing process. "This means that any Málaga wine is a signature wine, because beyond the type, the product will always be determined by the hand of the winemaker," explains Moreno Ferreiro.

We have chosen a small selection of these wines. Their names are familiar, but we often don't know what they are. We start with the **Málaga seco** wines, great forgotten ones that Paco García recommends for the aperitif. They are mostly made with PX, with unsoaked grapes undergoing total fermentation, and depending on their age they range from pale yellow to amber.

"They are very versatile; they go with everything, and depending on their age, I would pair them with aperitifs, including salted meats, cured cheeses and nuts, but at El Lago we serve them with a beetroot purée," he says. He adds that a dry 'transañejo' (more than five years old, it's easier to find them in their 20s or older) is "the perfect accompaniment to a good cured ham, and also a great con-





### Classification

Malaga wines are classified according to the blends, the colour of the syruped wines and the ageing time

### Unique wines

The limited production and the influence of the wine maker make these wines affordable jewels.



DANIEL MALDONADO

versation wine". Francis García invites you to drink them with desserts made with dried fruit, and to use them in the kitchen to light up meaty rice dishes.

The **Maestro** wine is another unique to Malaga. It is a sweet wine obtained after a very slow and incomplete fermentation, because before it starts, the must is headed; that is to say, wine alcohol is added. Just like the naturally sweet, it is fruity and pale and fresh in colour. Paco García recommends it with chilled soups. Francis, with soft cheeses, pâtés and foiegras.

We enter the field of blended wines with the **pajarete**. It is a sweet wine (headed with alcohol) with a minimum aging of two years, golden to dark amber color, and to which syrup can never be added. The regulations of the D.O. Málaga give so many possibilities of making it that inevitably the pajarete of each winery has its own personality. It can have the aromas of figs, honey, raisins, caramel, biscuits... What goes with it? Francis García is forceful: "I love it with Ensalada Malagueña and cod dishes." Paco García recommends it for oily blue fish: sardines, tuna, mackerel.

And what is a **Malaga dulce**? Well, it is a sweet liqueur wine, made from Muscat or PX grapes, with syrup added to give colour and aroma. In the Málaga dulce the colour is used in the commer-



Paco García, manager at El Lago.



Moreno Ferreiro, connoisseur.

cial name. From 'rojo dorado' if it has up to 5% syrup, to 'negro' or 'dunkel' with more than 15% syrup. The syrup can be made by direct heat or bain-marie and in different concentrations. It provides complex aromas: coffee, chocolate, smoked foods, liquorice, caramel, pineapple, strawberry. Paco García recommends taking advantage of these nuances in chocolate desserts (although these wines are a dessert in themselves), or with powerful blue cheeses. Francis García challenges us to try them accompanying stews, "even now in summer, lentil salads", but also in the company of fruit: "Pineapple, melon, watermelon". And in the kitchen, both the Malaga dulce and the pajaretes are recommended for pigs' cheek stews or meat with sauces.

We finish this short tour with **transañejos**, dry or sweet wines with added alcohol, aged for over five years. Several wineries have transañejos of 35 to 40 years, at prices well below their value. The characteristic of these Malaga wines is the freshness that they preserve thanks to the acidity of the grape. "These are impressive wines, I'd enjoy them in an after-dinner setting," says Paco García. Francis García dares to recommend them with an oxtail stew. Don't miss out: try it, experiment, we have treasures within our reach.

## Clean or natural?

ANDREW J. LINN



Organic wines arrived many years ago, and much later the term 'natural' became common currency. Poor man's organic without certification procedures, but to show that pesticides and additives were not used, period.

So, what are we to make of the newest buzzword, 'clean wine'? Film actress Cameron Diaz started the trend by jumping on the same bandwagon as the Clean Food and Clean Eating movements. The actress's own product, Avaline Catalan white, is certified as organically cultivated and free from 'unnecessary extras.' Her pitch is that 'most wines contain colour enhancers, preservatives, chemical stabilisers, added sugar, acid, etc'. And many indeed do.

Cheap American reds are bolstered with grape concentrates to provide more colour and sweetness. There is no legal definition of natural wine, and it exists because it is announced as such. Now-retired wine critic Robert Parker called natural wine an 'undefined scam'.

A French study showed that 90% of wines contained traces of pesticides, and although

only 3% of agricultural land is down to vines, 20% of all pesticides are bought by wineries.

Would the drinker be better protected if ingredients were listed on labels, (as is obligatory with food products)? The response is that wine is not an industrial product and is made by an artisan process that can vary from one batch to another. The big boys may have no trouble listing ingredients, but it would be a nightmare for small producers to have to update labels every now and again. So, as the Spanish say, 'es lo que hay', take it or leave it.

### WINE OF THE WEEK

#### Pedro Luenga Monylla Moriles

The Montilla Moriles wine region is disrespectfully referred to as where second-rate 'sherry' is made. Firstly, the wine is not sherry, even though the production process is similar, nor is there anything second rate about it. Indeed, in this area they are way ahead of Jerez in producing organic wines. Around 7 euros.



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Mula, back in Malaga after a loan, has a blood test. **MÁLAGACF.COM**Juanpi at the temperature check. **ÑITO SALAS**Cifu, having the Covid PCR swab test. **MÁLAGACF.COM**Diego González poses as he leaves La Rosaleda. **ÑITO SALAS**

## Five Covid-19 positives among Malaga players in first round of tests before pre-season training

While some players are expected to be leaving soon, there were no absences on the first day back at La Rosaleda for Covid-19 tests

**BORJA GUTIÉRREZ**

**MÁLAGA.** Malaga CF announced on Thursday that after tests on the first day back at work this week, five players tested positive for Covid-19. Without naming the players in question, the club said that they were all well and did not have symptoms.

Activity at the club got back under way as planned at La Rosaleda this week. There were few surprises when the cars started rolling up at the stadium on Wednesday morn-

ing, the only 'new' face being Mula, back after his half-season loan to Alcorcón. The club plans to keep Mula for this 2020-21 season, which began with the first of two Covid-19 tests all players have to undergo before they can start training as a group.

Initially this will happen at the Federación ground on the outskirts of the city, as the two pitches at La Rosaleda still need to be left a few weeks for reseeding to take effect.

First to arrive on Wednesday were the training staff (head coach Pellicer was there long before the 8am start), followed by the players who, as well as the Covid tests,

were also given blood tests and had their weight and body fat checked.

None of the players with contracts was missing, with the exception of José Rodríguez, who started his holidays weeks later than everyone else having been loaned to Fuenlabrada.

One of the players to attract the most attention on his arrival was Keidi, who is apparently close to leaving the club on a transfer.

All of the players politely refused to answer reporters' questions as they entered and left the stadium.

Inside, each of the players met with the coaching team to discuss the plans for the coming season and the start of training. Sporting director, Manolo Gaspar, met with some players to inform them of the situation of the team, which is in drastic need of restructuring.

There is plenty to be discussed: financial issues, with the need to balance spending on players; and sporting issues, as the Malaga

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Benkhemassa and Boulahroud went back to work together. Ñ. SALAS



Mula, happy to be back. ÑITO SALAS



Keidi, waiting for news of an expected transfer. ÑITO SALAS

coaches have ruled out several of the players still with the club from the team for the coming season.

The only player who did offer an opinion on Wednesday was Tete, who spoke of his impressions of the start of the season to the club's own cameras.

Tete, who comes from La Línea de la Concepción, said that he was keen to get back to work.

He said that it would be "strange" to go back one by one as they did in May after the lockdown (they can't train together

until the Covid test results have been delivered, according to LaLiga protocol).

#### New start for Femenino

Malaga's women's team also went back to work this week, training for the first time on Wednesday after the health checks on Monday.

While still waiting for a fixture list and dates for the Second Division matches (Liga Reto Iberdrola) the team will be doing their pre-season training in Cártama.



A LOOK AT LA LIGA  
ROB PALMER  
Commentator, Sky Sports

## An expensive spectator

Professionally, life at Real Madrid for Gareth Bale is tough; personally, life is good



**G**areth Bale used to be a footballer who divided defences, now he's a man who divides opinion.

In the opinion of Real Madrid, their manager and supporters, he's a waste of space who is drawing £600,000 euros per week for doing very little. He needs to be drummed out of town as soon as possible.

In the opinion of his fans and representatives, he's a world-class footballer who is honouring a contract in a professional manner and he's going nowhere.

There's truth in both of those opinions. The Spanish giants are no longer getting value for money; however that isn't the fault of the Welshman.

Often footballers are judged by their medal haul. Bale's cabinet overflows with four Champions League wins, two Liga titles and Copa del Rey winners medal from the day he scored an incredible solo goal against the arch-enemy Barcelona.

His incredible overhead kick in 2019 against Liverpool will go down as one of the greatest European Final goals of all time. Given the above facts, he should be enjoying legendary status at the Bernabéu.

Yet, Bale is booed whenever he plays in front of his home fans. Ok, fans aren't let into the ground right now but then again Bale isn't allowed onto the pitch either. He's not featured in any of the last seven games and didn't even travel to Manchester for last week's final game.

So, what happens next? It's clear that manager Zinedine Zi-



Gareth Bale during a league game last year. REUTERS

dane won't include him in his plans. The hierarchy need to get his €2.4m per month off the payroll. It almost happened last summer when a deal was struck with Chinese Super League club Jiangsu Suning. Bale wasn't keen but the wage increase to €1 million per week was compensation for leaving behind his luxurious life in Spain.

When Real halted the deal, Bale had no other option; he had to stay. The club won the league although he only started 12 of the games and filled his latter game days being filmed as he made a bandage roll into a periscope or fiddled with the mandatory face mask.

Professionally life is tough as he sits on the periphery of the team. Personally, life is good as he lives with his wife and kids in a dream villa just a short drive away from his beloved golf course.

They use his addiction to golf as a club to beat him with. Compare this to the destructive

addictions of many sportsmen and he's almost the model pro.

Real are undoubtedly going to have to take a financial hit if they are to free his peg in the locker room. They may have to pay half, or even all, of his wages.

Bale, the footballer must want a challenge and noises have been made by pals at Tottenham about him returning there. Spurs are notoriously prudent so there would have to be hard bargaining at board room level. I'm not sure any other top-level teams would want to break the bank for a 31-year-old.

So, it looks like a long stand-off as Bale sits tight and the club try to find a solution.

Expect the TV cameras to have a weekly feature during matches where they cut away to capture the bored Bale playfully filling his time as the most highly paid spectator, and amateur golfer, of all time. This may continue until his contract expires in summer 2022.



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THE STARS



**Aquarius**  
January 21st - February 19th  
Feeling a bit shocked at how quickly things have moved on? Being confused by everyone's different standards? Keep yours strong.



**Pisces**  
February 20th - March 20th  
By being a little more determined and honest, speaking your mind brings results. Don't aim to make everyone your friend but do aim to get respect from them.



**Aries**  
March 21st - April 20th  
Any recent disputes seem to be forgotten with the realisation that they were not important to start with. A clear mind is an asset right now.



**Taurus**  
April 21st - May 21st  
Getting into a more relaxed frame of mind may take a few days but is what you need right now. Helping others to get things right rather than doing things for them is more satisfying.



**Gemini**  
May 22nd - June 21st  
In thinking about your immediate future there may have been a lot of chopping and changing. This week, however, there is a calmer feeling.



**Cancer**  
June 22nd - July 23rd  
Fresh moves at work now show the results of efforts made some time ago. Once your talents are appreciated it naturally spurs you on to create more opportunities and ideas.



**Leo**  
July 24th - August 23rd  
Some connections made in the last few months help ease you back into the general run of life. The 'real' you is surfacing again.



**Virgo**  
August 24th - September 23rd  
A large part of the week may be taken up with getting organised for what is clearly a new start. Regrets are not now relevant as you clear the decks and set sail for the future.



**Libra**  
September 24th - October 23rd  
You may be asking yourself to step into a future where you cannot be entirely in control. If this makes you feel uncomfortable then think what the alternative is.



**Scorpio**  
October 24th - November 22nd  
Those who have instilled confidence and hope in your mind are the ones to seek out now. Getting your team together to start on the future is inspiring and satisfying.

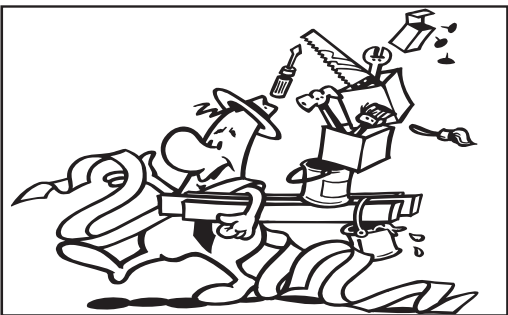
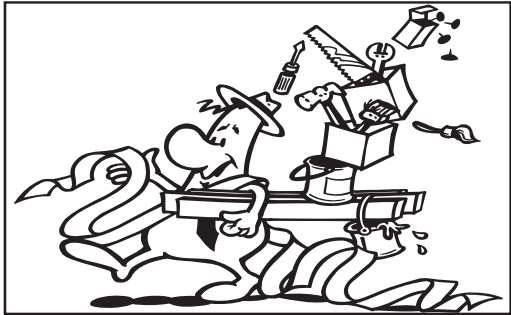


**Sagittarius**  
November 23rd - December 21st  
Midweek sees some trouble brewing but it does not seem to be yours. Save yourself the drama and do your own thing, somewhere else!

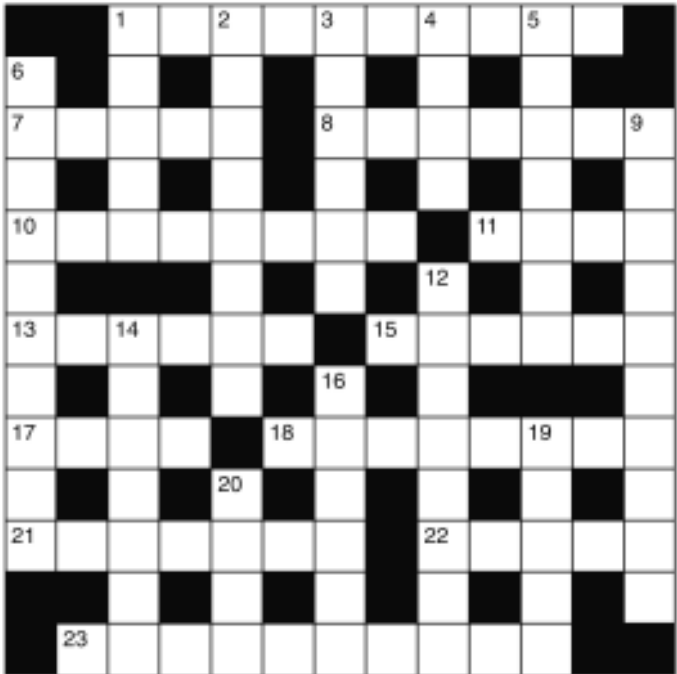


**Capricorn**  
December 22nd - January 20th  
In getting involved with helping others you may have been straining your resources. Begin, this week, to improve this side of things. Use delaying tactics to gain a little time to get organised.

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11422



Across

- 1 Take notice of bag? (3,3,4)
- 7 Swain has a pound to spare (5)
- 8 Comes back happy on anniversary (7)
- 10 Come a cropper in early winter? (4,4)
- 11 Thus appearing shortly (4)
- 13 Can see to wrap (6)
- 15 Flag of prohibition? (6)
- 17 One governed a country (4)
- 18 Having many skills but not a bit square (3-5)
- 21 Grant me something to wear (7)
- 22 The majority contain one that is damp (5)
- 23 Sole opportunity through mere luck? (4,6)

Down

- 1 Presented learner with sale hammer (5)
- 2 Shot boar to get fez (8)
- 3 Divine messenger amongst other messengers (6)
- 4 Location of sound vision (4)
- 5 There's nothing in the box but a satirical drawing (7)
- 6 Malaise causes animosity? (3-7)
- 9 Deny trusty, when on guard (8,4)
- 12 Miranda is upset about youth leader being dealer in milk (8)
- 14 Hothead racing round in confusion and vexation (7)
- 16 Tightly hold eggs (6)
- 19 Join forces partly to run it effectively (5)
- 20 Trust sincerely after being taken out (4)

SUDOKU BY HANZO

**Instructions**  
Complete the square making sure that every row of nine numbers includes all digits from 1 to 9, every column includes all digits from 1 to 9 and every 3 by 3 subsection includes all digits from 1 to 9

		1		5	8			
	9		4	3		5	7	
3	4					1		
	6			2				7
9		2	1			8	6	3
					7			
4				6				8
2	1			8			4	
	5		3			2		

THE WORDPUZZLER

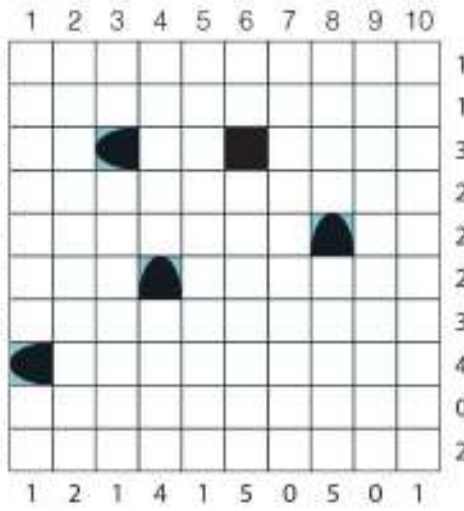
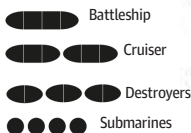
O	R	D	R	A	C	A	L	E	T
S	T	O	U	C	H	I	O	R	N
B	A	W	N	E	A	D	V	E	O
O	R	N	S	L	I	F	E	A	T
D	I	E	P	U	N	I	S	C	H
Y	B	R	A	S	U	P	T	T	I
E	H	I	G	H	T	I	R	E	S
N	E	S	T	I	K	A	R	E	N
K	A	M	E	G	A	N	Y	V	A
A	D	A	N	U	F	O	O	L	S

Can you identify the words missing from the titles of the Diana Ross songs listed below?

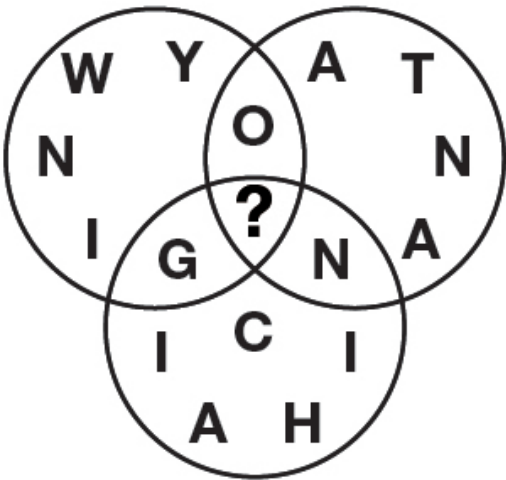
- 1. All Of My ---
- 2. Ain't No Mountain --- Enough
- 3. Why Do --- Fall In Love
- 4. Upside ---
- 5. My Old ---
- 6. Work That ---
- 7. You --- Everything
- 8. --- Me In The Morning
- 9. --- Hangover
- 10. --- Reaction

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
- Down
- 1) Traders (12)

6) Bricks (9)

11) Gold (3)

12) Weekly (7)

13) Shelves (11)

14) Square (f) (8)

17) Thick (f) (5)

20) Architect (10)

21) Hard (m) (4)

23) Used (f) (5)

26) Crime (6)

27) Construction (12)

30) Eleven (4)

31) Old (f) (5)

32) Us (3)

33) Art (4)

34) Years (4)

35) Territories (11)

36) They (f) (5)

39) Commerce (8)

41) Stone (6)

42) Tax (8)

44) The (f) (2)

46) You (pl) (2)

47) Observation (11)

48) Merchants (10)
- 1) Cathedral (8)

2) They are (5)

3) Happy (f) (8)

4) It gets dark (8)

5) Pulling (7)

7) Discovery (14)

8) Market (5)

9) To safeguard (12)

10) Arches (5)

15) Rivers (4)

16) Equines (7)

18) Nor (2)

19) They adore (6)

22) They promised (11)

23) University (11)

24) You attacked (8)

25) You (2)

27) Content (9)

28) Classic (m) (7)

29) To round up/down (9)

30) She offers (6)

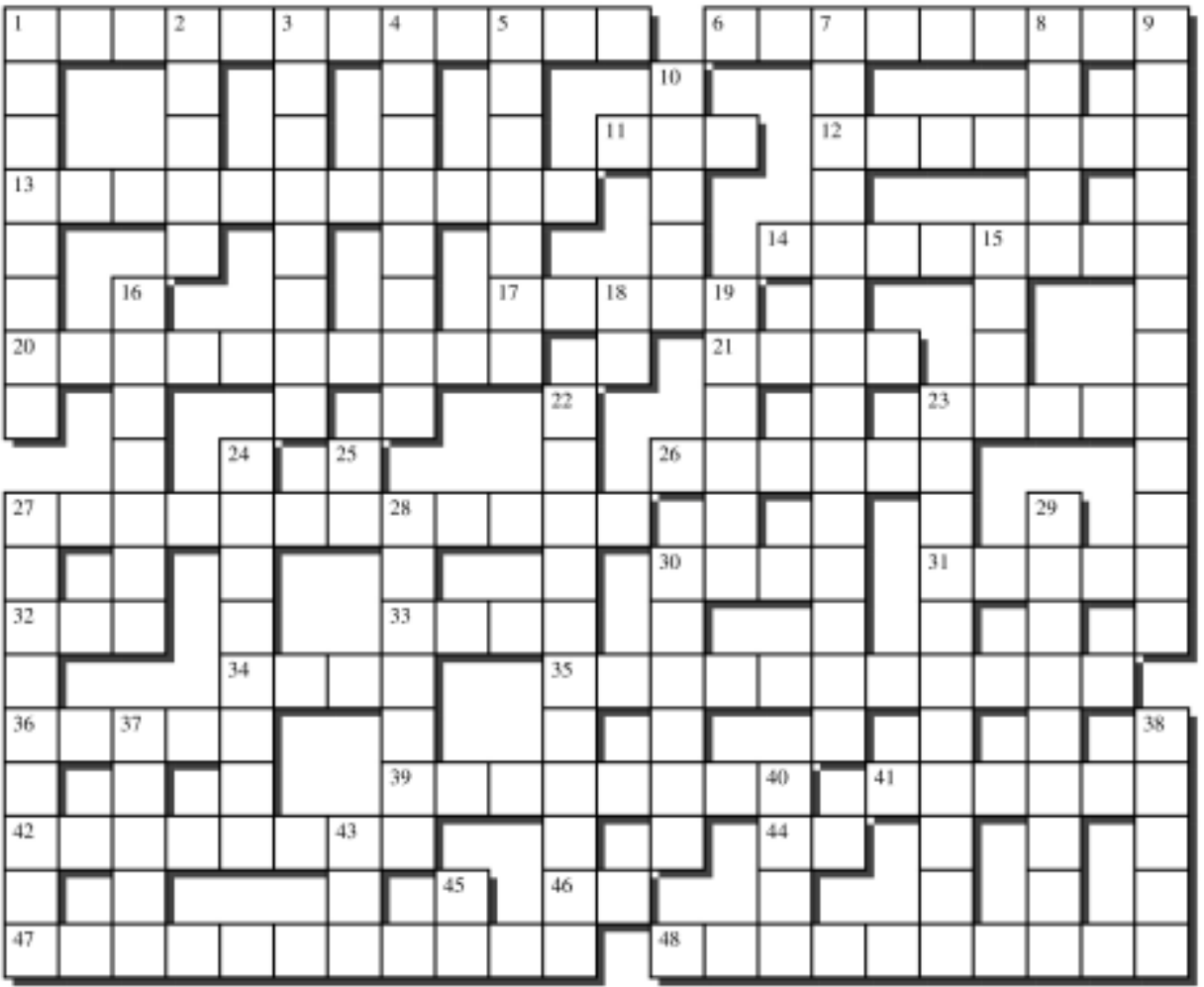
37) Limpets (5)

38) Maps (5)

40) To smell (4)

43) Aunt (3)

45) If (2)



ANSWERS

**Quiz answers**

**Answer:** Wallpaper tax

**Of interest:** The tax was introduced during the reign of Queen Anne. Patterned, printed, or painted wallpaper was initially taxed at 1d per square yard, rising to 1s by 1809. This tax was avoided by using plain paper and having it stencilled.

**Answer:** Guernsey

**Of interest:** The French author and poet spent 15 years on the island while in exile from France. He bought Hautville house to ensure that he could not be expelled from the island as Guernsey law prohibits the deporting of people with property on the island.

Language Crossword



Cryptic Crossword

**Solutions:** Across: 1. Get the sack; 7. Lower; 8. Returns; 10. Fall over; 11. Soon; 13. Enigma; 15. Banner; 17. Rain; 18. All-round; 21. Gammon; 22. Moist; 23. Only chance. Down: 1. Gavel; 2. Barboosh; 3. Hammer; 4. Slog; 5. Gammon; 6. Ill-feeling; 8. Sundry duty; 12. Damp; 14. Chagrin; 16. Clutch; 19. Unlit; 20. Folly.

Wordpuzzler solution

1. Life  
2. High  
3. Fools  
4. Down  
5. Piano  
6. Body  
7. Are  
8. Touch  
9. Love  
10. Chain

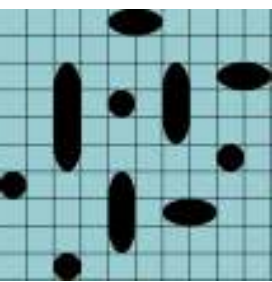
Sudoku solution

8	5	7	3	1	4	2	9	6
2	1	6	7	8	9	3	4	5
4	3	5	6	2	7	1	8	
5	8	3	6	9	7	4	2	1
9	7	2	1	4	5	8	6	3
1	6	4	8	2	3	9	5	7
3	4	5	2	7	6	1	8	9
6	9	8	4	3	1	5	7	2
7	2	1	9	5	8	6	3	4

Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is M. Wyoming, Montana, Michigan, all U.S. states.

Battleships



WHERE IS THIS?



The ruins of a watchtower

Last week: Mijas

The photo last week was of the pretty Plaza de la Constitución in Mijas.



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# Fuengirola's route to tourism

## Costa history. How the traditional Villa Blanca became a modern resort with apartments and hotels

VÍCTOR HEREDIA

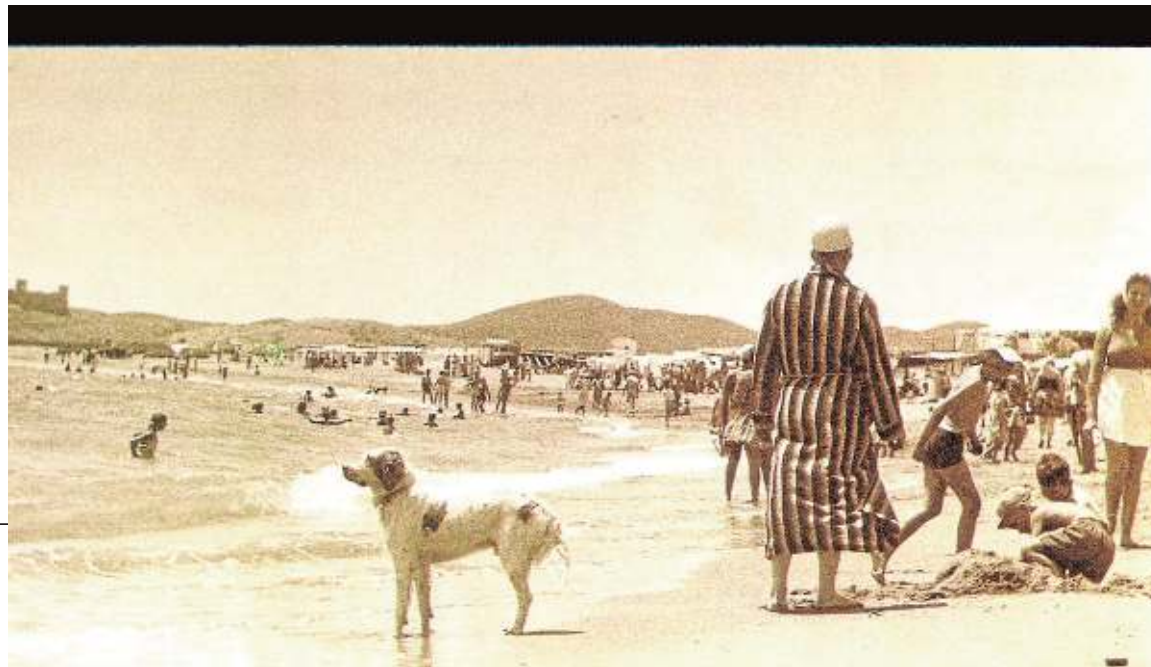


**T**he beauty of Fuengirola was lauded by poet Salvador Rueda a century ago when he dedicated a sonnet to the town, which he defined as "God's mirror". At that time wealthy families who lived inland would spend the summers there; but they were few in number and their presence could not really be considered tourism in a village whose economy was based on agriculture and fishing.

Even in the mid-1960s writers who described Fuengirola said the Villa Blanca (White Town), as it was known, was a model of town planning with no tall buildings. Diego Vázquez Otero wrote: "One could say that the numerous farms hidden in the valleys or on the tops of the 100 hills that surround Fuengirola have served as a model for the modern buildings which still retain a traditional character, being low-level and whitewashed."

Tourist guides usually referred to Fuengirola as a white town nestling between the Sierra de Mijas and the Mediterranean. One, published by Ediciones La Garza in 1960, even told its readers what was grown in this small municipality: sugar cane, olives, vines, wheat, barley, vegetables.

It also, however, successfully predicted its future: "Above all, overwhelmed by an influx of tourists, Fuengirola aims to become



### ▲ Evolution.

Above, enjoying the beach in Fuengirola in the 1950s. Left, an aerial view of the port and town centre. In the small photo, Fuengirola's seafront promenade.

inns such as Donoso, El Centro and El Rondeño, and 'pensiones', which were mentioned by local historian Cristóbal Vega: Sedeño, Italia, Coca, La Morera and Rodymar, in Los Boliches. This is where the few people who used to come to Fuengirola in the summers of the 1940s and early 1950s used to stay.

The Hotel Florida, the first of certain pretensions, opened in 1957. In the following years it was joined by La Concha in Los Boliches, the Somió, the Mare Nostrum, the Sarasol, the Caballo Blanco, the Enriqueta, El Cid and the Cendrillón. In general these were very small, with the exception of the Mare Nostrum, which had 242 rooms.

The inauguration of the 12-storey Stella Polaris in 1969, built by the Danish tour operator Tjaereborg, marked the start of a frenzy in the opening of large hotels, some in complexes with blocks of apartments. Seven opened in Fuengirola between 1970 and 1974.

## Apartments and residential estates

Vitasa was one of the first developers to operate in Fuengirola, building Urbanización Sevilla in Torreblanca and the Yola and Los Caracoles buildings in the town centre in the 1960s. By 1970 there were numerous apartment complexes: Los Olimpos, El Palacio del Mediterráneo, La Perla, El Mar, Los Geráneos, Ópera, Estrella de Torreblanca, Pauli, Sierra-mar, Torrealta, Apartamentos Fuengirola... The first three belonged to Sofico, a company well-known thanks to major advertising campaigns, whose bankruptcy in 1974 was one of the most spectacular during the Franco regime.

Although some villas were built in Carvajal in the 1950s, it wasn't until the early 1960s that the first real residential developments appeared, such as Playa del Castillo, in Santa Amalia, and Torreblanca del Sol, one of the biggest on the Costa. Others were San José, Solvillas, La Ponderosa and Los Pacos, designed for Finns. Among the Andalusian village style complexes were Pueblo López, Puebla Blanca and Puebla Lucía.

The first was Las Pirámides, a four-star with 320 rooms which boasted the first automatic door on the Costa del Sol. It was followed by Las Palmeras and El Puerto, Mas Playa, Torreblanca del Sol, Ángela and Stella Maris.

By 1974, when international tourism began to feel the effects of the oil crisis, Fuengirola could boast an extensive range of hotels for middle-class tourists (three and four-star establishments) from Spain, Britain and Scandinavia.

A guide from those years described Fuengirola as "a tourism centre with an ultra-modern urban landscape".

The model of the Villa Blanca had been left behind.

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