



Junta urges public to 'stay at home' in face of 'explosion' of new Covid-19 cases

The regional government is set to announce new, stricter measures today, Friday, to curb a sudden surge in infections locally

New restrictions brought in by the Andalusian regional government on Monday appear to have come too late to halt a dramatic surge in coronavirus infection

across the region. By Thursday, regional president Juanma Moreno was calling on people to voluntarily stay at home and reduce contact, ahead of today's meet-

ing of the regional committee of experts on the pandemic, which is expected to announce new, stricter measures, including limits on movement. **P4**



The cold weather leaves its mark across the province

The heavy rain which led to a double tragedy in Mijas was followed by snow and widespread cold on the Costa and inland

Estimates calculate that there could be up to 1,000 claims from those affected by floods, with a value of about four million euros **P4**

A couple walk their dog in a snow-covered Sierra de las Nieves earlier this week.

VANESSA MELGAR

The pandemic has set local tourism back 40 years

Figures for Malaga province in 2020 show that there were 75% fewer visitors and losses of 10.3 billion euros **P16**

Man wanted over acid attack evades the police as Costa manhunt escalates **P6**

British man, 65, found dead in blaze in wooden house in Comares **P6**

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The heavy rain which led to a river tragedy in Mijas is followed by snow and widespread cold



Emergency workers help rescue a trapped van in the Sierra de las Nieves area. **SUR**

A weekend of intense weather events brought 327mm of rain in Estepona and Costa beaches whitewashed by hailstones

SUR

MALAGA. After the heavy rain in Malaga province last weekend, and the damage from Storm Filomena, came the snow and icy temperatures to complicate attempts by those affected to get back to normal.

Last Friday (8 January), at the height of the downpour from Filomena, a man and woman drowned in a swollen river in the rural Esparragal area of Mijas.

Their vehicle was dragged along by the Río Fuengirola after they stopped on a nearby track; another man and woman traveling in the car were rescued.

A team of divers recovered the body of the woman from the vehicle but the man was swept away by the strong currents, despite efforts to throw him a lifeline. His body was later recovered after a search by divers.



Locals rushed to see the unusual covering of hail on Fuengirola beach. **SUR**



El Torcal by Antequera was covered in snow. **A. J. G.**

A team of divers recovered the body of a woman from the vehicle but the man was swept away by the strong currents

Despite the town hall's notices prohibiting using the river crossings, council sources in Mijas said that last Friday there were more than thirty rescues of people trapped in cars during the storm.

Elsewhere along the Costa, firefighters using a ladder rescued a man who was trapped inside his vehicle by the flood waters from a swollen river in the Parque Antena area of Estepona.

Flooding

Flooding after a heavy downpour in the centre of Alhaurín de la Torre dragged several parked motorcycles and street furniture down the street, where several homes and garages were also flooded.

Over the two days of rain, the heaviest rain from Filomena was in Estepona where 327mm fell, around 60 per cent of typical annual rainfall in the province, although the intensity of the rain varied from place to place.

The port of Malaga measured waves of almost six metres at the peak of the storm with an average of 3.5 metres.



The Pico de la Encina walk in Alhaurín el Grande. **A.J.**



A snowy landscape near Alfarnate, in the Axarquía. **EUGENIO CABEZAS**



Guardia Civil later found the man's body in the Fuengirola river. **ÑITO SALAS**

A significant amount of snow fell on parts of the interior of Malaga province on Sunday - particularly affecting the Serranía de Ronda.

From the early hours of the morning, the peaks of the Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara and Alhama Natural Park, the Montes de Málaga and the Ronda area - including the Sierra de las Nieves - registered significant snowfall.

No serious incidents reported

In Ronda the snow affected several roads where the use of snow chains became mandatory on three routes, including the busy A-397, between Ronda and San Pedro.

However no serious incidents

were reported nor was it necessary to cut any traffic routes.

During Sunday, workers had to rescue four vehicles that were trapped by the snow between Yunquera and Ronda.

Hail also left scenes to remember on Sunday and bleached the beaches of Fuengirola and Torremolinos white. It happened at midday but lasted barely an hour. The last time a similar phenomenon was experienced was in January 2018, when a strong hailstorm covered the Carvajal area.

Meanwhile, those unaffected by the snow were still left shivering with early morning temperatures earlier this week little above freezing along the Costa del Sol.

Taking stock of the impact of Storm Filomena on the Costa del Sol

Although the heaviest rain was localised and didn't help the area's reservoirs much, up to 1,000 flood damage claims are expected

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Storm Filomena, which swept across the south of Spain last weekend, left a trail of destruction in its wake. The majority of local insurance claims are being recorded on the Costa del Sol.

The initial estimates from Spain's national insurance consortium - which pays out compensation for damage from natural weather incidents - calculate that there could be between 800 and 1,000 claims from those affected by the floods, with a total value of about four million euros.

Of the initial 168 claims received by midweek, Mijas was the most affected municipality with 94, followed by Alhaurín de la Torre (47). Half of them relate to flooding in homes and residential developments, and the rest for vehicles and commer-



A man in Alhaurín de la Torre inspects the flooding in his home. **S. SALAS**

cial premises. It is expected that the first payments will be made at the end of this month.

Storm Filomena also damaged numerous beaches in the province in addition to affecting beach bars and promenades.

The pattern of rainfall varied. The heaviest rain was in Estepona, at 327mm over three days. The provincial average in a normal year is 532mm, although this is officially measured at Malaga Airport. Here, 113mm

fell last weekend. But nearby Alhaurín de la Torre is believed to have had 250mm in a localised cloudburst.

Reservoirs

The rain did not fall very heavily over the province's reservoirs however, making little difference to water levels; water gained was only the equivalent of five months worth of water for the city of Malaga alone, according to estimates.

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Tighter regional restrictions expected today as third-wave Covid cases surge

New, tweaked rules came into force in Andalucía on Monday but soaring case rates mean officials want to get tougher still and sooner than planned

SUR

MALAGA. New restrictions brought in by the Andalusian regional government on Monday appear to have come too late to halt a dramatic surge in the local case rates of coronavirus. National case numbers shot up too this week.

The surge was being blamed locally this week on the more contagious 'British' strain of Covid-19 and the aftershock of people meeting up more often until Three Kings Day on 6 January.

Ahead of this week's meeting of the regional committee of pandemic experts, called for today (Friday), Andalusian president, Juanma Moreno, called on people to stay home voluntarily and to stop converting their homes into "mini restaurants" for friends and extended family in the face of the "explosive" growth in Covid-19 numbers.

More restrictions in Andalucía were widely expected to be announced today, as regional leaders here, along with counterparts in other devolved governments across Spain, called on central government to allow them to confine people to their homes again. Currently the nationwide rules do not allow the regions to go this far.

Moreno said the regional gov-



Moreno (c) on Thursday in Seville ahead of today's announcement. EFE

ernment is not considering "right now" asking for total confinement for Andalucía, which is still below the national average in incidence rate, but "we never rule out anything".

Andalusian Health minister Jesús Aguirre also renewed calls this week for Spain's Health minister, Salvador Illa, to bring the night curfew rule forward an hour to 9pm - a proposal that has so far been rejected by the national government.

On Thursday (14 January), regional data showed a continued increase in cases.

In Andalucía, there were 5,723

daily new cases reported, pushing the 14-day case rate per 100,000 people regionally to 405, more than double the 192 figure of a week earlier

Within Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, the number of new coronavirus infections exceeded a thousand for

The Andalucía case rate per 100,000 people in the previous 14 days was 405 on Thursday, double the figure of a week earlier

the second consecutive day.

A total of 1,287 positive tests were recorded following the 1,417 on Wednesday, according to official data from the Junta de Andalucía's health authority. This placed the province on a 432 per 100,000 average case rate. The number of people in hospital in the province with Covid-19 had doubled in a week to 386.

On Thursday evening, the national government announced 35,000 new daily cases in Spain, slightly down on Wednesday's record since the start of the pandemic of 38,869.

Last week's changes not enough

Last Friday (8 January), the Junta de Andalucía announced new measures, for the region in force for two weeks from Monday 11 January, although events have now overtaken this optimistic revision date.

The new measures started this week included the closure of shops and businesses at 8pm and bars and restaurants at 6pm. Cafeterias can stay open until 8pm as long as they don't serve alcohol after 6pm. Establishments are able to stay open for the collection of takeaways until 9.30pm and food can be delivered to homes until 11.30pm.

The curfew has been brought forward to 10pm until 6am across the region. Travel out of the region is not allowed except for essential purposes but inter-provincial travel in Andalucía was still permitted this week.

Malaga villages urge locals to go into voluntary lockdown

SUR

MALAGA. Faced with growing case rates locally, the mayors of some towns and villages in Malaga province have been taking it into their own hands to urge residents to stay indoors.

On Thursday, Álora became the latest place to issue the request, with a case rate of over 540 per 100,000. The mayor told locals to stay indoors as much as possible and avoid social meetings.

Earlier this week, three Axarquía villages - Benamocarra, Alcaucín and Comares - were among others issuing the same call. The mayor of Comares reminded the population that if they suffered any Covid-19 symptoms or had been in direct contact with a positive patient, to call health service helplines and "for all the community to cooperate".

On another front to try to combat the spread of the disease, the regional government has been carrying out mass testing on a percentage of the local populations this week in Coín, Vélez-Málaga, Mijas, Fuengirola, Monda, Gaucín, Genalguacil and Alhaurín el Grande.

A mobile testing unit has been carrying out the rapid antigen tests. Reports said around half of the sample summoned by text message for mass testing had been turning up, with a handful of positive results.

Andalucía to start vaccinating people over 80 next week after finishing care home first jabs

The region is ramping up its Covid-19 inoculation programme and nurses will administer vaccines seven days a week round the clock to reach targets

ÁNGEL ESCALERA

MALAGA. From next week the Junta de Andalucía plans to roll out its Covid-19 vaccination plan to people over the age of 80 who do not live in residences for the elderly.

The regional government has almost finished first vaccinations for the most vulnerable

group - the elderly in care homes and their carers who have had mobile teams visiting them.

In Andalucía there are estimated to be 450,000 octogenarians, of which approximately 80,000 live in Malaga province.

Likewise, from next week the Junta will begin to vaccinate private healthcare professionals who work on the front line in the fight against Covid, an inoculation that was launched for public health personnel on 27 December.

The vaccine from the American company Moderna was also due to arrive in Andalucía next week on top of the Pfizer one

currently being used.

Health officials have reminded people who have been given a first dose that they should continue to take precautions, such as the using a mask, social distancing and hand hygiene, since they are not protected against the SARS-CoV-2 to the maximum degree until they receive their second dose.

A total of 73 mobile teams, made up of 219 nurses, are participating in the mass vaccination in the region.

The Andalusian government is to run a "24/7 plan" to accelerate vaccination against Covid and to be able to administer



A care home resident in Malaga province receives her first injection. SUR

close to one million doses per month.

The objective is to vaccinate every day and reach the maximum number of people in the shortest time possible, without any interruptions, explained the Junta's spokesman, Elías Ben-

dodo, and regional Health minister, Jesús Aguirre.

Andalucía has asked for two million vaccines before spring in order to ensure the vaccination of the entire population over 65 years of age - approximately 1.4 million people.

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Hunt is on for 'violent' man wanted over Cártama acid attack on ex-partner

Police were still searching on Thursday for the 26-year-old man whose grey Volkswagen was spotted on the Costa del Sol shortly after the attack

SUR

MALAGA. A huge manhunt was on across the Costa del Sol this week to find a fugitive accused of throwing sulphuric acid at his former girlfriend and a female friend of hers in Cártama on Tuesday.

At time of press, the net appeared to be closing in on the suspect, who is also wanted over several other serious offences, although with police across the province keeping an eye out for him, his capture was still by no means certain.

After Tuesday's horrific attack, which seriously injured the two young women, the man was named by police as 27-year-old José Arcadio D.N., who fled the scene in a dark grey Volkswagen Golf with twin exhaust pipes. The suspect goes by the nickname 'El Melillero', because of his origins in the North African city of Melilla. Police sources told SUR that El Melillero has seven arrest warrants in force in total.

On Wednesday night the suspect's car was detected by a number plate recognition system on the A-45 motorway near Casabermeja, when it was spotted driving towards Malaga.

A huge chase along the A-7, involving Guardia Civil and National Police officers with helicopter support, followed. It also involved Local Police teams from Malaga city, Torremolinos, Benalmádena and



The acid-damaged white Mini after the attack on the two women earlier this week. **SUR**

Mijas.

During the chase, the road was closed, but the suspect managed to escape while driving at more than 200 km/h.

The abandoned car was located and removed on Thursday near the Muslim cemetery in Mijas. Police continue their work to locate and arrest him.

Airlifted to Seville

The attack on the two women happened on Tuesday while they were sitting in a white Mini. A grey VW had blocked the traffic and there was an altercation. Witnesses said a young man left his vehicle, approached the car and sprayed acid through the partially lowered window of the women's car.

Both of the screaming victims leapt from the vehicle which then careered out of control down the



'El Melillero' is dangerous. **SUR**

street for 60 metres before crashing into a lamp post. The alleged attacker fled the scene in his vehicle.

Local Police officers were first

on the scene and a few minutes later paramedics arrived. They called for the support of an air ambulance due to the nature of the women's injuries.

The suspect's ex-girlfriend suffered deep burns to 45 per cent of her body and she was flown to a specialist burns unit in Seville where her condition was described as "very serious".

Her friend was rushed to the burns unit of Malaga's regional hospital in a "serious but stable" condition with 25 per cent burns to her body.

Among the other offences that El Melillero is wanted for is an incident in 2018 when he allegedly pointed a pistol at staff in a bar in Torremolinos. He also has a trial pending later this month over a physical attack on another former partner in Marbella.

British man, 65, found dead after blaze in wooden house in Comares

EUGENIO CABEZAS

COMARES. A British man has died after a wooden house he was sleeping in was totally destroyed in a blaze in Comares on Wednesday night.

He has been named by authorities as Brian Patrick Mcorley who was 65 years old and had lived in Comares for almost two decades. Sources told SUR he had four children from two different marriages.

A caller alerted the 112 emergency number to the house fire in the Chiquín area, near the pedestrian bridge over the Cuevas river at around at 9pm.

Firefighters, Guardia Civil and Local Police officers along with paramedics were quickly on the scene but flames engulfed the wooden house causing the roof to collapse.

Speaking this Thursday the mayor of Comares, Manuel Robles, told SUR that Brian was a "very dear" neighbour and that he actively participated in the cultural and social activities of the town.

112 REPORTS

MARBELLA

30 reported for Covid rule flouting party

Á. F. / J. C. Police were called to break up a party being held at the Olivia Valère nightclub in Marbella at 1.30am on Sunday morning. Attendees were allegedly failing to comply with coronavirus regulations, with claims that more than 100 people were there. Officers rounded up and reported about 30 people for non-compliance, while it is believed others fled the premises and others were found hiding inside.

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

695 marijuana plants seized in two raids

E. C. National Police officers have dismantled two large marijuana plantations in Vélez-Málaga after regular power cuts in the area led an investigation to them.

Officers found 495 marijuana plants already in bloom and another 200 plants, collected and dried, ready for packaging and distribution.

Two men aged 41 and 51, both of Spanish nationality, have been arrested.

Body found in Benahavís had been riddled with bullets

The victim, 37, was shot at least 20 times inside his vehicle; special protocol had to be activated for the autopsy after the body tested positive for Covid

JUAN CANO / ÁLVARO FRÍAS

BENAHAVÍS. Investigations into the shooting of a man at a luxury development in Benahavís on Sunday point to a revenge killing case.

The victim, a 37-year-old man of French nationality and Moroccan origin, died after being

shot with an AK-47 assault rifle. A post mortem examination revealed more than 20 gunshot wounds.

The events took place around 9pm on Sunday at the Capanes del Golf luxury residential estate.

The victim, who rented a property there with his partner, arrived at the wheel of a luxury Bentley car.

It appears that the attackers - it is believed that at least two men were involved - were in another car. When the victim stopped his vehicle, the gunmen fired a barrage of shots with the

rifle. At least fifteen empty 7.62 calibre rounds of ammunition were found at the scene of the murder.

The injuries indicated that he had been shot with two different weapons, pointing detectives to

The victim, a 37-year-old man of French nationality and Moroccan origin, died after being shot with an AK-47 assault rifle

believe that the attackers fired several more shots with a short weapon.

The first Guardia Civil patrol that arrived on the scene found the body still inside the Bentley.

A routine Covid-19 test at the Malaga Forensics Institute was positive, leading to the activation of the yet unused protocol for a judicial autopsy on a body with Covid-19.

Sources consulted indicated that the dead man had a police record from a few years ago that would link him to drug trafficking, but it has yet to be fully confirmed by investigators.

The vehicle used by the attackers was located near a stream in Estepona, completely gutted by fire. Inside police found the Kalashnikov weapon that appears to have been used to commit the crime.

Brexit chaos leads to short supplies at Costa's British shops

The Food Co., which supplies Tesco and Iceland, as well as Russell's in Torrox Costa have reported problems

JENNIE RHODES

MALAGA. Supermarkets selling British products in the province have been reporting problems with deliveries since 1 January, the day after the Brexit deal agreed on Christmas Eve came into force and the end of the transition period.

The Food Co. and Overseas Su-

permercados, which supply Tesco and Iceland products on the Costa del Sol, apologised to customers via their Facebook pages about the lack of fresh products.

On Wednesday they both posted that they had "been working around the clock over the last few months to prepare for post-Brexit life". However, "this has come with its own set of challenges, many of which were only disclosed in the days leading up to January 1st [and] agreeing a deal on the 24th December has not helped." They went on to say that they are starting to use local



The Food Co. supermarket which opened in Mijas in November. **sur**

suppliers for fruit and vegetables.

Russell's British Store in Torrox Costa has also reported problems leading to some empty shelves. Kane Tipping who works at Russell's said, "We haven't received any meat since New Year. Our suppliers didn't know what certificates were needed and there were doubts about certain

products, for example those containing milk powder, but fortunately that is OK."

Tipping added that there was "a lot of uncertainty" about how long supply problems could go on for. Russell's also uses local suppliers for some meat products and they say that frozen food is starting to come through.

Three days of strikes called for ITV vehicle testing stations in Andalucía

EUROPA PRESS

MALAGA. The UGT union in Andalucía has called for three days of strike action at all ITV vehicle testing stations in Andalucía on 25, 26 and 27 January if negotiations with the management company, Veiasa, fail.

In a statement released this Monday the union said their workers would strike if "the meetings scheduled with the management company do not result in firm agreements to solve the problems that have led us to strike".

"The problem of delays in appointments to take the ITV in Andalucía has not yet been resolved and the average delay time to inspect a vehicle is between two and five months in most stations," said the union.

According to UGT the lack of personnel is the main reason for this delay, with a shortage of 450 workers across Andalucía.

The appointment delays at the regional government-owned but privately-operated test centres have considerably worsened during the coronavirus pandemic.

Rogelio Velasco from the Junta de Andalucía said they were optimistic about the negotiations that are being held with the workers' representatives and hopes that an agreement can be reached this week.

Benalmádena ice rink not expected to reopen for 'at least six months'

IVÁN GELIBTER

BENALMÁDEN. Benalmádena's famous Club de Hielo ice skating rink is unlikely to open its doors again for at least six months – unless the Covid-19 restrictions are suddenly eased – according to officials at the town hall.

On 5 December, the doors at the council-owned premises (but privately-operated facilities) were suddenly slammed shut citing the drop in users due to the preventive measures against the second wave of Covid-19 which forced the centre to close at 6pm.

The head of Sports at the council, Joaquín Villazón, insisted that the closure was a direct result of

the coronavirus and the drop in the number of users and not because of a bad management.

He said, "As a government team we are going to ensure that all jobs are saved, and reopen the facilities once the current health crisis has passed."

Not profitable

The centre is divided into three parts: the skating rink, the gym and the pool. In the case of the first, the official said that it had to close in order to comply with health regulations. In the case of the swimming pool, only 40 per cent of the capacity could be used. And, as for the gym, most of the clientele went after 6pm and that therefore most

of its users had been lost.

Given this situation, Villazón explains, the concession holder did not see it profitable to continue with the service.

The town council announced that they have started to work on a new proposal, but that it will not be ready for at least six months. In addition, they do not plan to retract the concession, which was due to end at the end of this year.

"If we do, the workers would not be able to resort to support from the ERTE scheme, and we want to protect them," admitted Villazón.

"If there are no restrictions, maybe the concession holder will reopen, although I doubt it," said the town hall official.

Rotarians offer comfort to the homeless in Mijas and Fuengirola

TONY BRYANT

MIJAS. Members of the Rotary Club Mijas were out on the streets of Mijas and Fuengirola last week to continue to offer assistance to the area's homeless community. Rotarians distributed food, warm clothing, blankets and sleeping bags to help rough sleepers cope with the winter temperatures.

The campaign also offered free dental treatment, an initiative that was launched shortly after the club was founded in 2017. Since then, the organisation has focused on the homeless, making regular donations to local food banks run by associations like Adintre and the Red Cross.

President Suvi Kauranen said: "I would like this not to be necessary, as nobody should be sleeping on the street, but if the need is still there we will certainly continue with the project."

Action group renews call to extend train line to Estepona

FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ

MALAGA. An action group fighting to extend the passenger train service from Malaga towards Estepona has said it believes the central government has a "unique, probably historical" chance to finance the project with EU coronavirus restructuring funds.

The 'Plataforma por el tren litoral en la Costa del Sol' says the project "fits perfectly with the objectives set by Europe for restructuring funds, where among other issues it is committed to the development of sustainable transport, such as the rail transport, and to infrastructures that stimulate the economy".

Businesses and hospitality associations have long called for the extension of the line from Fuengirola along the coast to Estepona, which they claim could carry up to 50 million passengers a year.

The group adds, "It's a line that facilitates the mobility of the coastal population, while reinforcing our international relations making the most of the potential that having an international airport and the AVE high-speed train links provides."

'It would be absolutely tragic if the Salón Varietés had to close'

Lynn Halliday President of SALVA

The theatre is experiencing severe financial difficulties and its members are trying to raise 30,000 euros by March in order to reopen

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. The Salón Varietés Theatre has been presenting amateur theatrical productions in Fuengirola for more than 35 years, and in that time it has become an institution among the English-speaking community. The devastating effects of the coronavirus pandemic have left the theatre with severe financial difficulties, and, unless sufficient funds can be raised, it is in danger of closing for good. SALVA president Lynn Halliday spoke to SUR in English about the current fundraising campaign and her determination to save the theatre, the only one of its kind in Spain.

-How is the fundraising campaign going?

-We are lucky, because we have a great fundraising team and they have been organising lots of different events. We have so far

raised just over 8,000 euros, but we need to raise 30,000 by March, so we need a huge injection.

-Are you confident that you will reach the target?

-It is a lot of money to raise, but we are very hopeful. We have had a huge response, which is fantastic considering the financial climate at the moment, but we cannot be confident, as we really don't know what will happen.

-What will happen if you do not hit the target?

-If we do not reach the target by March, we will have to keep plugging on with the fundraising until such time that we can reopen the doors.

-Do you receive any outside financial help?

-No, we don't receive any grants or subsidies; we are fully self-financing. Running the theatre fully costs around 25,000 euros a month during normal times, so we really rely on bums on seats.

-Would it be possible to open for matinees?

-We have considered this, but at the moment we are restricted to how many people we can admit, so it would be very difficult to do without running at a loss. This is tragic, as there is nothing we want



Lynn Halliday is determined to get the theatre back open. T. BRYANT

more than to put on shows.

-How much does it cost to put on a show?

-This depends on the show, because we have to pay performance rights and those are based on the amount of people that watch the show. We also have to build the set and make costumes, so it would be anywhere between 10,000 and 20,000 euros.

-Do you own the building?

-No, we rent the building, but our landlords have been very helpful: they are not charging us any rent, but this only lasts until March. However, it is not just the rent, because there are obviously lots of overheads, like standing charges for electricity, water, and general maintenance. This means we incur costs while having no incoming funds.

-Do you receive any income from the bar?

-Not as such. We sublet the bar, but, because we are not paying rent at the moment, we have passed this on to the bar also.

-What is the worst scenario?

It would be absolutely tragic if the theatre closed. We have established a hub among the local expat community, so we are absolutely determined to keep the theatre alive.

-How can people help?

-By organising, or supporting events, or by making a donation. We will help publicise any fundraising events and we welcome any ideas.

i More information:
fundraising@salonvarietes.com

Fuengirola now has the fourth largest population in the province

IVÁN GELIBTER

FUENGIROLA. Despite a lack of space remaining for development, Fuengirola has seen its population grow again this year. Passing the 80,000 mark for the first time, (with 82,000 people on the population census), Fuengirola is now the fourth largest municipality in the province - in terms of population - after Malaga city, Marbella and Mijas.

This was revealed by mayor Ana Mula this week, who said that this was a result of the good work of the town hall. In her opinion more and more people are choosing to live in Fuengirola because they are attracted "by the quality of life and the multiple possibilities it offers".

As Mula explained, throughout 2020, according to figures from the National Institute of Statistics, the number of residents registered in the town grew by 3.15 per cent compared to 2019 (the biggest rise in all of Andalucía). "Fuengirola is one of the most important towns, with the biggest future in Andalucía. That's not just my opinion, it's a fact. And the data proves it. Year after year we've had an increase in population," she said.

Mula repeated that quality of life on offer was the main factor for people to choose the town for their new home, their second residence or to enjoy their retirement.

Local animal charities devastated by aftermath of storm Filomina

Appeals have been put out by organisations requesting help with clean-up operations and for donations of food, medication and blankets

T. BRYANT

COSTA DEL SOL. Storm Filomina played havoc on the Costa del Sol over the weekend and, along with damage and human casualties, many of the area's animal charities were severely affected. Urgent appeals were put out by local organisations requesting help with clean-up operations of premises badly damaged by torrential rain and gale-force winds. There were also appeals for blankets,

medication, food, mops and brooms.

Spanish equine association SEARCH was one of the organisations that suffered from flooding. The Coin-based rescue centre's roof was badly damaged, causing severe leaks, while essential deliveries of hay could not be delivered because of mud slides.

The ACE dog shelter in Mijas

More than 400 dogs and over 100 cats were saved due to the swift action of the volunteers at the ACE refuge in Mijas

was badly affected when a nearby river burst its banks. Thankfully, more than 400 dogs and over 100 cats currently in the charity's care were saved due to the swift action of the volunteers. Unfortunately, two of the dogs died the following day and many of the animals are, in the words of founder Fabienne Paques, "critically ill with lung infections".

Volunteers needed

Protectora de Animales Domésticos (PAD) is calling for volunteers to help with the clean-up of the shelter in Mijas, which was also badly damaged by the rain. A spokesperson said that they need around 20 people to help with getting the shelter back in operation.



ACE workers with some of the rescued dogs after last week's storms. SUR

The Last Chance dog shelter, also in Mijas, was preparing to evacuate animals due to severe flooding, but quick-thinking volunteers managed to pump the water out before the kennels became totally submerged. The charity is now appealing for

tinned food and blankets.

"The rain has had a massive impact and we nearly had to remove the dogs from the shelter," founder Jacqui Ross said.

Information about how to help can be found on the charities' Facebook pages.

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Anita Jordan (right) and her mum Diane administering the hand sanitiser at Trapiche market last Tuesday. J.R

Trapiche market - a firm fixture in the Axarquía diary

Anita Jordan has been running the weekly event since 2007 when she started with 12 stalls. Before Covid she had up to around 70 regulars

JENNIE RHODES



TRAPICHE. The weekly Trapiche farmer's market has been a key fixture in the diary and highlight of the week in the Axarquía for longer than some expats can even remember.

Every Tuesday morning foreign and Spanish traders, companies and charities set up stall at the Jardines del Trapiche function rooms and gardens, knowing that they will attract a good crowd of regulars, tourists and second-home owners.

Anita Jordan has been running the market in Trapiche since 2007 and took over from her friend Linda Davis, who set up the first one in Cártama in 2002.

After problems in Cártama, successive alternatives were found in Puente Don Manuel and Periana. In 2007, Anita managed to agree with the owners of Jardines del Trapiche to hold the weekly event there.

Anita, 56, who has been in Spain for 19 years, confesses that she "never thought for one minute" that she would find herself running a market here.

When she's not organising that, she also cooks fish and chips on a Friday night and does the Sunday carvery at La Tavola restaura-

nt in Coin. "I never imagined I'd be doing fish and chip suppers and a carvery either," she laughs, adding "I'm a vegetarian."

Like everywhere, the Covid-19 pandemic has hit the market hard, with many stallholders worried about the virus and deciding not to have a stall for the time being.

Anita started with 12 stalls in 2007 and that soon became 18. By 2019 she explains that before Covid they could have up to 70. In terms of visitors, she admits that she has "no idea" how many people come through, but that "it's normally a lot".

Like other markets, it had to close for the first lockdown last spring and then in November it wasn't worth opening just for people from Vélez-Málaga. "We couldn't keep it going just for people from Vélez-Málaga. A lot of the stallholders and customers come from further afield. People come from all across the province," Anita explains.

Anita is confident things will pick up again though and explains that, for most traders, the market, which keeps going all year round (apart from the forced closures in 2020), is their livelihood. "I have had people begging me to keep it going since the start of Covid," she admits.

Anita has ensured that traders and customers alike adhere

to Covid-19 protocols; everyone must wear a mask at all times and use hand sanitiser before they enter. She's even roped her mum, Diane, into coming along with her, putting her in charge of dispensing the hydroalcoholic gel at the gates.

There's an outdoor and indoor area, cafeteria and gardens, as well as ample parking.

"It's a friendly market and very international," says Anita, adding that among the current stallholders there are Britons, Germans, French, Italians, Irish and Peruvians. Customers, she says, come from all over Europe and beyond and, even on a cold January morning in the midst of a health pandemic, it's easy to identify a range of native English accents and European languages.

There are stalls selling everything from organic vegetables to books, secondhand and new clothes, prepared food, photography, art and crafts and natural cosmetics. Some of the local charities are regulars and insurance companies, estate agents and other businesses also attend.

Despite the early starts - she gets up at 4.30am and drives from her home in Cártama to be at Trapiche by 7.15 - Anita says she loves running the market "most of the time" and that it's worth keeping going despite the problems caused by Covid-19. "As long as people keep coming I will carry on," she concludes.

i Further information:

Facebook: Trapiche market.
Every Tuesday 9.30am - 1.30pm,
Jardines del Trapiche, Carretera Benamargosa, 0.5 Km, 29718 Vélez-Málaga.

Research project into sustainability and efficiency of Nerja sewage plant wins award

NERJA

E. C. An academic study which looks at improvements to the sustainability and efficiency of Nerja's new sewage treatment plant has won an award.

Francisco Casas's Master's dissertation, which provides five alternatives to the management of the plant to ensure full use of the water for agriculture and human consumption, received the Premios de la Cátedra DAM, an organisation that oversees the management of wastewater treatment in the Mediterranean and is based at the University of

Valencia.

"When I analysed the project I saw that the proposal didn't go far enough to collect the energy produced by biomass or the nutrients for agriculture," explained the 40-year-old student.

The main objective of his report, Casas explained, is to "look at the concept of the circular economy of water, the reuse of treated water for agriculture and the reduction of environmental and health impacts".

He added that Spain could face "further fines" from the European Union if it doesn't commit to finding solutions to the nine incomplete treatment plants in Spain, of which seven are in Andalucía (Alhaurín el Grande, Barbate, Coin, Isla Cristina, Nerja, Matalascañas and Tarifa).

"The Spanish government has accumulated approximately 50 million euros in fines for delays since 2018 and it could go up," Casas warned.



The N-340 between Maro and La Herradura. SUR

La Herradura to Maro stretch of road is sixth most dangerous in Spain

NERJA

E. CABEZAS. Spain's automobile association, The Real Automóvil Club de España (RACE), has revealed that a stretch of the N-340 coastal road between Maro and La Herradura is the sixth most dangerous in the country.

The section between kilometres 296,4 and 312,9 has repeatedly appeared in the country's top ten most dangerous roads for over a decade.

In the last three years, the section, which is particularly windy and hilly and cuts between mountains and cliffs, has witnessed seven accidents involving one death and six serious injuries.

The majority of the accidents have involved motorbikes as the road is popular with bikers, especially at weekends.

The RACE gathers its grizzly statistics through a European programme which analyses risk factors, including how many accidents take place, how serious they are and how many are fatal. It also takes into account the characteristics of the roads.

The riskiest stretch of the N-340 is managed by the national government, while the section that runs through Nerja and Maro centres falls under the responsibility of the local town halls.

According to the RACE findings, the most dangerous stretch of road in Spain in 2020 was a section of the N-240 in Huesca province, followed by a section of the N-541 in Ourense.

The only other road in Andalucía to enter the top ten was a section of the N-433 in Huelva province.



Sixty-second Nerja cave anniversary reunion forced online

NERJA

Three of the original five discoverers were joined by representatives from the cave foundation and the town hall to mark the occasion

E. CABEZAS

NERJA. The annual reunion of the Nerja cave discoverers took place online this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 12 January, three of the original five discoverers were joined by representatives of the Nerja Cave Foundation and town hall online to mark 62 years since they came across the Neolithic site.

Up until this year, it has been customary for the men who came



The Nerja cave 60th anniversary reunion in 2019. **E. CABEZAS**

across the cave as young boys to gather at the historic site to mark the occasion.

The boys discovered the cave while playing in the area in 1959 and it first opened to the public

on 12 June 1960.

From 15 January to 25 February children under 12 can get in for free and two-for-one offers are available from Monday to Thursday.

Venta Baja to Riogordo road works complete after five years of complaints

RIOGORDO

E. C. The regional Infrastructure minister, Marifrán Carazo, visited Riogordo on Monday as work to a 22-kilometre section of the A-7204 road in the Alta Axarquía was completed.

The section, from the junction with the A-402 in Venta Baja, was one of the first to get under way during the first coronavirus lockdown, taking advantage of the reduction in traffic, according to Carazo.

The one-million-euro budget for the project came from European Union Regional Development funding (ERDF). Local mayors first reported the road's bad state of repair to the regional government five years ago.



Rincón de la Victoria beach. **SUR**

Second study rules out presence of Covid-19 in sea

R. DE LA VICTORIA

E. C. A second analysis of sea water has ruled out the presence of Covid-19 off Rincón de la Victoria's coast.

The samples were taken between 14 and 17 December 2020. Earlier tests were carried out in summer which also showed there was no evidence of the virus.

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The director of IKEA Malaga, Linus Frejf, inside the showroom part of the store. FRANCIS SILVA

"In Malaga we spend more in bars and restaurants than on the home - but that's changing now"

Linus Frejf Director of IKEA Malaga

With shopping habits quickly evolving, the company is looking at a new strategy to make the IKEA brand more accessible for everyone

DARYL FINCH / JUAN SOTO

MALAGA. Swedish businessman Linus Frejf's time in Malaga hasn't been easy. Having only just arrived after spells in Russia and Poland, and with only a handful of Spanish lessons under his belt, the Covid-19 pandemic changed all of our lives forever.

As director of the IKEA store in Bahía Azul, next to the Plaza Mayor shopping centre in Malaga, he has had to oversee major changes in a short period of time. Not only the way we make purchases has changed, but also where our priorities now lie. We asked him to reflect on the past year and how the company has been forced to bring forward its plans in a bid to adapt to our 'new normal'.

-How was 2020 for the company?
-It was challenging - for all of us. But in a way, business is surprisingly good.

-How has the pandemic affected you?

-More than anything, the pandemic has pushed us five years into the future. Everything we were antici-

pating, everything we were planning for around 2025 to 2030 has been brought forward. During this pandemic we've had to become much closer to the people - the people that couldn't come to the store because of restrictions or because they didn't dare to go to a shopping centre. In Granada we have opened a click and collect at the Nevada shopping centre where there will also be an IKEA Diseña, where we help customers to make orders but also to plan kitchens, bedrooms and living rooms. This is kind of the model that we're trying to build. Then we'll see what we can do in other parts of the region. The next focus now is very much along the western Costa del Sol, where we don't have an IKEA touchpoint until more or less Algeciras. So there is quite a long distance where IKEA is non-existent at the moment.

-How has the pandemic changed us as consumers?

-We could see two quite clear trends in Malaga. Normally, people don't spend so much time at home. Malaga is a fantastic city; we spend more money on restaurants and bars and on drinks and food than we do on our home furnishing. We don't invite family and friends to our home so much; we tend to go to 'chiringuitos' or to restaurants or to the beach. I think this time gave our customers a totally new view of what the home is,

and what it could be. I think many, including myself, realised that they didn't have a work space at home that is suitable for sitting and having eight-hour meetings. The second thing we realised was that we will all be a little bit less prone to travel so that's why we decided to focus super strongly on our accessibility business plan.

-Do you think this sudden surge in interest in improving our homes will last?

-I don't think this is something that will disappear quickly. Even with restrictions easing up and a vaccine arriving, I think people will

WHAT HE SAID

DURING THE LOCKDOWN

"We quickly discovered that we didn't have a good space for working from home nor enough storage"

FUTURE

"The next focus now is on the Costa del Sol because we don't have any presence until more or less Algeciras"

still have a bit of a mental barrier about living life as freely as we did before. My feeling is there will be a continual trend of spending more time in our homes, which we will open up to more people. I also think more people will be free to work from wherever they want in the world, and not only from the home.

-What did customers prioritise most during lockdown?

-Quite early on during lockdown I asked the staff what they were experiencing in their homes and we all kind of came to the same conclusion. If we had children, we didn't have good storage for them. Also, we were all working from home and none of us had a good workstation. We didn't have a comfortable chair, no desk... not an ergonomically safe environment at all. And then as we spent much more time together as a family, I think storage in general was the part that stood out a lot.

-Did any items surprise you?

-One type of storage surprised me a little bit and that was wardrobes. But some people have more love for shoes and clothes than I do. I have my uniform on for 12 hours every day!

-Did you run out of stock of many items?

-Certainly. What's extremely challenging in a big international company like IKEA is that we're reliant on a supply chain and supply chains don't react very well to panic breaks and that's difficult to get going again.

-If another strict lockdown happens again, do you feel you'd be prepared this time around?

-For sure. During the first lockdown we went from having between 80 and 90 per cent of total turnover from customers physically coming through the doors to becoming a 100 per cent online retailer. After just a couple of days we realised that doing everything from a central fulfilment centre was not feasible. So after a couple of weeks we brought all our people back into the stores and turned all of them in Spain into local fulfilment centres. So now we have the model, we could simply go back to it and then work out how to make it even better.

-Have restrictions on foreign travel affected you? Have you noticed that there aren't as many foreigners coming in?

-Absolutely. Malaga is a super popular tourist destination which means that in a normal year, about 30 per cent of our total turnover is from foreign customers.

-Do you think Brexit will have an effect?

-I'm hoping that we have already seen its negative impact on the Spanish and Malaga economy and that there will be a turnaround. We actually started seeing a declining trend about two years ago with the Brexit referendum and then of course with the lockdown. Over summer about half of the foreign customers as normal were coming. Now with new mobility restrictions it is even less. But with the relaxation of restrictions, we are

expecting more visitors, also from other provinces, and we are prepared with more stock, new scheduling and new safety measures to prevent bottlenecks.

-Speaking of bottlenecks, is there any progress on the project to get the new access road?

-At the moment this is still in progress. Everything from our perspective is ready. Now the only thing is to get the final approval from the city hall and we're ready to go. We're hoping to have it by spring.

-IKEA has announced it's no longer publishing its catalogue in paper form. Why's that?

-Well we will have the current one until August. But it's a development that's in keeping with the times. That said the catalogue is much more than just a tool for finding home furnishings - it's an event. So next year you'll still receive something, but I'm not allowed to share what it is!

-And the company is now moving more towards reusing furniture. Is that correct?

-Exactly. I've been with this company for about 15 years, and I've always had a very strong connection with the brand's values which are very much connected to circularity and sustainability. What we haven't been so effective at is communicating it - we're a little bit too humble. Now we are taking a few steps with our new rebanded Circular Hub section, a concept from the 80s, to give furniture, which would normally go in the bin, a second chance.

-Shopping in IKEA seems easier these days. Before it felt like you were trapped in a maze. Is this a deliberate change?

-It's a big store here - 23,500 square metres and there are 10,000 article numbers so to have the necessary stock you need a long way to walk around. But here we've opened up in an excellent way. We've taken away taller things so that visitors can get more of an overview. The IKEA standard concept has shortcuts but sometimes they're not prioritised and they become a little bit hidden but Malaga has made a point to highlight the shortcuts to make it a little bit easier. This is a local Malaga initiative. But in general too we're also becoming much better at understanding what the customer actually wants to see and then allowing them to see that quite quickly.

-The same applies to assembling items. Assembling an IKEA product doesn't take as long as it used to...

-Self assembly is an old concept that provides both sustainability improvements and also cost saving. The latest IKEA development is to include dowels in more parts of the range, especially in our new storage and kitchen solutions. They're all connected without screws so it makes it much easier and also gives you a cheaper piece of furniture at the end of the day. Of course, too, the instructions are improving as we find ways to make things more efficiently.

SALES

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Slow clear-up as worst snow in decades gives way to record freezing temperatures

Madrid and other towns and cities affected by Storm Filomena have been racing to clear roads and reopen premises in the face of the icy blast

SUR

MADRID. It was all hands on deck to clear the exceptional amounts of snow that fell on Madrid and other towns and cities late last week. Forecasters said it was the worst snowfall since the early 1970s in the capital region.

With vehicles blocking roads, damage to trees and accumulated snow turning to ice as temperatures plummeted to the lowest in 60 years, even politicians joined in the neighbourhood clear-ups.

Coming in the midst of a surge in Covid-19 cases, hospitals, many with blocked entrances, were put under extra pressure. By early this week, some 2,000 people had sought medical help in Madrid after slipping on snow and ice.

Although Madrid was slowly getting back to normal by the end of the week, on Thursday the capital's mayor, José Luis Martínez-Almeida, joined many other mayors in the region in calling on the government to declare his city a Disaster Zone in order to increase the level of support available and speed up compensation claims.

As well as blocking roads, the snowfall closed Madrid's Barajas airport for a few days until last Monday and the huge Mercamadrid wholesale market until Tuesday, disrupting fresh produce supplies in the city.

Schools were also closed this week across the worst-hit areas



A pedestrian resorts to using skis by Madrid's Royal Palace after the blizzard late last week. EFE



Supplies got moving again on Tuesday at the wholesale market. EFE

of inland Spain and some were expected to remain shut next week as damage was assessed.

Madrid estimated on Thursday that 850 tonnes of the 9,000 tonnes of rubbish that has built up on the city's streets had been cleared.

The freezing temperature that hit much of the country after the snowfalls has prevented melting. Early on Tuesday morning, the thermometer in the tiny village of Bello, in Teruel province, got as low as -25.4° C, the lowest in a Spanish town or village since 1963.

Some main rural roads across the country stayed shut. In Andalusia, five were still closed on Thursday in higher parts of Almeria, Cadiz and Granada provinces.

Government rules out measures to control soaring electricity prices during cold snap

SUR

MADRID. The national government said this week that the big surge in electricity prices in the last few days was "temporary" and that prices would drop again.

Ministers ruled out intervening, creating an uncomfortable political situation for the left-wing ruling coalition of PSOE and Unidas Podemos. Both political groups had been extremely critical of the previous conservative government when they were in opposition and when prices last rose in the same way.

On Wednesday this week the price per megawatt hour for consumers on variable tariffs had risen over a third since last Sunday.

More radical Unidas Podemos wants to intervene on prices but its PSOE partner is staying cautious, partly blaming EU rules.



Energy costs have risen. J.R.L.

THE EURO ZONE MARK NAYLER

Layers of the Covid cake



Here's a typical sentence on Covid and Spain's economy, taken from a Reuter's report published last week: commenting on the year-on-year 22% rise in unemployment seen last December, the news outlet said that the "brutal economic contraction induced by the coronavirus crippled tourism and other labour-intensive industries".

This is not technically false, but it is misleading, because there's a vital omission in the

source's description of the cause-and-effect chain that is, indeed, ruining many businesses in the hospitality sector. There are three layers to the disgusting cake we've all had rammed down our throats this year: first, the virus itself; secondly, the measures taken to temporarily reduce its spread; and thirdly, the economic, social and human fallout from both of those combined and each separately.

The prevailing view seems

to be that there is no real distinction to be made here, from which it follows that the panicked, punitive response to the virus employed in Spain is not just the best way, but the only way. But despite what the country's fumbling government wants you to believe, this is manifestly false, and not just because Sweden went down a different route (thereby making itself the focus of a complex debate about the wisdom of indiscriminate lockdowns).

It takes just seconds to enumerate ways in which the response could have been different. Before the imposition of total lockdown - a devastating and extreme measure, wherever it's employed - was there any attempt whatsoever at a cost-benefit analysis? What

about placing mobility restrictions only on the most vulnerable parts of the population - what's been called a "smarter" approach to lockdowns? What about employing greater leniency in smaller villages and less densely-populated areas? What about making some rules discretionary rather than compulsory? What about allowing bars and restaurants to take their own risk calculations and deciding for themselves whether or not to remain open for the last few hours of trading? I could go on.

The fact that a discussion about different approaches is possible shows that there are other ways in which Spain could have dealt with its Covid situation, especially as it has impacted upon the tourism and hospitality sectors. In

other words, there is a distinction to be made - and a very important one - between the second and third layers of the Covid cake. This, in turn, leads us to question the extent to which the damage sustained by the country's bars, restaurants and hotels is owed only indirectly to the virus itself, but directly to the draconian measures taken to contain it.

This question is especially pertinent when applied to the prohibition of alcohol in bars between six and eight in the evening. Comprehension or justification of this ludicrous piece of legislation requires a real leap of credulity, as it presumably did for its mercurial creators - all the proof one needs that there's the virus, then a whole load of nonsense on top of it.

A message of hope for 2021 in New Year message

"I cannot pretend the hard times are over yet," the chief minister told the people of Gibraltar about Covid and Brexit, "but they will be"

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. This time last year, Brexit was the only challenge the Gibraltar government was expecting to have to deal with, said chief minister, Fabian Picardo, in his televised New Year Message on Monday evening, but the Covid-19 pandemic meant that "our departure from the EU almost faded into the back of our minds as we watched, almost powerless, as the

virus spread".

In March, Picardo said, he chaired the toughest meetings of the Cabinet of his time in office, and they were called upon to make some of the toughest decisions they had ever made. "I have hated every decision my government has taken to curtail your constitutional freedoms. But I am certain that the actions we took in the first week of March last year saved lives. And in taking those difficult decisions, I reached out to the Opposition. United, we faced those early Covid challenges together," he said. He then spoke about the vaccine and how it had brought new hope "which will allow us to move on".

Moving on, of course, means Brexit which is by no means over



The new agreement will put an end to long delays at the border. **sur**

in Gibraltar even though the transition period has now ended. This week the first ferries arrived from Algeciras carrying goods of animal origin from the UK, which due to Brexit can no longer be trans-

ported across the land border. This cumbersome situation is just one of those the Gibraltar government is trying to avoid as it negotiates its own future relationship with the European Union.

The chief minister said he is "very happy" that they have been able to reach the in-principle agreement which was announced on New Year's Eve, and which he said covers all the key issues for Gibraltar without crossing a single one of the red lines on sovereignty, jurisdiction and control.

"And so it is with hope above everything else that we embark on the rest of 2021. That new hope I spoke of earlier. Hope that we can start to leave behind this terrible pandemic. Hope that we can avoid the loss of any more precious lives. And the hope that we can together go forward into a new, much brighter, post-pandemic and post-Brexit world. A world in which we will be closer than ever to Britain. With the right to passport our services into the UK. And as part of the UK's new trade deals with the world. And yet with an enduring connection with the EU. Securing our right to unhindered mobility and seeking new arrangements to trade in goods.

"I cannot pretend the hard times are over yet," he said. "But they will be".

IN BRIEF



The Governor, Sir David Steel, visited the vaccination centre. **sur**

CORONAVIRUS

Gibraltar starts vaccination campaign

D.B. There was a huge sense of anticipation on Saturday evening when the first 5,850 doses of the Pfizer BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine were delivered to the Rock by an RAF plane. The vaccination campaign began early on Sunday, with frontline workers and residents of

Elderly Residential Services the first to receive the injections.

Vaccinations have continued every day this week, as the number of active cases of the coronavirus continued to rise. On Wednesday evening there was very sad news, as it was announced that the number of deaths linked to the virus had risen to 23. Five people died on the same day, including three residents of Elderly Residential Services.

SECURITY


Homeless protest sparks scare at the Convent

D.B. Security is being reviewed at the Convent, the official residence of the Governor of Gibraltar, after a man climbed onto the roof to protest about homelessness on Wednesday afternoon. He was holding up a sign saying 'Shelter-wise - helping the homeless', and is believed to have gained access from nearby scaffolding. Police cordoned off the area and diverted traffic, and officers went up on to the roof to persuade the 42-year-old to come down, which he finally did. He was later arrested.

CRIME

Cannabis resin seized in Customs operation

D.B. Gibraltar's Customs Marine unit seized 825 kilos of cannabis resin and a Spanish-registered yacht on Tuesday after stopping the vessel during a routine patrol 1.5 miles off Europa Point. After questioning the two male occupants, who were Spanish and Portuguese, the boat was taken to Customs Marine Base and searched. Slabs and bales of cannabis resin were discovered in a secret compartment in the floor. The haul is believed to have a street value of around four million pounds.



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THE BIGGER PICTURE
JEREMY BLATCH

Cryptocurrencies and Bitcoin: folly or future?

✉ jbl@ehh.gi



A battle of ideas is raging among investors and speculators, fought with equal conviction about the merits and defects of Bitcoin and cryptocurrencies. According to the founder of the Celcius Network, "People giving venture capital to crypto believe it will save humanity from itself."

It is easy to confuse cryptocurrency with a state-owned digital

currency. Because most US dollar payments are made with a piece of plastic, the USD is already a digital currency. That governments will in time have a digital currency is probable, simply because they can. However, the US Central Bank is quick to point out that this is not currently being considered.

Some 1,500 cryptocurrencies are currently being offered in the

world. The primary concern of the G20 is to protect the consumer against fraud, global terrorism, illegal arms sales, human trafficking and narco-trafficking. However, US regulators, in consultation with the G20, are deliberately dragging their feet and not producing any clarity in regard to regulation.

The term 'cryptocurrency' is misleading. As a 'currency', they fail as a store of value or a medium of exchange. Though ostensibly 'crypto', they cannot deliver security and scalability and at the same time be decentralised. Crypto-entrepreneurs widely trumpet consumer access to the stock market through smart contracts, but unlike common stock or bond holders who

have a direct claim on an asset and contractual rights, these consumers have no rights nor claim. If this situation is to continue unchecked it will magnify counterparty risk on a global scale, the very risk that brought down the giant insurance company AIG in 2008 during the financial crisis.

Due to its decentralised construction, Bitcoin is acknowledged to be different from other cryptos because it is not an efficient method of payment: Bitcoin can process five transactions per second, while Ethereum can process 7 and Visa 25,000! Billions of people use Visa, WeChat, PayPal, and iPay, driving down costs. These services are the result of fintech

revolution, not Crypto, nor Blockchain.

Because the technology used in Crypto is in its infancy, we can only speculate about its future development and usage. Technological advancement is, by its very nature, deflationary. No one could have assured us several years ago, that we would be making free telephone calls across the world via the internet.

Like gold, Bitcoin may make the investment case as a hedge against the devaluation of Fiat paper currency and loss of purchasing power. As with any commodity, scarcity of supply and demand drives prices, and scarcity of supply is used to support the case for an increase in the price of Bitcoin.

With 55% of Bitcoin mining controlled by three miners, the risk of oligarchic control is real. If Bitcoin is held in securitised form within a portfolio, it may prove to help preserve purchasing power over time and act as a hedge against other assets. Since its launch in 2009, the price of Bitcoin has spiked to USD 20,000 and crashed to USD 6,000 on its way to surpass USD 30,000.

Therefore, those who hold Bitcoin as the panacea for the global financial system had better be prepared for a rough and ugly ride.

As for "saving humanity from itself", pride goes before a fall!

The author is a member of the Society of Trustees and Estate Practitioners and an investment counsellor. The comments and observations by the author are a reflection of his opinion and do not constitute an offer to buy and hold securities, nor does he receive any remuneration of any kind from names referred to.

IN BRIEF

COSTA DEL SOL

MediaMarkt set for Mijas, Marbella and El Ingenio

JUAN SOTO. Consumer electronics chain MediaMarkt is to open three new stores - at Marbella's La Cañada, Mijas Costa's Parque Miramar and Vélez-Málaga's El Ingenio mall.

The German company has signed an agreement with Portuguese firm Worten to acquire 17 of its existing stores across Spain.

MediaMarkt hopes to rebrand the three Worten stores on the Costa in the next few months. However the chain will close two other Worten stores located in the Málaga Nostrum and Larios Centro malls in Malaga city due to an overlap with existing shops.

MediaMarkt will now have 106 shops in Spain and 7,000 staff.

Register in cmmalaga.com

6th SESSION. Tuesday, January 19th, 2021. Culture / Museums 5pm

Malaga, City of Museums in the Post-COVID Reconstruction

For almost two decades now, Malaga has been building an unprecedented museum network among the Andalusian capitals. The city has placed its cultural offer among the most competitive ones in Spain. The so called 'City of Museums' has attracted millions of tourists who have vanished with the pandemic. Museums have been forced to adapt to this new normality and focus their efforts on attracting and working for locals. How have museums in Malaga experienced the closure of their institutions? What initiatives have they carried out from the digital world? Once open, what strategies are they following to engage regular and new audiences?

Moderate:

Noelia Losada
Ayuntamiento de Málaga
DELEGATE COUNCILOR OF THE CULTURE AND SPORTS AREA

Case Study:
Museum Jorge Rando

Vanessa Díez
Museum Jorge Rando
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Speakers:

Jose María Luna
Agencia Pública para la Gestión de la Casa Natal de Picasso y otros equipamientos museísticos y culturales
DIRECTOR

Lourdes Moreno
Museo Carmen Thyssen Málaga
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Mario Morante
Museo de Málaga
DIRECTOR

Helena Juncosa
CAC Málaga - Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga
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Covid-19 has taken Costa del Sol tourism back four decades in one unforgettable year

The figures for 2020 show that there were 75% fewer visitors and economic losses of 10.3 billion euros in the province of Malaga

MATÍAS STUBER



MALAGA. Sunshine, beaches, and empty. That just about sums up 2020 in terms of Costa del Sol tourism. Other descriptions could be; catastrophic, unbelievable and devastating. At a press conference held by the provincial authority last Friday, to report on a year which makes those in the industry want to cry and forget at the same time, Luis Callejón, the president of the Aehcos Costa del Sol hoteliers association, said "I can think of many adjectives to describe the past 12 months, and none of them are good."

Outside, the rain lashed down and the wind howled, courtesy of Storm Filomena. It seemed a suitable accompaniment for such a solemn occasion. The impact of the coronavirus on tourism in Malaga province, said Francisco Salado, the head of the Costa del Sol Tourist Board, has been so great that it has returned the sector to 1980s levels: "This crisis has taken the Costa del Sol back four decades."

Anyone with the slightest idea of what tourism means to the Costa in terms of the economy and employment must be asking themselves if these figures can be real.



Luis Callejón, Francisco Salado, Margarita del Cid and Antonio Díaz at the press conference. SALVADOR SALAS

They are. There were 9.3 million fewer tourists than in 2019 (down 71.6 per cent). The loss to the economy of the province is nearly 10.35 billion euros, 17,605 direct jobs in the sector have gone and 31,000 workers have been temporarily laid off. Salado described the damage as "astronomical".

It is ruinous for the province, and it is difficult to imagine what happens next in a scenario which is constantly changing because of the pandemic. Malaga depends on tourism like Germany depends on its car industry and Norway depends on oil. The concern on the faces of those in authority was obvious, and no mask could hide it.

The uncertainty doesn't help. It looks as though, at best, 2021 will be a year of transition. It's not that Malaga is no longer attractive. It's the nature of the crisis, the invisible threat that makes people re-

luctant to travel. That means the problem is global and the province has suffered badly from a general fall in its source markets.

The figures regarding transport infrastructure in Malaga province were also depressing. The airport reported that 6.9 million fewer passengers arrived in 2020. Arrivals by high speed train fell by 61.1 per cent. There were 89.3 per cent fewer cruise passengers. And the effects on the labour market so far are, said Salado, "unreal" because of the anaesthetising effect of the ERTes. If the situation doesn't improve in 2021, those temporary layoffs will become permanent.

The vaccine is being seen as vital for the Costa del Sol. Salado said recovery depended on its success and urged the government to improve controls at the airports. The most important selling point in 2021 will be tourism that is safe.

Calls for longer furlough period and tax reductions in the sector

Luis Callejón also said that although the government has indicated that it will extend the furlough period until 31 May, this is not long enough for the tourism sector, and the measure should continue to the end of this year. He said there is too much uncertainty about how the situation will evolve in 2021 and businesses in the sector rely on these ERTes to keep their costs down. He also called on the government to introduce tax reductions, as many companies will be unable to pay their taxes in the next few months.

Foreign tourists who travel to Andalucía offered free coronavirus insurance

PILAR MARTÍNEZ

MALAGA. Andalucía has kicked off 2021 with a new campaign to reinforce its position as a safe destination to travel.

A free medical insurance policy with Covid-19 coverage for non-resident international tourists is being offered to entice visitors back to the region.

The Junta de Andalucía has said that to benefit from this offer, travellers must stay in any type of regional government-regulated establishment which can include hotels, tourist apartments, hostels, apart-hotels, campsites and rural cottages.

This initiative will continue throughout the year, and will be operated by Europ Assistance.

"This is a free medical insurance for all foreign tourists, who are not residents, who travel to Andalucía by any means of transport between 1 January and 31 December and without age limit," although the regional government said the end date may be extended if necessary.

Helpline

The Junta said the insurance scheme would cover "the medical, surgical and hospitalisation expenses for Covid-19, those of transport and repatriation and costs derived from an extension of the stay due to quarantine".

In addition, tourists will have a multilingual 24-hour helpline available to answer their questions. An international marketing campaign to promote the insurance to a worldwide audience will also be rolled out.



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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

The future for the elderly

In this world that is ever more technical and digitalised, we the elderly have to keep adapting. Medical and scientific progress will slow down ageing and improve health.

The development of domotics, technology and robotics will allow us to live longer and with better quality of life: security, entertainment, intellectual and cultural wealth, social media...

Unfortunately, not everyone will have access to this progress, as the welfare state is weak, with insufficient pensions and no guarantee of spending power.

The challenge will be to maintain a passion and a sense for living. "We'll die when we die" - we have to have a positive attitude to events and an active old age (health, security, participation and permanent learning).

I hope our descendants will know nothing of inequality, pandemics, unemployment, risk of poverty or loss of culture.

FERNANDO SERRANO

Money issues

Following the death of my wife over seven years ago, I sold our property in Mijas Costa. Agencia Tributaria have told me they now want to return to me 600 euros.

My solicitor has failed to help me and is now considered too ill to work. To appoint a new attorney will cost 600 euros. I wonder if there is a solution to this matter.

Thank you.

BRIAN DALE

El Capistrano Village

Thank you for the lovely article written by Jennie Rhodes on 1 January regarding the joint retirement at El Capistrano, Nerja.

She managed to weave the two events together very smoothly and the result was a light and informative piece, which was a pleasure to read.

Keep up the good work!

DIANE MILLWARD

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Reading festival

These are times for rejoicing in the small pleasures of life: bacon sandwiches, making music, both of the Manchester teams losing, reading the paper while having a couple of pints. Oh, wait. That last one has been snatched from our disbelieving grasp by the publishers who've decided it isn't worth persevering with the print editions of many of the more interesting UK newspapers here in Spain.

Clearly they weren't selling enough copies to make it worth while. Why? Because, incredibly, it appears that vast swathes of people who should know better have decided that reading the news online is an acceptable pastime. It isn't.

Any sentient soul knows that the news should be read in its printed form, the reader idly flicking through heavenly pages of text, searching for the most

interesting articles, occasionally stumbling on a hidden gem, before skipping the economy section in search of something less mind numbing, like the weather. Reading on a tablet or - heaven forbid - a phone just doesn't cut the mustard. First of all, it's undignified all that hunching and squinting and right/left swiping. Sit up straight, man. Furthermore, your chances of happening upon something you weren't intending to read are much smaller and this can only limit our already cropped horizons.

It's the same with books. Now, I'm sorry if you got a Kindle for Christmas and don't wish to dampen your spirits but it's a capricious love, the tablet thing. Oh, yes, right now, it's all "Look everybody, I can store 17 gazillion books on here and can control the screen glare with a simple flick of the finger", but that

charm will soon fade and soon you'll be yearning for the touch and smell of paper pages, staring longingly at the bloke next to you on the train with his dog-eared copy of A Picture Of Dorian Gray while you fiddle with your glare controls and realise you've only uploaded four books - A Picture Of Dorian Gray (just now) and three Robert Ludlums.

Books are great.

You can take one into the bath with you if you wish, although the physical contortions necessary to keep the pages dry may dampen the appeal somewhat.

Perhaps most importantly of all, you can give a book as a present to someone and write a heartfelt dedication on the inside cover. "To Jane, thank you for the lovely bacon sandwiches last Tuesday. P.S. Will you marry me?"

Try doing that on a tablet.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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THE BOTTOM LINE
RACHEL HAYNES

Better than last?

What were those phrases we said and heard over and over again as we wished one another Happy New Year two weeks ago?

"Let's hope 2021 is better than 2020." "Well 2021 can't be any worse than 2020, can it?" This year we couldn't wait to say "out with the old, and in with the new".

But so far 2021 hasn't started off that well, has it?

Covid-19, or rather the virus that causes it, must be getting used to how we are deal-

ing with it by now. We bring in measures and manage to slow it down, keep it reined in and more or less under control. Then we relax, drop our guard and out it flies again.

It happened after the summer and now it's happening again, the blame landing straight at the door, rightly or wrongly, of those who had the nerve to celebrate Christmas or New Year with too many people.

And now with the change of year, we're faced with a new, far more contagious version of the virus that is sending those graphs

shooting up alarmingly.

It's interesting how, coinciding with Brexit, this new, more contagious, strain has been labelled the "British" variant. The Brits argue that it's just because their laboratories are better and identified it faster. Just like the "Spanish" flu then, which, more than a hundred years ago, got its name because Spain was the only country to talk about it.

And if Covid's new "British" fling was not enough to deal with, along came Filomena to literally dampen any remaining sparks of excitement for the new year.

Not only are we still trying to find a way out of a pandemic, but Spain has been hit by its lowest temperatures in 60 years and an amount of snow that few can remember having seen before, especially in the streets of the country's capital, Madrid. And where there wasn't snow, there were floods, damage and tragedy.

We are only two weeks into 2021, however, and it's still valid to have high hopes for the coming months.

Vaccination programmes are already under way with more doses and types due to arrive as the year progresses. The way practically all the health authorities have dealt with the task of administering the vaccines at first has certainly earned criticism and fuelled political slanging matches, but surely as the weeks pass, the pace will quicken and the organisation improve.

First though, as we wait for enough people to be vaccinated to allow us to go outside and celebrate properly, it looks like we're in for another stint of lockdown in some shape or form, or at least more restrictions on our movements.

If patience wasn't high up on our New Year's Resolutions list this year, perhaps it should have been.

Gib police officer celebrates raising over £7,000 climbing steps

Tony Gaul went up the Rock's Med Steps 24 times over two days to raise funds for causes in the UK and Gibraltar

ASH BOLTON

GIBRALTAR. A Royal Gibraltar Police officer swapped his polished boots for climbing shoes to complete a gruelling challenge in December.

Tony Gaul went up the Rock's Med Steps 24 times over two days - climbing over 10,000 metres and 76km in the process.

During the fundraiser, the 47-year-old dad of four raised a total of £7,365, which is set to be split between two good causes.

Tony, who is originally from the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, and has worked as a police officer for five years, told SUR in English: "I felt extremely proud when I finished

the challenge.

"The aim of the challenge was to raise a minimum of £5,000 to split between two charities, and we've smashed that.

"It feels great and I'd like to thank everyone that joined me and supported me on the challenge as it really helped me to keep going."

Starting at 7am each morning, each walk took around an hour to complete, with Tony finishing at 7pm each day.

The former soldier, who was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours list in 2012, explained that half of the money will go towards a young police officer (Gibraltar Defence Police) called Wesley Warwick, who had a serious stroke last year and who will now need a variety of equipment to become self-sufficient.

The other half of the money will go to the three-year-old daughter (Grace) of a police officer in the UK who has a rare medical condition (Hope for Grace).



Tony Gaul, at the foot of the Rock's famous steps. SUR

cer in the UK who has a rare medical condition (Hope for Grace).

One of only 17 people in the world with the condition, it caused her to have a number of life-changing seizures when she was first born.

Tony, who went into the army at 15 before joining the Royal Gibraltar Police in 2016, was joined on his first and last climb by Wayne, the father of Wesley Warwick.

Donations can still be made by visiting <https://cutt.ly/YjbDmet>

Malaga's council-run museums lose two thirds of visitors to the pandemic

FRANCISCO GRIÑÁN

MALAGA. The end-of-year figures released by Malaga city's main museums sum up the damage the pandemic has caused to the local cultural sector.

Three centres managed by Malaga city council - the Picasso birth-house, the Centre Pompidou and the Russian Museum - have seen a dive in visitor figures of between 61% and 75%.

Meanwhile the Malaga Picasso Museum recently described 2020 as its "annus horribilis" as far as figures were concerned, and the Carmen Thyssen said this had been an "especially difficult" year.

"Great efforts have been made to keep the museums alive," said city councillor Noelia Losada, stressing how they had adapted to circumstances, organising online activities, lectures, workshops and concerts with reduced audiences.

Lineup continues to grow for this summer's Starlite Festival in Marbella

International stars who had to cancel last year, such as Tom Jones and Lionel Richie, hope to make it to the Nagüeles stage in 2021

KATIE HEYES

MALAGA. After paving the way for a new era of 'Covid-free' concerts in the summer of last year, the Starlite Catalana Occidente festival is set to return this summer to celebrate its ten-year anniversary in Marbella.

Due to be held between 2 July and 28 August, this festival has already announced an array of international stars, many of whom were unable to travel to Spain last year because of Covid-19 restrictions. So far, the confirmed international lineup includes iconic faces such as Lionel Richie, Tom Jones, Passenger, Ozuna, Simple Minds, Sebastián Yatra, Nile Rodgers & Chic, Maluma, Il Divo, Ara Malikian and Bonnie Tyler (although her postponed performance date is yet to be confirmed).

National stars such as Raphael, Pablo López, Rozalen, Aitana and David Bisbal will also grace the



Violinist Ara Malikian was among the artists who performed in 2020. AFP

auditorium stage for the 2021 edition of the Marbella boutique festival.

Starlite prides itself as one of the few "emblematic festivals" held worldwide in demonstrating how a "safe culture" can be implanted in the live music industry.

The founder, Sandra García-Sanjuan, previously commented on how they have adapted their venue to be safer in the light of social distancing guidelines.

With capacity reduced to 1,500 spectators per concert and no recorded incidents related to Covid-19 last year, García-Sanjuan said, "Starlite Catalana Occidente's rigorous compliance with health regulations has led it to be an example

throughout the world of the return of live music to the stage."

Tickets already purchased for postponed concerts last year will remain valid for the new dates, or they can even be exchanged for any other festival performance. Seats are now on sale on the festival's website with a wide choice of options up to VIP boxes.

Alongside the concert experience the venue continues its traditional blend of music, culture and gastronomy in its wide selection of "gastro spaces", which include "finger foods, signature tapas and trendy cuisine". Alternatively, the Starlite Restaurant, with reservation availability, is open both before and after the concerts.

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Eldevenir, the latest addition to the local contemporary art scene



Jesús Chacón and María Rosa Jurado, at the new gallery in Torrox. SUR



'Confinada', one of the most recent works by Jesús Chacón. SUR



Detail from 'Ausentes'. SUR



The staging of the photographs has a greater role in Chacón's 'Fotogramas' series. SUR

That individual isolation portrayed in the images of 'Instantes/Invisibles' returns with 'Ausentes', where Chacón portrays personages self-absorbed with their respective mobile phones, the only source of light in the scenes in this series, which then gives way to the aesthetic and conceptual turn-around brought about by the photographer's most recent works in 'Fotogramas'.

Here, those featured in the portraits share the protagonism and the carefully staged settings which, in a way, close Chacón's creative circle through the same dreamlike, almost surrealist, air of those images of Kabilia taken two decades ago.

The Andalusian setting

María Rosa has also agreed exhibitions at Eldevenir with Jesús Zurita, José Luis Puche and Simón Zabell. She has a particular interest in Andalusian contemporary art, which also represents one of the essential lines of work in her project, and she has also been attending art fairs such as Just Madrid, Just Lisboa and Arte Santander.

"The project has been asking for this step," says this young entrepreneur, who from now on will be combining her online activity with the programme for her gallery on the eastern side of Malaga.

"Torrox can be as good a place as any other. I am convinced there is a need to delocalise art, because I believe that what mobilises people is the quality of the project, and of the artists.

I have never gone to a gallery because I just happened to be passing," she says. "The physical relationship between the spectator and the work is essential. Most works are created to be appreciated in person, not on a screen in the same way as video art."

It is this conviction that led María Rosa to open her gallery and she explains her general strategy: "You need to have very good communication, professionalism and good collaborations. This is a time when the galleries should be joining forces and all pulling together, like a rowing team."

But is it so easy to all pull together and row against the current of the ongoing crisis and a general sense of dejection?

"You mean because this is a difficult sector?" muses María Rosa. "But they are all difficult. Every Monday I have felt like dropping out of the race, but every Monday I just carried on anyway."

Why? Perhaps it was because it really was the only thing that made her happy.

María Rosa Jurado has taken the step from the digital world to a physical gallery, with an exhibition of the photographic works of Jesús Chacón

ANTONIO
JAVIER LÓPEZ



MALAGA. It sounds like a very simple thing to do, but in fact it is radical, even revolutionary. Because in the midst of a health and economic crisis, the true dimensions of which are still barely known, with the uncer-

tainty of what lies ahead in the short and medium term, what made a young woman, qualified in architecture and fine arts, who trained in Madrid and Florence, open a contemporary art gallery on the outskirts of a town which is some distance from a big city? "Because," says María Rosa Jurado, "nothing else makes me happy".

Her enthusiasm has been matched by her determination to open Eldevenir, the online project she created five years ago which has now moved into physical form with the inauguration of the gallery in Torrox.

"I have done things the other way round," she says. "I spent five years learning, seeing what art galleries do, and I found that

the virtual space wasn't enough for me, I needed more contact with the artists and the public."

For her first exhibition, María Rosa is featuring Marbella photographer Jesús Chacón, in a display called 'Acompaño a mi sombra', a look at the last 20 years of his works, which range from nude portraits to snapshots in a staged setting.

"For me, photography always starts in the form of a dialogue. In the case of the portraits there is a connection with the person in the image, while in the works with a staged setting, that relationship tries to establish itself with the whole of the context represented and, in both cases, I always make bridges for the spectator," says Chacón.

The exhibition, which will continue until 14 February, brings together Chacón's works from his vocational and diverse aesthetic series. If the initial 'Kabilia' denotes a certain haunting surrealism with its documentary appearance, 'Instantes/Invisibles' isolates the subjects in scenes with a greater affiliation to the pictorial. From the colour and saturation of this series, Chacón travelled to the subtle black and white of 'Miradas de una ciudad', in which he took the pulse of the cultural life of Marbella through different photos of some of its protagonists, among them the portrait of David Delfín which became one of the most popular pictures of the designer, who died in 2017.



DENISE BUSH

GARDENING

Garrya elliptica

If you are looking for a shrub that will flower throughout the winter then Garrya elliptica is an excellent choice. Common names include coast siltassle, wavy-leaf siltassle and siltassle bush. It is native to the dry coastal regions of California and Southern Oregon and is an evergreen bush or small tree that will reach around 2.5 metres in height.

Forming a domed, or nearly spherical shape, the foliage is attractive in its own right with crinkled edged, leathery leaves, glossy green on the top and pale underneath. In the winter the elegant silky catkins appear.

Garrya elliptica is dioecious, it has male plants or female plants. The most attractive tassels are probably those on the male plants; they are certainly the longest at up to 20cm and on the variety James Roof (given the RHS Award of Garden Merit) they can reach up to 30cm long. The female tassels are shorter, up to 6cm long, and a lighter, silver colour.

After flowering, the female, if there is a male nearby, will produce grape-like bunches of green berries that will turn purple or black when ripe. The dry brown tassels remain on the branches and give summer interest.

Propagation is best from semi-ripe or ripe wood cuttings; seeds can take two years to germinate and the resulting seedlings, although fast growing, cannot be identified as male or female until they flower.

Garrya elliptica is moderately drought resistant but will grow more luxuriant with regular watering during the hottest months. A good position would be at the back of a border, against a wall or other structure. It is not fussy about soil type as long as it is free-draining. It can also be grown as a windbreak or as a specimen plant. It is frost hardy, so ideal for gardens inland. As the leaves may scorch in hot sun, a location with some afternoon shade in the summer is recommended.

The family Garryaceae contains only two genera and is named after Nicholas Garry, the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company from around 1820 to 1835.



Tassles of Garrya elliptica and a bush in full bloom (insert). WIKIMEDIA



READERS' PHOTOS



ANITA PEMBURY

A pink splash

This photo, taken by SUR in English reader Anita Pembury, is of a beautiful hibiscus in bloom.

The hardy Yucca

Yuccas are native to the Americas but adapt to many different climates and can be found in most countries of the world. They are extremely tough, with sharp, sword-like leaves and pretty white, bell-shaped flowers. This photo was sent in by reader Ann Pennington.



ANN PENNINGTON

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



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JENNIE
RHODES



WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

15 JANUARY 2012

The death of Manuel Fraga, founder of the PP

As minister for tourism and information he was behind the 'Spain is Different' slogan and was ambassador to the UK during the 1970s

On 15 January 2012 Manuel Fraga, Franco's tourism and information minister, who went on to found the Alianza Popular - the forerunner to today's Partido Popular party - died of heart failure in Madrid.

Fraga, (Villalba, Lugo, 23 November 1922) had risen through the ranks of Franco's regime during the 1950s and '60s and became minister for tourism and information in 1966.



Manuel Fraga in 2010.

As tourism minister, Fraga

particularly focused on encouraging foreign visitors to the Co-stas and was the person behind the famous 'Spain is Different' catchphrase, which was used in tourism campaigns during the 1950s and 60s.

In 1966 Fraga sought to reassure locals in Almeria and potential tourists that there was no threat to their health after four atomic bombs fell near Palomares, three on land and one in the sea.

The bombs were being carried by a US Air Force B-52 bomber, which was flying alongside a refuelling aircraft. The two planes collided, killing seven airmen.

To prove there was no danger, Fraga and US ambassador Angier Biddle Duke bathed in the sea near Palomares, in front of press and television



Fraga as UK ambassador after a meeting with the Queen in 1973. sur

cameras. Experts stated in 1986, however, that the sea off Palomares had the worst plutonium contamination levels anywhere in the world.

In 1973 Fraga took up the role of Spanish ambassador to the UK until Franco's death in November 1975.

After the dictator's death, Fraga

became deputy prime minister under King Juan Carlos I's interim government and in September 1976 he formed the Alianza Popular party, which was the forerunner to what is now the Partido Popular. Fraga's party only won 16 seats and less than 10 per cent of the vote in Spain's first democratic elections for 40

LANGUAGE
FOOTNOTE

Fundador	Founder
Ministro	Minister
Turismo	Tourism
Información	Information
Precursor	Forerunner
Lema	Catchphrase
Extranjero	Foreigner
Campaña	Campaign
Salud	Health
Diferente	Different
Embajador	Ambassador
Gobierno	Government
Elecciones	Elections
Escaño	Seat
Secretario	Secretary
Gallego	From Galicia
Avenida	Avenue
Presidente	President
Eurodiputado	MEP

years, which were held on 15 June 1977.

Fraga went on to become a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) in the 1980s and president of the Junta de Galicia in 2005. He eventually retired from politics in 2011. There is an avenue named after him in Torremolinos.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

Banderas is looking for musicians to help him hit the right notes

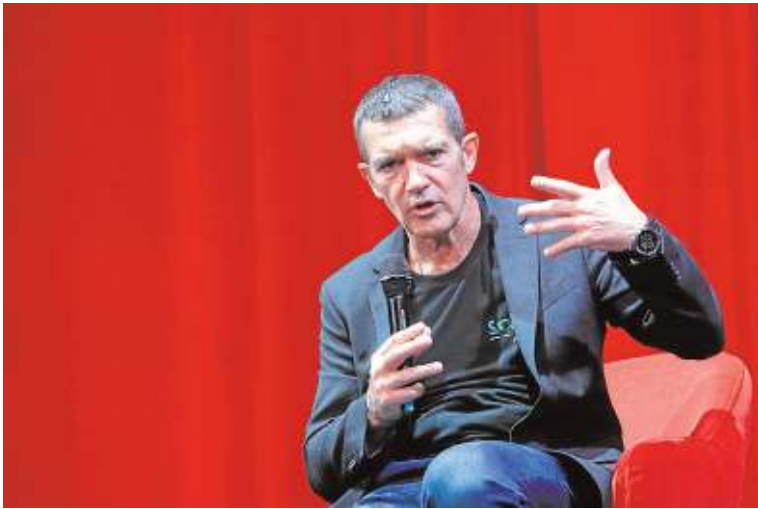
The new orchestra at the star's city centre theatre will be under his artistic direction and the baton of Díez Boscovich

REGINA SOTORRÍO

MALAGA. Malaga actor Antonio Banderas is on the look-out for musicians to form his own orchestra - but if you want to apply don't hang around - the closing date to take part in the selection tests is 17 January.

Banderas wants to create a resident orchestra at his Teatro del Soho CaixaBank in Malaga and is looking for musicians who play the following instruments: violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, flute/piccolo, oboe, oboe/horn, clarinet, clarinet/bass clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, horn, trumpet, trombone, bass trombone/tuba, percussion (required drums), harp and piano.

Applications to take part in the selection tests can be sent until 17 January. All the information, with the rules and the



Banderas, at the launch of the theatre's programme last October. EP

registration link can be found on the theatre's website (<https://teatrodelsoho.com/buscamos-musicos-para-la-orquesta-del-teatro/>).

The auditions will take place from 25 to 27 January with a first exercise consisting of the interpretation of a work by Mozart, except for saxophonists and percussionists, who will play a piece of their choice.

Antonio Banderas will be the artistic director of the project,

which will be under the musical direction of conductor Arturo Díez Boscovich.

It will not be a conventional training according to the website: "In contrast to traditional classical symphony orchestras, we propose the fun and enjoyment of making music with an eclectic and vibrant repertoire, ranging from the classical works best known to the general public to Broadway shows, film music, or the Beatles."

PET CARE
PETER HARRISON

Pandemic and priorities

The situation has hit family budgets hard, often to the detriment of expensive pets



It is always sad to read of animals being abandoned and readers of such action can be quick to condemn. Incidents seem to have risen recently so it may be interesting to reason why, without condoning such action.

I firmly believe that many animal owners take on pets without realising the financial commitment they are undertaking. The good times are one thing but animals can live for many years; the vet bills, vaccinations and kennel fees can mount up and, with a reduced income caused by the current situation, you may have to prioritise.

Sadly in many cases the pets lose out. It's easy to understand even if you do not agree.

Some time ago I was asked to go with someone to buy a horse. A vet would be a better judge to assess the condition of the animal in respect of health. As an experienced

rider and teacher of riding, I would be able to guide her on suitability but no more.

In the car I casually enquired about the budget allocated for the upkeep of the horse. The figure was woefully inadequate, she had made no provision for a vet driving to her remote mountain home.

Neither was there provision for stabling when the family went on holiday, there was inadequate allowance for foodstuffs and what could happen if the animal had a long and serious illness. I bowed out of the commitment and suggested renting from a good stable.

My wife and I have eight acres of land near El Chorro and I would certainly love to renew my riding life but in retirement we believe in our commitment to one hungry labrador, one cat and one regularly visiting stray cat and that is what we can easily manage.

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EXHIBITIONS

Cristianos Coptos

LAS LAGUNAS. Until 18 January. Casa de la Cultura. An exhibition of photos by Antonio G. Redondo entitled Cristianos Coptos, Una Forma de Vida.

Mesopotamian art

MARBELLA. Museo Arqueológico Municipal. The exhibition at the archaeology museum consists of various pieces from different periods in the history of ancient Mesopotamia. The collection is owned by Estepona resident and French architect, Jacques Cavo.

Isabel Rosado

MARBELLA. Until 19 January. Galería Yusto/Giner. La Ermita industrial estate, C/Madera, 9. The exhibition Still Living by photographer Isabel Rosado consists of still lifes with a twist. Viewing is by previous appointment only. galeria@yusto-giner.com / 951507053

Malaga Picasso Museum

MALAGA. Museo Picasso Málaga, Calle San Agustín.

Collection. Dialogues with Picasso. Collection 2020-2023 is formed of 120 works by the artist. These include the cubist sculpture Glass of Absinthe (1914) and the painting Susanna and the Elders (1955).

James Turrell. Until June. The exhibition entitled Cherry, is an experiment with light, space and time.

Hilando Diseño. An enormous tapestry mural of colourful squares created by over 500 students in primary and secondary schools, art and college students as well as vulnerable adults in care homes in Malaga.

www.museopicassomalaga.org

Colección del Museo Ruso

MALAGA. Edificio Tabacalera, Avda Sor Teresa Prat.

Temporary exhibitions. The two temporary exhibitions currently at the museum are Rompiendo el Silencio. El cine Mudo en Rusia (Breaking the Silence. Silent Film in Russia) and Andrèi Tarkovsky. Maestro del Espacio (Master of Space). Andrèi Tarkovsky was 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 is a series of silent movies, with some of the most iconic Russian, Italian and American films available until 4 April.

Annual exhibition. 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.

Centre Pompidou

MALAGA. Muelle Uno.

From Miró to Barceló. The semi-permanent exhibition is entitled De Miró a Barceló. Un siglo de Arte Español (From Miró to Barceló. A century of Spanish art). This chronological journey through a century of Spanish art



Dar La Cara, Pompidou Malaga.

A creative use of wood, influenced by construction and the third world

SUR IN ENGLISH

ESTEPONA. Casa de Las Tejerinas, located in the central Plaza de las Flores in Estepona, will host a sculpture exhibition from artist José Manuel López Toirán from Monday, 18 January, at 4.30pm.

Curated by the Estación 2B cultural association and the municipal delegation of Historical Heritage, the exhibition consists of 15 sculptures carved out of wood and 10 painted wall-mounted planks.

José Manuel Toirán, who is from Sarria in Lugo (Galicia), spent his childhood making sculptures out of plasticine. Once he became a teenager, he fully embraced his creative side at the Padre San Millán arts school.

He proudly describes himself as self-taught with a wide range of influences, from his experience in the world of construction and managing an extensive real estate portfolio, to exploring countries



Carved wood sculpture. SUR

such as Cuba, Algeria, Morocco, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

His work is a tribute to nature, expressing his preferred, though not exclusive, use of wood as a noble material above all other things.

The artist delves into collective thinking based on his own psyche, talent and taste. Nothing is random in the execution or result of this artist's work which will be open to visitors until 10 February (Tuesday to Saturday, 9am to 8pm).



Students in rehearsals at the Torremolinos Dance Centre. SUR

Dance school offers a free afternoon at the ballet

TONY BRYANT

TORREMOLINOS. The Torremolinos Dance Centre will present an afternoon of ballet at the Principe de Asturias Auditorium tomorrow (Saturday).

The show, which begins at midday, will be presented by students of the long-established academy and will offer a programme of classical ballet. The production will start with a work called The Class, which will be accompanied by the music of Lisa Harris and Silvina Rouco. The second

part will consist of routines set to the music of Bach, Strauss, Rossini and Delibes. The company will finish with the neo-classical Grand Showman Overture.

Entry is free, but, because of restricted capacity (250) reservations should be made by phoning 622637371, or by e-mail (centrodedanzadt@yahoo.es).

The Torremolinos Dance Centre was founded in 1976 and it follows the methodology of the Imperial Classical Ballet (ISTD) and the Royal Academy of Dance.

shows that the generation of contemporary artists has kept alive the spirit of the avant-garde with extraordinary energy.

Charo Carrera. Until March. The main staircase in the Centro Pompidou is the site for the painting 'Si yo, Si tú' by veteran artist Charo Carrera.

Dar la Cara. Until 11 April. This latest exhibition consists of photos and videos by 26 artists. Classic portraits are mixed with contemporary and innovative styles, sometimes surreal and disquieting.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo - CAC Málaga

MALAGA. C/Alemania.

Rinus van de Velde. Until 24 January. This 40-minute film entitled The Villagers is a compendium of fragments played by different characters in undefined places that are linked through image editing. This allows Van de Velde to experience different roles within his artistic production and allows the spectator to enter the universe of the artist.

Pedro Cabrita Reis. Until 14 March.

The Portuguese artist is exhibiting 224 works which include paintings, sculptures, drawings and pieces created with materials he has found.

Miki Leal. Until 21 February. Sculptures and paintings by the Seville artist reveal his 'mikitology', reflecting his love of tennis, jazz and film, in the exhibition Well-known People / Right to Entry.

Galería JM

MALAGA. C/ Duquesa de Parcent, 12. De Gente En Gente is the title of the current exhibition at the gallery. It consists of contemporary works created by artist José Miguel Chico López.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

MALAGA. C/ Compañía, 10. 9.30 - 2.30pm. 7-9pm Tuesday to Friday. 9.30am-9pm Saturday and Sunday.

Collection. A journey through mainly Spanish art from the Old Masters through to Romantic Landscape and Costumbrismo, Précieux Style and Naturalist Painting and Fin-de-Siècle.

Museo Revello de Toro

MALAGA. Until 24 January. Closed Mondays. C/Afligidos.

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. The temporary exhibition is entitled Revello y la Transición Española and consists of ten works completed between 1978 and 1997.

Museum Jorge Rando

MALAGA. C/ Cruz del Molinillo.

www.museojorgerando.org
Expressionist museum of work by painter and sculptor Jorge Rando.

Marilyn Manson, 21 Years in Hell

MALAGA. Until 22 January. La Térmica. Free.

British photographer Ralph Perou took photos of the extravagant, dark and peculiar American rock star Marilyn Manson over a twenty-one-year period. Thirty of his photographs from the book 21 Years in Hell: Manson/Perou are on display.



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Covid-19
Regular Updates

Creadores 2020

MÁLAGA. Until February. *La Térmica*. Free.

Six young artists, Abel Jaramillo, Virginia López-Anido, Delia Boyano, Antonio Ruiz Montesinos, Jorge Isla and García & Fernández are exhibiting works which include installations, photographs, posters, collages etc.

Eugenio Chicano

MÁLAGA. Until 16 March. *Casa Natal Picasso*.

The first director of the Picasso birth house, Eugenio Chicano, died in November 2019 leaving a substantial artistic legacy. The artist had dedicated some of his works to Picasso and the museum has selected some of these for an exhibition in his honour.

Paisajes Cotidianos

MÁLAGA. *Espacio Cero, Contenedor Cultural, Universidad de Málaga*.

British mother and son, Margaret Harris and Timsam Harding are exhibiting a selection of their works entitled *Paisajes Cotidianos* (everyday views), while the father and husband, sculptor Robert Harding, has an exhibition in the garden of El Contenedor.

Juxta Litus

MÁLAGA. Until 31 January. *Alfájar Sala, C/ Císter, 1*.

Entitled *Juxta Litus* (Close to the shore), this exhibition includes the gallery's recent ceramic works.

The Beatles versus The Rolling Stones

MÁLAGA. Until 31 March. *Centro Cultural La Malagueta, C/ de Cervantes*.

The exhibition consists of a collection of photographs taken by Terry O'Neill and Gered Mankowitz of the two legendary bands from the start of their careers and through their 'boom' years. There are also some photos taken by Baron Wolman and two documentaries, *Eight Days A Week* by Ron Howard and *Charlie is My Darling* by Peter Whitehead.

Brujas sin Coloquios

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 7 February. *Centro de Arte Contemporáneo*.

Granada artist Lucía Díaz has been working on a project that represents the history and legends about witches that has persisted since Arabic times by way of the tradition of Andalusian ceramics.

LIVE CONCERTS AND MUSIC

OFM Chamber Music concerts

Country and western tribute show rolls into Mijas Costa

Cowboys and Kisses presents the music of country legends such as Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, Glen Campbell and Shania Twain

TONY BRYANT

MIJAS. Lovers of a traditional-style country hoedown will enjoy *Cowboys and Kisses*, a show packed with classic country and western music and accompanied by a troupe of dancing cowgirls performing country waltz and line dancing.

Presented by Costa favourites Johnny G and Melissa Carver, the show presents the best of country music legends such as Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, Glen Campbell, Garth Brooks and Shania Twain.

Johnny and Melissa are both well-established on the coast and their country show was enjoyed by sell out audiences in Fuengirola last October.

The concert will be held at the La Sierra Restaurant - Cerrado del Águila Golf and



The show is complemented by a troupe of dancing cowgirls. SUR

Resort - in Mijas Costa on Saturday 30 January. The music starts at 1.30pm.

Tickets cost 35 euros and include a three-course menu and a glass of cava on arrival. A donation from ticket sales

will be made to the Salón Variedades fundraising campaign.

Capacity restrictions and social distancing measures will be in force, so early reservations are advised (951 741 990).

MÁLAGA. *Auditorio del Museo Picasso de Málaga*.

2 February, 7pm. *Harmoniemusik Málaga*.

9 March, 7pm. *Cuarteto para el fin de los tiempos*.

6 April, 8pm. *La Spagna*.

11 May, 8pm. *Quinteto OFM*.

1 June, 8pm. *Trío Círculo*.

www.museopicassomalaga.org



Vaivén Circo, Teatro Cánovas.

Siempre Mozart

ONLINE. 23 January, 7pm. 15€.

Online talk (in Spanish) and recital to celebrate the child prodigy's 265th anniversary. Information: 654013232. Reservations: reservas@musica-conencanto.org

THEATRE AND DANCE

Vaivén Circo

MÁLAGA. 16, 17 January, midday.

Teatro Cánovas. 8€.

A new show by the Granada Vaivén circus company. Tickets: mmalaga.es/agenda/vaiven-circo/

LaSal theatre

MÁLAGA. 30, 31 January, midday.

Teatro Cánovas. 8€.

Aimed at a young audience, the LaSal

Teatro company presents a contemporary dance performance based on the theme of the home and the uncertainties that surround it. Tickets: www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/teatros/teatro-canvas

TALKS / LECTURES

Art history in focus

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Founded by art historian and lecturer Siân Walters, Art History in Focus arranges regular courses, study days and visits in the UK as well as cultural holidays throughout Europe. Siân is a highly qualified and experienced tutor and events organiser, and lectures regularly for the National Gallery and NADFAS (The Arts Society).

www.arthistoryinfocus.com/courses/

The Arts Society Benahavís

BENAHAVÍS. Lectures online.

The lectures are broadcast online using Zoom for members and supporters. theartsocietybenahavis.com

26 January, 7pm. *How Viruses Inspire Purity in Architecture and Design* by Alejandra Carazo. The so-called Spanish Flu of 1918-20 cost at least 20 million lives. What is less well known is that it provoked a revolution in architecture and design. Out went the superfluous decoration and furniture that were hotspots for dirt and disease. In came a new emphasis on pure lines, natural light and air.



Alejandra Carazo.

The Arts Society de la Frontera

SAN ROQUE. Lectures online.

The Arts Society de la Frontera streams lectures to its members via Zoom. Free for members, 12€ for visitors. Visitors can register by contacting lucianaobrien1@gmail.com

20 January, 11am. *Fakes and Fortunes* (or have I discovered a Constable in my attic?) Lecturer Sara Cove.

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, Vialia

MÁLAGA. C.C. Vialia, Calle Explanada de la Estación. 902 22 09 22. www.yelmocines.es

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MÁLAGA. C/ Alcazaba, 4. Tel: 902360295. www.cinealbeniz.com

The Father: 12.10 (Sat, Sun); 18.00 (every day).

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Pickled herrings have been a staple in Northern Europe since Medieval times. Now, since last January, the herring counter has expanded to the south of Spain, to Torremolinos.

There we find John and Elizabeth Hofman. This Dutch couple are known for their special love of 'maatjesharing' - Dutch-style soused herring.

A year ago they opened their counter beside the Euro bar at the very heart of La Carihuella. It became a showcase for traditional Dutch gastronomy on the Costa del Sol.

In this interview Elizabeth points out how marinated herring is something that unites many nations on the coast.

-What distinguishes the Dutch herring from others?

-First of all, old tradition. 'Matjesharing' became a staple dish of the Netherlands in the Middle Ages. Our herrings are "ripened" for a couple of days in oak barrels in a salty solution, or brine. It's this special brine that makes the Dutch soused herring special. It is much sweeter than other European equivalents and gives the fish a distinctive sharply piquant flavour.

-When did you decide to launch your herring business?

-At the beginning of last year we decided to open a 'Haring' stall in the most Dutch place on the Costa del Sol - La Carihuella of Torremolinos. Here there are many bars and restaurants owned by Dutch people, as well as a supermarket and hairdressers, and the Netherlands consulate is also located here. The only thing missing was a herring sale counter and this is our principal gastronomic tradition! We even say that herring holds a special place in the heart of every Dutch person.

-Do non-Dutch people buy your herrings?

-I admit that raw herring is definitely not for everyone. But we have some people from Germany, France and Scandinavian countries who like it because they have something similar. In the Nordic



Elizabeth and John at their herring stall in Torremolinos. SUR

The uniting powers of herring

Dutch delicacy. The Hofmans started selling traditional marinated herring in Torremolinos last year. Elizabeth speaks about the dish's international connections

ALEKK M. SAANDERS



countries, for example, herring flavoured with mustard or onion is eaten with dark rye bread, crisp bread, as well as sour cream, or potatoes. Sure, many people have bought the typical Swedish herrings in the Ikea food shop. However, John offers only 'fresh soused' herring from Holland, with diced raw onions and gherkins, decorated with the Dutch flag. Our herring is also supposed to be eaten in a special way. The only true

Dutch way to enjoy herring is vertically, raising the fish above the mouth and taking generous bites from the dangling herring.

-Are only residents or guests of Torremolinos your customers?

-No, not at all. The Dutch who live in other towns on the Costa del Sol come here to eat our herring. For example, we have permanent Dutch customers from Marbella and Fuengirola. A Russian woman from Mijas often comes with her



▲ **Maatjesharing.**

The fish served by the Hofmans in La Carihuella, Torremolinos. SUR

Ukrainian husband. They say that pickled herring is very common in Eastern European cuisine as well. There, it is cut into pieces and served covered with minced boiled vegetables and seasoned with mayonnaise.

-What about British people?

-We found out that 'soused herring' in English can also mean a cooked marinated herring. But the Dutch herring is almost raw. So some Brits compare our herring

with kipper. But one English man said that in his hometown he used to eat bloaters, herrings that are salted and lightly smoked without gutting. I guess this English recipe was inspired by the invention of our national hero, a fisherman called William Buckels. In the 14th century, he got the idea of gibbing - to salt herrings and pack them into barrels. It is believed that the emperor Charles V even erected a statue to Buckels honouring his fish preservation technique that had beneficial consequences for the country.

-Charles V was Spanish. Do Spanish people nowadays try your herring as well?

-Not particularly... though Spanish people have their traditional 'arenques', sardines salted in wooden barrels. There are also numerous ways to serve pilchard in many regional recipes: raw, fermented, pickled or cured in other ways. For example, marinated fish is typical of Andalusian gastronomy. I know that in many restaurants in Cadiz province you can order a marinated tuna fish or dogfish. Near Tarifa, they prepare a snack of tuna, marinated in brine and served on dark bread. It appears that soused fish unites many countries.

-Is your stall open all year round?

-Yes. We opened just before the pandemic started. So we had to stop for the period of the lockdown. In general we sell the herring only on Fridays from 9am to usually 5pm. Here, winter on the Costa del Sol can be dull and cloudy with little sun so soused herring, which is rich in Vitamin D, comes into its own at this time of year because it can help supplement sunlight.

-What other benefits has the herring for health?

-It is known that pickled herring is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, selenium and Vitamin B12. It is also a good source of tyramine that helps regulate blood pressure. In fact, I read that they recommend fermented and marinated food in the coronavirus pandemic.

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150 years of Bismarck herring

150 years ago another fishmonger couple from Stralsund made history. The term Bismarck herring applies to all German herring pickled in vinegar and spices that you can even buy in the supermarkets Lidl and Aldi. There are various theories as to why the product is associated with Otto von Bismarck. The fishmon-

ger family Wiechmanns couldn't help admiring the statesman. For his birthday they sent him a barrel of pickled herrings. Then, in 1871, when Bismarck brought together the region's states into the German Empire, the couple sent him a second barrel to congratulate him on this triumph. The barrel was accompanied by a note, wherein they asked permission to name their pickled fish after this great man, to which he agreed.



The vermouth route: aromatised wines made in Malaga to suit all palates

We take a trip round the province in search of the most special aromatised and fortified wines

ESPERANZA PELÁEZ

MÁLAGA. With a long history dating back to the Middle Ages, when it was known as the 'wine of herbs', vermouth (wine fortified and aromatised with botanicals and spices) is a traditional aperitif which in recent years has made a major comeback in bars, restaurants and also in cocktail recipes.

The two most traditional grapes in Malaga province, Muscat and Pedro Ximénez, are perfect for vermouth, because it needs a sweet base upon which to play with

Vermouth, a wine fortified and aromatised with botanicals and spices, is making a comeback

bitter flavours and aromas of roots, herbs and spices. As a result, more and more wineries have recently decided to produce their own vermouths.

As well as the traditional varieties from Bodegas Antigua Casa de Guardia, Quitapenas, Málaga Virgen and Dimobe (Casa de Guardia and Dimobe each make two types), one exciting vermouth project is that of Javier Krauel, who uses the types of wine made in the family winery a hundred years ago to produce his new Vermú Krauel.

Young wineries such as Niño de la Salina (Almargen), Pérez Hidalgo (Álora), Antakira (Antequera) and Tierras de Mollina (Mollina) are also producing some very interesting vermouths because, in this aromatised wine, the mixtures and proportions are as important as the base wines (the finest ones are not used for vermouth).

If you are an enthusiast of this drink, you really should try the surprising and unique varieties being produced in Malaga. They go well with any type of snack, from hams and smoked fish to shellfish and nuts.



Vermouths, which are becoming popular again, go well with many different types of snack. **sur**



MADE IN MÁLAGA

The classics

Quitapenas: Made 100% with PX grapes, it is aged for 12 months. (<https://quitapenas.es/>)

Antigua Casa de Guardia: Vermut PX and Vermut Premium (<https://tienda.antiguacasadeguardia.com/>), which have 36 and 48 months of ageing respectively.

Bodegas Dimobe: Vermut Di-

mobe, which is not aged, is also sold from the barrel, and Ventura 27, a signature vermouth which is aged for 12 months.

Malaga Virgen: Malaga Virgen (www.bodegasmalagavirgen.com) produces Pimpillo, 100% PX.

The newcomers

Krauel: The most exclusive is Vermut Krauel (<https://krauel.es/>), using wine

recipes from 100 years ago.

Andresito: Vermut Andresito, from Bodega Niño de la Salina (www.fontalbacapote.es/), is made with 100% PX grape.

Cortijo La Fuente: Also with PX grape. (<http://www.bodega-cortijolafuente.es/>)

Antakira: PX grape, as well. (www.bodegasantakira.com)

VRTH Casser: Bodegas Pérez Hidalgo de Álora. No added alcohol. (www.bodegasperezhidalgo.es/).



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Hearts that lose their rhythm

Arrhythmias increase with an ageing population but technology has improved the way they are treated

ELENA MARTÍN



Everyone carries a song inside them, a constant percussion in the chest, the rhythm that gives us life. That beat isn't always as even and regular as it should be, however. Arrhythmia is a condition which changes the normal pace of the heart (which should be between 60 and 100 beats a minute) and affects more men than women.

José Luis Roberson, a septuagenarian whose heart lost its natural rhythm 12 years ago, tells us his story:

"It was January 21st and the weather was horribly cold, but I went out running anyway because I was training for a marathon. I have always been athletic and in good physical shape, but I suddenly felt a fluttering in my chest and a feeling of fatigue from the waist down. My legs didn't seem to want to work and the pulsometer started to go crazy. There was nobody else around, and no high-tension equipment, so there was no reason for the gadget to do that. I

turned round and decided to go straight to a doctor I knew from my rowing club, but by the time I got there I had a very fierce pain in the left part of my chest. The doctor said I had arrhythmia," he explains.

Since then, José Luis has had heart surgery three times, is undergoing treatment and has written a book about his experience, called *Usted No Tiene Nada*.

"I gave it that title [it means 'there's nothing wrong with you' in English] because that's what the first cardiologist I saw told me," he says. And something was wrong with him. He had atrial fibrillation (AF), the most com-

mon type of arrhythmia in Spain, which affects between one and two per cent of the general population, but rises to 4.4 per cent in the over-40s and up to nine per cent in octogenarians. With the ageing of the current population, it is calculated that these figures will double in the next five decades.

Even so, the title of José Luis' book is quite apt, because many patients are affected by the fact that atrial fibrillation is underdiagnosed, as a study published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* indicated in April.

Nevertheless, arrhythmias can occur in a large number of conditions, not just AF. These are distinguished depending on whether they speed up or slow down the pulse. If it is working at more than 100 beats a minute we are looking at tachycardia (the heart beats faster than normal). That occurs because of ir-

regularities in the way the atria, the upper chambers of the heart, function, such as in the case of atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter, or through alterations in the activity of the ventricles, (lower chambers of the heart), such as ventricular tachycardia or ventricular fibrillation.

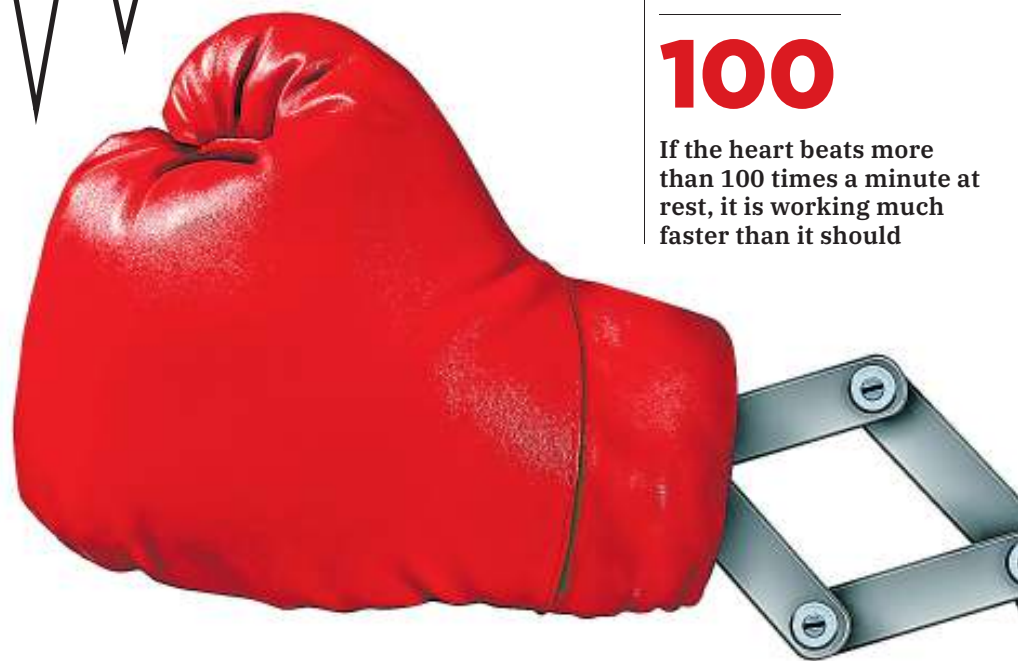
If the heart beats fewer than 60 times a minute, this is bradycardia (a slowing of the heart), and this is often related to problems in the sinus node (our natural pacemaker), and also atrioventricular block, in other words when the electrical signals which are transmitted through the atria do not reach the ventricles.

Each of these pathologies can have different causes depending on who suffers from them,

TACHYCARDIA

100

If the heart beats more than 100 times a minute at rest, it is working much faster than it should



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HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR CARDIAC HEALTH

Eat healthily

Mediterranean diet The best

A cardio-healthy diet means avoiding excess calories (less saturated fat, sugar and salt) and more fruit, vegetables, fish and fibre. Obesity and cholesterol are very damaging for the heart. The countries with the best cardiac health are those that follow the Mediterranean diet.

Don't smoke

Mortality Three times the risk

Research has shown that tobacco speeds up the heart, damages the cells that cover the blood vessels and contracts the main arteries, among other effects. It is also known that the incidence of cardiovascular illnesses is three times higher in smokers.

Exercise

Be more active More cardio

When we exercise, our heart speeds up. It's a type of healthy tachycardia, because it oxygenates the body and reduces blood pressure. Recommended moderate exercise includes walking for an hour, swimming or doing cardio exercise like dancing or aerobics.

Drink in moderation

A cup of tea An exceptional ally

Alcohol, even in small amounts, alters cardiac rhythm, says an article in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. However, a cup of tea a day reduces the risk of cardiovascular problems by 35 per cent, according to a study by the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Sleep for 8 hours

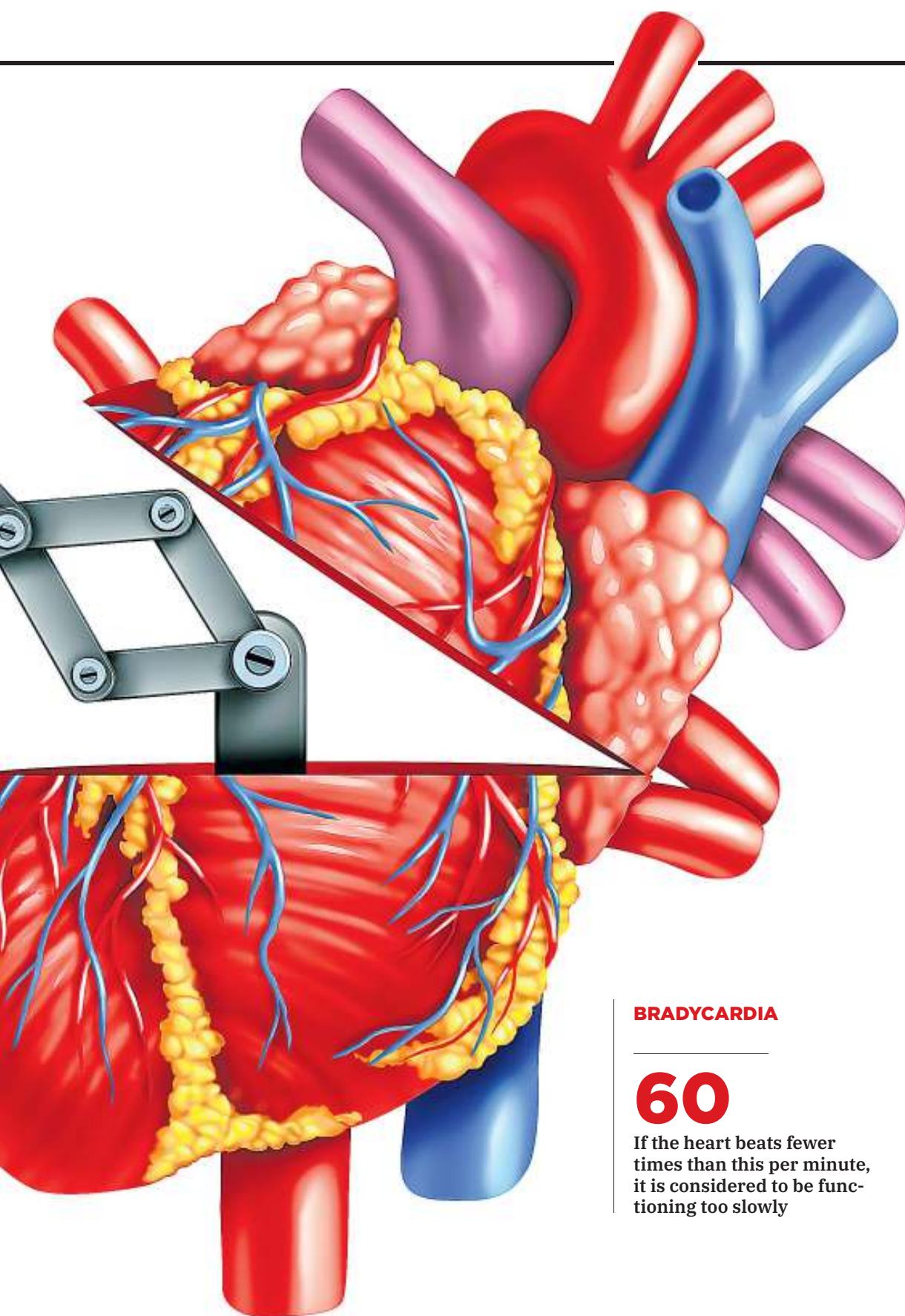
Insomnia Possible heart attacks

People who have difficulty sleeping are 45% more at risk of having a heart attack, according to a study by Norwegian experts. Recommendations for better sleep are: keep regular hours, avoid heavy meals in the evening, and take exercise.

Avoid stress

Meditation A simple respite

Stress increases blood pressure, can cause arteriosclerosis, arrhythmias and increases the risk of heart attack. People under stress are about 27% more likely to have heart problems. Try not to work too many hours, stay positive, meditate or do yoga.



BRADYCARDIA

60

If the heart beats fewer times than this per minute, it is considered to be functioning too slowly

because arrhythmias can be acquired (which is most common) or hereditary.

"An acquired arrhythmia responds to risk factors such as ageing, hypertension, diabetes, smoking, high cholesterol or a coronary illness, among others, while many cardiac illnesses are genetically determined and are predisposed to suffer arrhythmias," says Javier Jiménez Candil, president of the Cardiac Rhythm Association of the Spanish Cardiology Society (SEC).

Continual stress and high-intensity sport have also been classified as enemies of the heart. That was exactly the reason for José Luis' arrhythmia.

"When I thought about it afterwards, I was very stressed at work and that, combined with high-resistance sport, was like a bomb as far as my heart was concerned," he says.

This is why experts advise having a medical check-up before starting any new sport, especially people who have never done sport before.

Arrhythmias can also occur during foetal life, childhood or adolescence, but "the vast majority are benign and easily documentable and treatable", says the cardiologist.

In adults this is less common, although it is possible that arrhythmia shows only minor symptoms or perhaps none at all. The latter is a problem in serious cases, because the lack of treatment can have fatal consequences, such as a stroke.

The symptoms of arrhythmias depend on the type of alteration. "Tachycardias result in a fast pulse, palpitations, fatigue, pain in the chest and difficulty in breathing, while bradycardias appear in the form of syncopes [fainting]," says Dr Jiménez. Some malign arrhythmias can also lead to sudden death.

"I have lost consciousness sev-

"The mixture of stress and high-intensity sport was like a bomb as far as my heart was concerned"

eral times and found myself in hospital when I came round. It makes you feel very insecure. That's why some people with arrhythmia are too scared to leave their homes," says José Luis. "My advice to them would be to confront their fears, eat healthily, exercise within their capabilities and find a good cardiologist who will monitor them," he says.

Diagnostic apps

The latest news with regard to diagnosing arrhythmias comes in the form of mobile apps which carry out quality electrocardiograms. "This is a great advance because they make it easier to detect sporadic arrhythmias, which are difficult to identify, and therefore to treat," says Jiménez.

Treatments for arrhythmias are divided into three groups: the ones that change bad lifestyle habits (losing excess weight, taking exercise, controlling risk factors); specific drugs for each type of arrhythmia, and intervention techniques which depend on each patient.

For example, pacemakers are ideal to treat bradycardias with syncopes, while a patient with tachycardia which is not responding to medication will benefit from a cardiac ablation.

Thanks to all this, say the specialists, a large number of arrhythmias can be cured or controlled nowadays, thereby improving the quality of life of those who suffer from them.



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The Malaga players celebrate after Rahmani's spectacular goal gave them the lead. **ÑITO SALAS**

Malaga trip up at home again despite Rahmani's wonderstrike

Real Oviedo equalised early in the second half and the Blue and Whites couldn't recover as they went down to ten men

DARYL FINCH



MALAGA. Malaga's struggles at home continued on Saturday night as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Real Oviedo in their second meeting in four days.

A superb strike from Yanis Rahmani gave the hosts the lead in the 13th minute, but they were pegged back early in the second half and any chance of a winner was hampered by Alberto Escassi's late red card and VAR coming to the rescue of Oviedo.

With the enforced absence of Luis Muñoz (who must self-isolate after coming into contact with

someone who tested positive for coronavirus), Malaga coach Sergio Pellicer opted for an attacking line-up in a 4-4-2. This helped to get his side on the front foot in the early exchanges, although former Malaga striker Gustavo Blanco Leschuk was keen to give his former employers a reminder of what they are missing.

The hosts took the lead inside the opening quarter of an hour when Rahmani collected Cristian's short corner before unleashing a superb left-footed strike in at the far post.

This initial effectiveness was shortlived, however. Oviedo, initially penned in by Malaga's numbers in attacking positions, slowly started advancing up the pitch and thought they had an equaliser after pinball in the Malaga area but the play was pulled back by the VAR for a clear offside earlier in the move.

Six minutes after the break and the visitors were level. An intricate through pass from Lucas Ahijado fed Nahuel Leiva, who poked the ball past Dani Barrio in the one-on-one, despite the best ef-

forts of the Malaga players rushing back to their goalline.

Malaga pushed for a way back into the game and were denied what they thought was a clear penalty by the referee who ignored suggestions from the VAR that there was a deliberate handball.

Things went from bad to worse for Malaga when Escassi received his second yellow for dangling a leg in the path of Samuel Obeng with seven minutes left on the clock. However, they were spared further humiliation by Barrio, who produced a reflex save to deny Obeng the winner at this near post.

"At home we need better balance and to find greater rhythm during games. We have to demand more from ourselves," said Pellicer, following yet another game without a win at La Rosaleda.

Malaga currently sit comfortably in mid-table, albeit with the third worst home record, having won just twice in 10 games.

Copa del Rey clash against Granada to be played behind closed doors

The Andalusian derby will take place this Sunday at La Rosaleda and the club had looked at allowing a limited number of fans to attend

ANTONIO GÓNGORA / BORJA GUTIÉRREZ

MALAGA. The last-16 Copa del Rey clash between Malaga and Granada, confirmed to take place at

La Rosaleda this Sunday (from midday), will be played behind closed doors after all.

Rise in Covid cases

Malaga had initially planned on requesting that a limited number of fans be able to attend the game, with authorisation needed from both the Junta de Andalucía regional government and La Liga. However, given the rise in coronavirus cases locally, the club has now decided against making the request.

Games in Primera and Segunda División have been played

behind closed doors for the past 10 months, but at lower levels and in cup competitions, fans have been allowed to attend games in accordance with the restrictions in place in the local areas.

Broadcast online

In any case, the game will be broadcast on DAZN which costs 9.99 euros per month, with a free month's trial for new users.

The game will be a tough test for Sergio Pellicer's side. Granada are in the top flight and this season have been compet-



Lombán and Adrián fight for the ball during the last game to welcome fans at La Rosaleda, against Real Zaragoza on 8 March. **ÑITO SALAS**

ing in the Europa league.

Last year the fellow Andalusians reached the semi-finals of the Copa and arrive at this stage

in the competition having beaten Leonesa Cultural.

Malaga, meanwhile, needed extra time to see off Real Oviedo.

1-1

MALAGA-OVIEDO

Malaga: Dani Barrio; Ismael (Alexander González, 82'), Escassi, Lombán, Cristo; Joaquín (Orlando Sá, 82'), Cristian, Ramón, Rahmani; Caye Quintana (Jairo, 67'), Chavarria (Juande, 85'). Unused substitutes: Juan Soriano, Mejías, Joza-bed, Benkhemassa, Quintana, Larrubia, Juan Cruz, Haitam.

Real Oviedo: Femenías; Juanjo Nieto, Arribas, Bolaño, Lucas; Sangalli, Jimmy, Javi Mier, Nahuel (Riki, 89'); Rodrigo (Borja Valle, 76'), Blanco Leschuk (Obeng, 75'). Unused substitutes: Brazao, Grippo, Aburjania, Carlos Hernández, Johannesson, Viti, Cedric, Mossa, Joselu.

Goals: 1-0 Rahmani (13'); 1-1 Nahuel (51').

Referee: Gálvez Rascón. Red card for two yellow cards for Escassi (84'). Yellows for Rodrigo, Juanjo Nieto and Jimmy.

Venue: La Rosaleda.

A valuable point to start the new year for Malaga Femenino

The hosts' strong defensive organisation and a goal from María Ruiz were enough to secure a point against the title chasers

MALAGA GRANADA

1 1

MARINA RIVAS

CÁRTAMA. Malaga's women's team got the year off to a good start with a point in Saturday's Andalusian derby against Granada in Cártama.

The Blue and Whites, bottom of their group in the second tier, hosted their high-flying rivals knowing that the final six games of the regular season would be crucial for their prospects looking forward.

Nati Gutiérrez's side started well and took a surprise lead

in the 12th minute thanks to María Ruiz, who caught the Granada defence napping with a quick shot.

However, their lead didn't last long. Granada reacted well and proved dangerous on successive counter-attacks and this eventually yielded the equaliser, albeit in an unexpected fashion. Former Malaga player Postigo, spotted the keeper off her line and with a delicate chip, with hardly any power, restored parity.

The visitors pushed for a second before the break but it didn't arrive and it was a much more even game in the second half. Malaga showed good defensive organisation, led by captain Ruth who showed improved form after her return from injury.

Though Granada posed the greater attacking threat, Malaga held firm to secure a result which will give them great confidence in their fight to avoid the drop.



María Ruiz closes down her opponent. FRANCIS SILVA

Marbella's game postponed after three Linense players test positive for Covid-19

The Costa side were due to travel to the Campo de Gibraltar to take on their Segunda B rivals on Sunday

B. GUTIÉRREZ

MARBELLA. Last Sunday's match between Marbella and Balmompédica Linense in La Línea de la Concepción was called off

after four positive Covid-19 tests came back in the latest round of testing.

Three players and one member of the backroom staff at the club located in the Campo de Gibraltar tested positive last Thursday and, as a result, the entire squad went into 10-day quarantine.

The match, from the ninth round of the Segunda B league season, will be rescheduled.



A LOOK AT LA LIGA
ROB PALMER
Commentator, Sky Sports

All a distant memory

With how things are developing, it seems football as we know it is still a long way from returning



Giving the matchday briefcase its annual replenish this week, I was reminded just what a state of limbo football and our lives have been in for the past year.

Sitting in the briefcase, in pristine condition, was the programme from Atlético Madrid's visit to Anfield for the Champions League clash.

This was the final game before the seriousness of a global situation really hit home. A day later Mikel Arteta felt unwell, the Arsenal medics tested their manager for coronavirus, he was positive, they immediately closed their training centre and the Premier League suspended all football matches.

The reality hit home when a Spanish football manager plying his trade in England was struck by the virus. That was Thursday 11 March; the Liverpool-Atlético game was the day before.

Nowhere in the programme was there a mention of the potential of the incoming pandemic. Jürgen Klopp's final words in his matchday address were "embrace the joy of the moment and do your best".

Little did we know that "embrace" would become a dirty word. In the press box, we were giving each other ample space, jokingly avoiding the customary handshake and coughing politely into our elbows. The pandemic was something happening elsewhere. It was like a hurricane hitting China, and we were predicting a storm.

I'm privileged to have commented on several games since football resumed. It's an understatement to say it is a vastly different experience. Many games are covered "off-tube", sitting in a booth in front of a TV screen. This is the way we covered La Liga for years. The secret is out now!

When the situation requires commentating from the actual stadium, it is a clinical experience. Health questionnaires need to be completed digitally in the 24 hours before the game, a medic is waiting upon arrival at the ground, you must follow a strict pathway to your position and not move from your seat once you have found it.

My record so far is getting

tested six times between leaving my car and starting the broadcast. On a Zoom

call this week with fellow commentators we all agreed that we feel completely safe in the ultra-professional environment.

Football clubs are doing their best to ensure all protocols are followed and generally succeeding. The industry has continued despite the odd footballer thinking he's above it all by attending a party or jetting off for a break to Dubai or South America.

There's a big debate about whether players should control their celebra-

tions. At the game I covered last weekend, there was an 11-man pile-on as one team made it 3-3 in the dying seconds. At the time it seems a natural reaction; on reflection, it should best be avoided.

A crowd of 50,000 plus with 3,000 travelling across Europe to mingle at a football

match seems such a distant memory and maybe a distant dream of happening again.



The cover of the Liverpool-Atlético matchday programme. SUR

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"The pressure is a privilege; I always look at myself as a potential champion"

Garbiñe Muguruza Tennis player

The winner at Roland Garros in 2016 and Wimbledon in 2017 is approaching this Olympic year with eagerness after a "strange" 2020

JOSÉ MANUEL ANDRÉS

MADRID. 2020 was a strange year for everyone; even for a global tennis star like Garbiñe Muguruza. Despite lacking a certain level of consistency at times, at 27 years of age she can boast of having reached number one in the world and of having a record she could be proud of even if she retired today. That said, her best tennis should still be ahead of her and she is facing the next phase of her career with a renewed spirit.

The pressure of having won at Roland Garros and Wimbledon weighs heavy, but almost a decade at the highest level forges a special character. "The pressure is a privilege. It's better to go out and play already feeling that you have to do well and that it's an important tournament. That responsibility of having trained hard to be ready... I always prefer to look at myself as a possible champion in every

tournament I play," she says with determination when asked about the weight of her own career.

After an atypical 2020, her outlook is positive despite the feeling that the break caused by the pandemic hampered a period of good personal progress after teaming up with another Spanish women's tennis legend, Conchita Martínez, who is now Muguruza's coach. At the start of the year she reached the final of the first Grand Slam of the season, the Australian Open, before the Covid-19 made its appearance. It was her fourth career major final but came up short against Sofia Kenin.

Strange sensations

"It was a strange year, with a lot of uncertainty. It started very well and then there was a kind of standstill, a kind of new life for us. I'm always travelling a lot. Now I'm looking for more tranquility, to entertain myself somehow and to keep active by doing other things. I always see the positive side of everything that is bad and I have taken advantage of it to explore new things," she says, emphasising the value of having such a break in a sport as demanding as tennis.

However, when the sport fi-



Muguruza wants to go one better at the Australian Open. BORJA LORENZO

nally did resume, "it was really difficult", she says. Used to playing on the most important stages in the world such as the Philippe-Chatrier, Centre Court at Wimbledon or Flushing Meadows, in front of thousands of spectators,

playing in major tournaments without spectators (or very few) and on unusual dates had a big effect on Muguruza.

"We're used to playing with an audience. It gives us a certain spark. A nervousness. Coming into

an empty stadium is a challenge because you miss the energy of the people who come to see you and that is also part of the show."

Objectives

2020 is now behind us, a year that was supposed to be an Olympic year. Barring any more surprises, the Tokyo Games will be held in the summer of 2021 and this is of course the biggest objective for any sportsman or woman. Muguruza is looking forward to what will be her second Olympic experience after the round of sixteen in the Rio 2016 women's singles tournament and also the quarter finals in the women's doubles with her friend Carla Suárez. However, the Games won't be her only focus.

"An Olympic year is always very special but it's difficult to set an objective when there is so much uncertainty. All I can do is go out and play the big tournaments as they come and lift the big trophies. Lifting a trophy is the greatest feeling there is and I always have it as my goal," she says, with the emotion of someone who knows what it's like to lift the most important titles.

"We need to show strength and courage because this is something that affects all of us. It's a challenge but things will change. It won't last forever," she concludes, as a hopeful message for the new year.

It's a year that has started in Abu Dhabi where she is progressing well in the Open. Once her participation has concluded, she will travel to Australia where she will be hoping to go one better over the course of the next week in the Australian Open.

Competitive walking football returns with play-off to decide league winner

SUR IN ENGLISH

CALAHONDA. After months of disruption due to restrictions to curb the spread of coronavirus, competitive walking football action returned on Saturday with a play-off at Finca Naundrup in Calahonda to decide the Baha Whiskey League champions.

It was decided that the five teams who were in with a chance of winning the league when it was halted at the beginning of December would fight for the trophy in this way to avoid further fixture congestion in the future.

Atlético Benahavis won the final semi-final spot after beating Malaga B 3-1 but were eliminated at the next hurdle by Aston Viñuela, who ground out a hard-fought 2-1 win.

The Malaga A team meanwhile booked their spot in the final with a resounding 7-0 win over Sporting Benahavis.



The victorious Aston Viñuela team pose with their trophy. SUR

And so the old rivals met in the final with Viñuela coming out on top, 2-1, to claim their second trophy. Their previous, the League Cup, was awarded when Covid again disrupted schedules.

This Sunday, meanwhile, sees

the Hidromaster Walking Football League get under way, also at Finca Naundrup, with eight teams vying to become the first official league champions in the south of Spain. Kick-off is at 11.30am; spectators are welcome with strict Covid restrictions in place.



Ex-Unicaja player at Capitol riots

David Wood, who played for Malaga basketball side Unicaja during the 1997-8 season, has apologised after being spotted taking part in last week's protests at the Capitol in Washington DC. "I made a mistake," he said.

MY HOME SUR in English

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- Across
- Down
- 1) Foreigners (11)

6) President (m) (10)

11) I wander (4)

13) Beginning (9)

16) Bamboo (5)

17) Understanding (13)

18) Cold (f) (4)

19) My (2)

20) Gold (3)

21) You (2)

22) She knows (4)

23) I warned (7)

26) Rhythm (5)

28) Nor (2)

29) Catchphrase (4)

30) They laugh (4)

31) Simpleton (7)

34) From Galicia (m) (7)

37) Doubt (4)

40) Advertiser (10)

41) Willow (5)

42) I'll scrape (7)

43) Mediator (8)

45) Yesterday (4)

46) I built (8)

48) Health (5)

49) Unpunished (6)

50) Secretary (m) (10)

51) Ambassadors (11)
- 1) Elections (10)

2) Tourism (7)

3) To the (2)

4) Exposed (m) (8)

5) Hated (m) (6)

7) Representative (13)

8) I owe (4)

9) To name (7)

10) Education (9)

12) Minister (8)

14) Campaign (7)

15) Oyster (5)

24) Right (7)

25) MEP (m) (12)

27) Democratic (m) (11)

32) To go (2)

33) Forerunner (9)

35) Founder (m) (8)

36) Football (8)

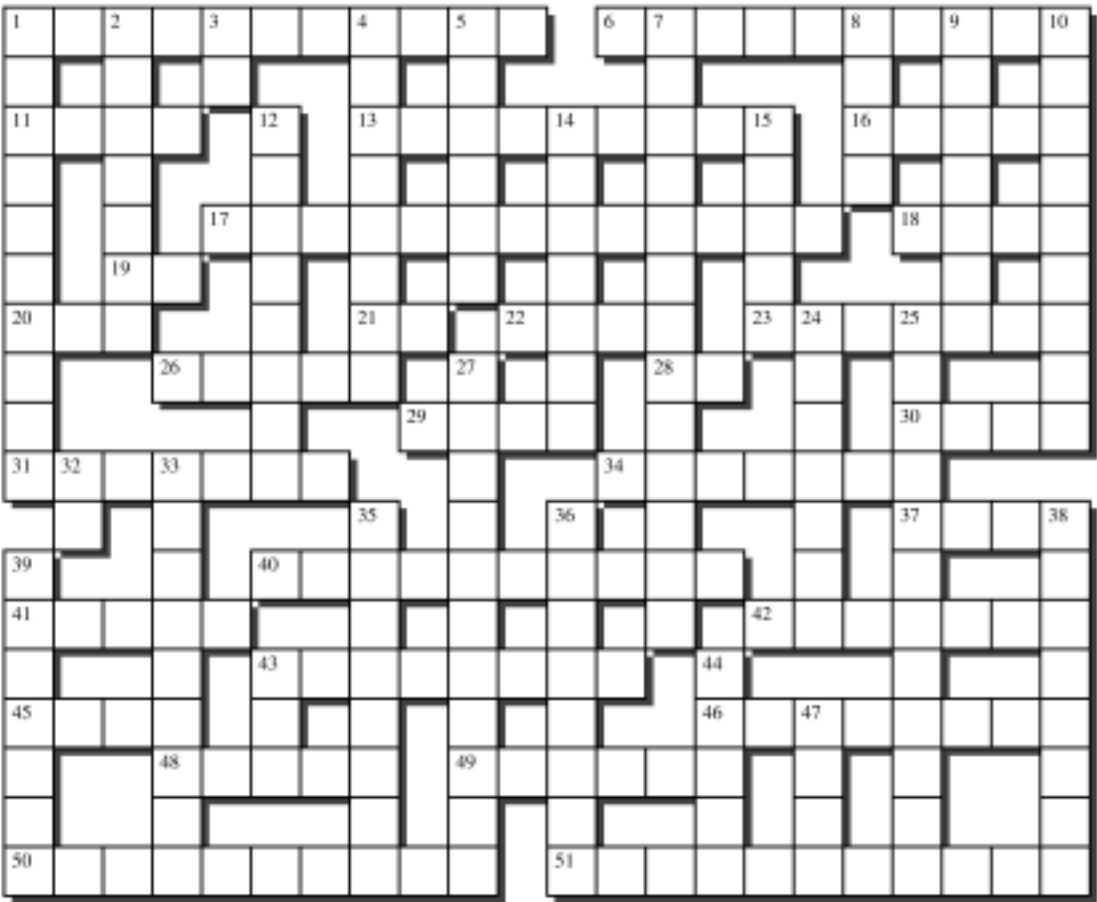
38) Avenues (8)

39) Seats (7)

43) Bad (3)

44) Pavement (5)

47) Nothing (4)



ANSWERS

Quiz answers

1810 by King George III.
patent was granted on August 25,
preserving food using tin cans. The
receiving the first patent for
merchant who is credited with
Of interest: Durand was an English
Answer: Peter Durand
electromagnetism.
metal. He also discovered
is credited with discovery of the
the first to isolate the element and
chemist Hans Christian Ørsted was
aluminum. Danish physicist and
metal which he gave the name of
Davy predicted the existence of the
Of interest: In 1808, Humphry
Answer: Aluminum.

Language Crossword



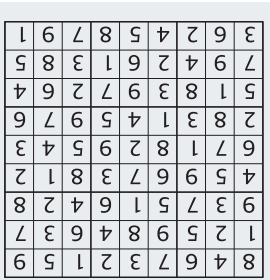
Cryptic Crossword

Solution: Across: 4 Has-been; 8 Dynamic; 9 Concern; 10 Tribal; 11
Evening; 12 Out at sea; 18 Piled up; 20 Make-up; 21 Coward; 22 Britain;
23 Versus; 24 Adorned; Down: 1 Edition; 2 Anxiety; 3 Impact; 5 Above
all; 6 Booby; 7 Earned; 13 Sapphic; 14 Answer; 15 Oppress; 16
Hated; 17 Better; 19 Leaves.

Wordpuzzler solution



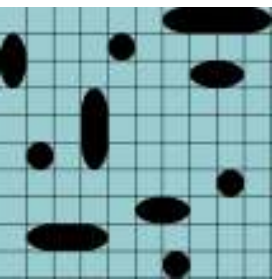
Sudoku solution



Circlegram

The letter represented by the
question mark is H. Phoenix,
Honolulu, Richmond, all US
state capitals.

Battleships



WHERE IS THIS?



Plaza with a view

Last week:
Benahavís

This picturesque junction is on the A-397 just outside Benahavís.



THE SUR IN ENGLISH CORNER

Go online and keep up to date

As Andalucía heads most proba-
bly towards harsher Covid-19 re-
strictions and case numbers rise,
at SUR in English we realise that
it's more important than ever for
our readers to be informed of the
latest developments.

Of course, whatever the restric-
tions, our print edition will be on
the streets every Friday as usual,
as it was during the strict lock-
down last
spring.

Throughout
the week

though, we are reporting on the
latest developments on the web-
site **www.surinenglish.com**.

One format does not replace
the other; the immediate updates
on the website and the round-up
of the week's news, lifestyle fea-
tures and entertainment in the
weekly print edition, comple-
ment each other perfectly.

And rest assured that both for-
mats come with
the reliability af-
forded by the
SUR newsroom.



A mastiff puppy that was found dumped and dying in a rubbish container in Malaga has been found a new home with a family from Ireland after they read of his plight on the SUR in English website.

Yvonne Edmonds and Kieran Byrne are currently spending time in Conil de la Frontera (Cadiz), where they first read the sad story about Ulysses, but plan to return to their hometown of Limerick in the mountains of southern Ireland in May.

This week the pair travelled to the Protectora de Málaga animal rescue shelter to collect the mastiff who was just seven or eight months old when he was found. Since his rescue he has been living with one the shelter's volunteers Inma Laure in Mijas.

The association said that Ulysses has leishmania and requires chronic treatment and they didn't think it would be easy to find him a home because he will need regular veterinary care.

Animal lovers

Throughout their lives Yvonne and Kieran have had three dogs and Yvonne is a volunteer at a cat shelter in the El Colorado district of Conil. "My husband and I love animals," she says.

The couple explained that they lost their previous rescue dog and didn't know if they were ready to take in another. But after pondering it they came to the conclusion the time was right but "we needed a sign, we wanted to know which dog would be the right one".

Then just two days later Kieran opened the SUR in English website on his mobile, and came



Yvonne and Kieran with Ulysses at the Malaga shelter. **SUR**

A new Irish home for Uli

Adoption. Yvonne Edmonds and Kieran Byrne, who are currently living in Conil de la Frontera, learned about the story after reading an article in SUR in English

IGNACIO LILLO



▲ **Growing.** Thanks to care given since he was rescued, Ulysses has become a fine mastiff. **SUR**

across an article in which the Protectora de Málaga was looking for a new home for Ulysses.

Two elements to the story attracted them to the young mastiff - the fact he had been found dumped in the rubbish like one of their previous rescue dogs and also that he shared the same name as a masterpiece by one of the leading Irish writers, James Joyce.

"Those coincidences made us see that Uli was the right one. This was the sign."

Thanks to SUR in English

They wrote to the animal welfare group to enquire about the case. "We sent a lot of photos of our previous dogs so they could see that we love them."

After a month of interviews and waiting for paperwork and documentation the couple finally collected the mastiff from Malaga.

"We adore Uli, he is so cute... we know he has some socialisation problems but he is so noble and loving, he is an incredible dog."

The couple plan to stay at their current residence in Conil until May and then return to their hometown of Limerick. The return trip will be made by car which they will have to adapt to make it more comfortable for the mastiff. They will cross by ferry from Bilbao, which has specific cabins for travelling with pets.

"It is the best way because Ulysses can be with us in the cabin and not be anxious."

Yvonne concludes with a special message for SUR in English: "Thank you very much for publishing the article that allowed us to meet Uli."

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