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April 23rd to 29th 2021
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TURNING DREAMS INTO ARTISTIC THERAPY

Digital artist and Xbox designer Manuel Camino exhibits work inspired by the "monsters of his mind" in Malaga **P30**



British residents make Malaga top in population growth in Spain

Two thirds of the 8,169 new residents in the province in 2020 come from outside Spain, mainly the UK

In 2020, a year marked by the pandemic, Spain's population fell by 106,000 inhabitants. In Malaga, however, the number of residents grew by more than 8,000, the highest increase among all of the country's provinces, according to the latest figures released by the national statistics institute, INE. Sixty-six per cent of all those

who joined the padrón at their local town hall in 2020 come from other countries, and most of them are British. Brexit had a lot to do with this increase, as Britons decided to formalise their residency due to the new conditions resulting from the departure of the UK from the EU. The number of British residents on the local population registers in Malaga province on 1 January 2021 totalled 50,773, an increase of 3,164 on the previous year. People wanting to spend Covid-19 lockdowns in the sunshine are also thought to be behind the increase in residents on the Costa del Sol. **P2**



Two women in Gibraltar's Main Street last week. **ÑITO SALAS**

Smiles all round as masks come off on the Rock

Gibraltar. With a vaccination programme that has now covered the entire population and jobs being given to cross-border workers, residents on the Rock show their relief at being able to walk around without face masks. "People seem happier." **P20**

First delivery arrives of single-dose Janssen vaccine, with over 17 million on order **P4**

Lux Mundi centre for the vulnerable calls for support to survive **P12**

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Population increase in Malaga province

ORDER BY PROVINCE

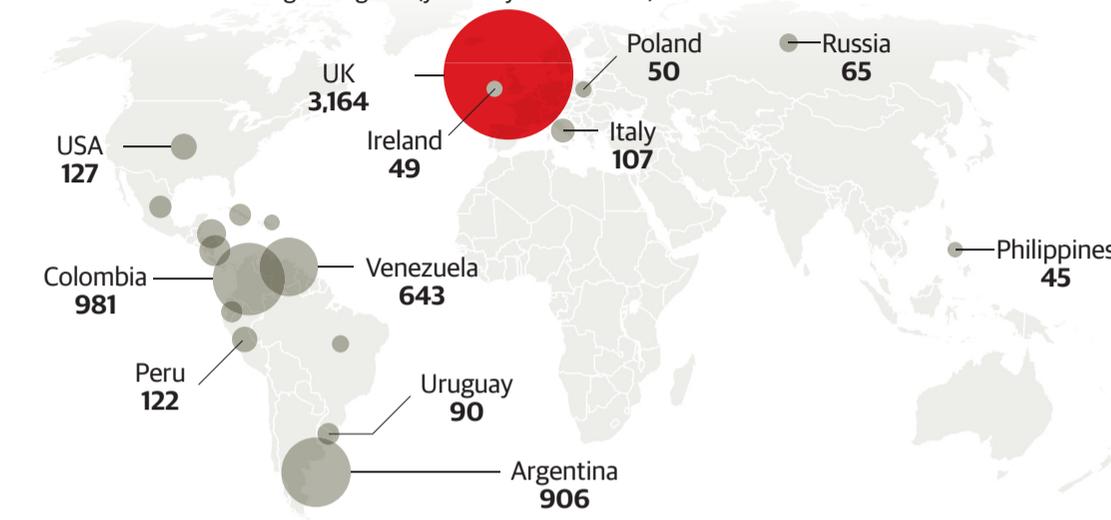
Only those with population growth (year-on-year variation)

	2020	2021	Increase
Malaga	1,694,089	1,685,920	8,169
Murcia	1,517,938	1,511,251	6,687
Toledo	708,775	703,772	5,003
Tarragona	821,404	816,772	4,632
Guadalajara	265,566	261,995	3,571
Gerona	784,991	781,788	3,203
Almeria	730,475	727,945	2,530
Granada	920,852	919,168	1,684
Cadiz	1,245,718	1,244,049	1,669
Cantabria	584,308	582,905	1,403
Castellón	586,907	585,590	1,317
Huesca	223,916	222,687	1,229
Balearics	1,172,333	1,171,543	790
Lleida	439,128	438,517	611
Huelva	524,613	524,278	335
Teruel	134,498	134,176	322
Ávila	157,918	157,664	254

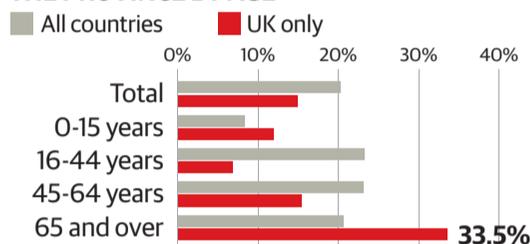
Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística, data from 1 January 2021

COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF NEW FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN MALAGA PROVINCE IN 2020

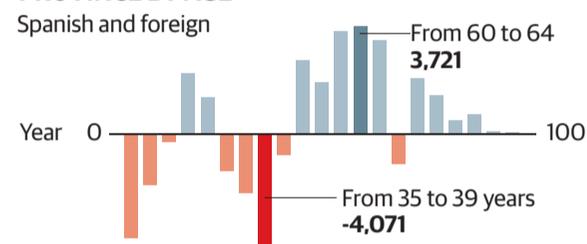
The 20 countries with the highest figures (year-on-year variations)



PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN POPULATION IN THE PROVINCE BY AGE



VARIATION OF POPULATION IN THE PROVINCE BY AGE



E. HINOJOSA

Britons newly registered on padrón help Malaga province to top the 2020 population growth table

While the total national population dropped, the number living in the province, including the Costa del Sol, went up by 8,169 last year despite Covid-19 and Brexit

NURIA TRIGUERO



MALAGA. The population of Malaga province increased by 8,169 people in 2020 - despite the pandemic - according to the latest update from the government which was drawn from town hall 'padrón' census data.

This was the largest increase in residents recorded in any province in Spain. Factors such as Brexit and the arrival of people from other provinces and countries in search of a refuge to make confinement more bearable are believed to be behind the increase.

The other Spanish provinces that gained the most population were Murcia (+6,687), Toledo (+5,003), Tarragona (+4,632) and Guadalajara (+3,571). At the other end of the scale, the provinces that lost the most inhabitants were

Madrid (-34,297), Barcelona (-31,997), Valencia (-8,337), Asturias (-7,224) and Vizcaya (-6,081).

Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, reached a record 1,694,089 inhabitants on 1 January of this year; a figure that represents an increase of 0.48 per cent compared to the previous year.

The population growth rate has slowed down compared to the previous three years (in 2019 Malaga province gained 24,135 residents; in 2018 some 20,664; and in 2017 there were 10,506). But even so, it represents a very notable increase compared to the decline registered by the country as a whole (over 100,000 fewer) and by most provinces.

Andalucía as a whole registered a net increase of 825 people, with the coastal provinces (Malaga, Almeria, Granada, Cadiz and Huelva) registering a positive trend, while those inland (Seville, Jaén and Cordoba) lost population.

Brexit

The foreign population is the one that gave the main boost to Malaga in 2020. Of the 8,169 residents that the province gained throughout the year, two thirds (5,436) are people born abroad and only 2,733 are Spanish. Brexit probably played a part and six out of ten new foreign residents

registered are from the UK. The British community on the town halls' population registers totalled 50,773 people in Malaga province in January, up over 3,000 on a year earlier and despite pandemic movement restrictions in 2020.

Some of the new residents from elsewhere may well be second homeowners who, in the face of the pandemic, have moved their habitual residence to the Costa del Sol and, with the freedom granted by remote working, many professionals have moved with their families from the bigger cities to Malaga.

The British community on the town halls' population registers totalled 50,773 in Malaga province in January, up over 3,000

Andalucía as a whole registered a net increase of 825 with the coastal provinces seeing a positive trend

The age groups that lost population are not the oldest, as one might think due to the mortality rate associated with Covid-19. On the contrary, Malaga continues to lose its younger population.

In the year to January 2021, the population under 15 has decreased by 5,517 people and the age group between 25 and 44, by 8,016. On the other hand, the population between the ages of 45 and 70 has increased by 14,821 people and that of those over 75 by 4,520. The number of centenarians has even increased: there are 751 people more than 100 years old in Malaga province.

Spain loses 106,146 inhabitants after previous four years' growth

Á. SOTO / M. SÁIZ-PARDO

MADRID. The population of Spain fell by 106,146 (0.2%) in 2020, the year of Covid-19 - the dramatic effects of which have been felt in all walks of life. The total number of people registered at their local town halls on 1 January 2021 was 47,344,649, according to the government's official INE report.

These 2020 figures mark a change in trend compared to recent years. This is the first 12 month period in which the population according to the padrón has dropped after four years of increases.

The number of Spanish nationals fell below 42 million once again, after breaking that barrier for the first time last year. In terms of foreign nationals liv-

ing in Spain, despite the number dropping, it still stayed above the 5.4 million mark.

In total 41,936,827 had Spanish nationality (88.6%) and 5,407,822 foreign nationality (11.4%). In 2020 the net number of Spaniards dropped by 79,815 people (-0.2%) and foreigners by -0.5%. Of the foreigners, those from EU countries dropped 37,870 (-2.3%) and non-EU countries grew by 11,539 (0.3%).

49% of the total number of people on the town halls' padrón registers were men and 51% women.

Andalucía offers a 72m-euro aid package to holiday accommodation companies

The Junta will give 200 euros per hotel bed with a limit of 200,000 euros per property and other direct aid to firms running apartments and campsites

PILAR MARTÍNEZ

MALAGA. The Junta de Andalucía has approved the first package of direct coronavirus crisis aid to the holiday accommodation sector in the region.

The vice-president of the Junta and regional minister of Tourism, Juan Marín, announced on Monday that the regional government would give financial aid of 200 euros per hotel bed with a limit of 200,000 euros per establishment.

The measure had been demanded by businesses in the sector, who until now have not received any direct support for their companies. In total, the regional government is going to allocate 60 million euros to the hotel sector, 9m for firms that own self-catering apartments and 3.8m for camping and rural centres.



Inside a Costa hotel which was mothballed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. S. SALAS

Apartments will get 80 euros per bed up to 50,000 euros and campsites and rural complexes from 3,000 upwards depending on staff levels.

Firms will have to prove that income dropped at least 20 per cent between 2019 and 2020.

Homes that are let out short term by private owners to tourists are excluded from the aid however.

The aid measures have been well received by the sector, although the figures are far short of the losses they have suffered after a year without trade and facing average costs that are estimated to be 50,000 euros per month at a four-star hotel with one hundred rooms.

The president of the Costa del Sol hoteliers association (Aeh-

cos), José Luque, has demanded that the aid reach the companies as soon as possible.

"We are very happy about this help, but we want the regional government to make the aid available as soon as possible," he said.

An industry report last year claimed Andalusian hotels would need 250 million euros to save their sector.

Private holiday rental owners upset that aid does not cover their properties

P. MARTÍNEZ/H. BARBOTTA

MALAGA. The Andalucía government's relief measures for hotel accommodation has upset private owners of holiday homes categorised officially as 'Viviendas Turísticas'.

The AVVA association, which represents local owners, said it was studying legal action, pointing out that tourist property owned by private individuals was regulated in a similar way as other self-catering.

"It feels like discrimination to us. It is unacceptable. The Junta will have to give very good reasons to discriminate against a licensed sector that generates in Andalucía 1.2bn euros [a year] in economic impact," a spokesperson said, adding that some 40,000 local properties in Malaga province had seen income plummet.

The Junta has said the aid is for companies and property classed as "viviendas turísticas have private owners".

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Vaccine roll-out breaks daily record as more jabs arrive

The government doesn't want to ease restrictions yet for those who have had the full vaccination and won't spread out first and second doses

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MALAGA. Spain's Covid-19 vaccine roll out continued this week amid signs the rate of vaccination was speeding up and as more mass deliveries of vaccines started to arrive.

On Wednesday, a record number of 456,777 jabs were given out in 24 hours nationally. Data reports said 7.6% of the whole population had had the full two doses to date and 20.9% at least one dose.

The government is still aiming to have 70% of the population vaccinated by the summer and this week started to take delivery of the 17.6 million promised single-dose Janssen vaccines. These will initially be prioritised for 70-79

years old, but the regional health services are already starting to use them on the over-60s as well. Their use is likely to stay restricted to the over-50s while the effects of the vaccine on younger women in America are studied more.

Andalucía region

In the Andalucía region, the daily figures on Wednesday were 7.6% with a double dose so far and 19.8% with one dose. The regional health service said that all over-80s who want a jab have had at least one and 85% have had the complete course.

It also said that 60% of the 70-79 group had had a first jab and 38.9% of the 60-69 age group. People in the 70-79 age bracket who haven't been called yet were being asked to get in touch with their local health centre.

Despite more people having the full vaccine doses, the national ministry of Health said on Thursday that it was too soon to ease restrictions for those protected, as the EU has been suggesting.



The Junta de Andalucía opened its largest 'vaccinedrome' so far this week inside Seville's La Cartuja stadium. EP

The government is yet to say what it will do with the second dose of AstraZeneca, shortly due for younger keyworkers

However Andalusian president, Juanma Moreno questioned this policy, saying that 650,000 fully

vaccinated people in Andalucía shouldn't be "locked-up" any more. "It makes no sense when the EU is already talking about relaxing restrictions," he stressed.

Second dose dilemmas

The national government is yet to say what it will do with the second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine shortly due for many younger keyworkers, now that current guidelines state that it is only suit-

able for 60 to 69 year olds. The results of extra studies are being awaited.

National and regional officials have also rejected the idea of spreading out the second doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, as has happened in some countries in order to reach people with a first dose more quickly. For the time being, doses will be given following the manufacturers' guidelines as the EU recommends.

Covid-19 case rates start to plateau and fourth wave may be slowing

The regional government has held off reviewing current restrictions until next Tuesday amid the encouraging signs

SUR

MALAGA. The increase in Covid-19 cases was slowing down nationally this week, with the government's pandemic expert and spokesperson, Fernando Simón, suggesting that "the fourth wave could turn into a fourth ripple". In Thursday's updated national data, the rolling 14-day case rate was 232 per 100,000, hardly changed since the start of the week. The worst affected regions were still Madrid, Basque Country and Navarra.

Despite slowing case rates, the numbers in hospital have been increasing in worst-hit areas, with 45% of intensive care beds with Covid-19 patients in Madrid by mid-week.

The national government has said that it has no plans to extend the state of alarm legisla-

tion beyond 9 May, confident the vaccine roll-out rate will have "taken a spectacular leap forward" by then.

The Andalucía region has delayed its regular meeting of its expert committee until 27 April (next Tuesday), amid confidence that the evolution of the case rate could mean an easing of regional restrictions by then.

Local case rates

In Thursday's daily update on regional case rates in Andalucía (22 April) there were 1,884 new cases reported, bringing the average 14-day case rate per 100,000 in the region to 251.60, up on 225 a week earlier. However, this was down from a peak of 264 on Monday. Granada was still stubbornly the worst-affected Andalusian province with a 446.8 case rate.

The same pattern was being repeated in Malaga province, with a 138.2 case rate on Thursday, up from 117 a week earlier, but down from 142 on Monday. Just under 6.7% of all hospital beds in Malaga province had Covid-19 patients on Thursday.



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Do UK pensions now attract wealth tax in Spain?

By David Boveren, Partner, Blevins Franks

Generally, Brexit has not affected the tax treatment for UK nationals settled in Spain, as the UK-Spain double tax treaty determines how Spanish residents are taxed on UK assets. However, there may be a change in the way UK pensions are treated when it comes to Spanish wealth tax.

Pensions and wealth tax in Spain

UK pension plans (other than purchased annuities) have generally been exempt from Spanish wealth tax. But now that UK pensions have become 'third country' (non-EU/EEA) assets, they may no longer qualify for the exclusion. This means that UK personal pensions and SIPPs (Self-Invested Personal Pensions) may now fall into the Spanish wealth tax calculation.

Although pension plans are not usually captured by Spanish wealth tax, as with many tax matters in Spain, this is not clear-cut. The current law on wealth tax exemptions does not differentiate between Spanish and foreign/EU and non-EU pension plans, so both should be treated the same. However, a binding ruling from the Directorate-General for Tax (DGT) in Spain in 2019 states

that "pension plans established in non-EU member states may not benefit from the [wealth tax] exemption".

Because there is no distinction between Spanish/non-Spanish pension plans in the actual wording of the law, lawyers could argue that UK pensions remain exempt. But this is not a given – as Brexit is such a new state of play, this is an untested position so it is unclear what the outcome would be.

So if you are Spanish resident with a UK pension plan, you may have to potentially defend your position with the tax authorities to prevent a new wealth tax liability.

Spanish wealth tax rules

While Spanish wealth tax was effectively abolished in 2008 and reinstated on a "temporary" basis during the financial crisis in 2011, it has been extended in successive budgets. The 2021 budget confirmed it is now considered a permanent tax. Spanish residents face wealth tax on worldwide assets; for non-residents it affects Spanish assets only. It is payable each December on the total

net value of most capital assets, including real estate, savings and investments, shareholdings, jewellery, art, antiques, cars and boats. General household contents, certain shareholdings in family companies, business assets – and usually pension rights – are not subject to wealth tax.

Wealth tax allowances

There is a personal tax-free allowance of €700,000 per person, which can vary regionally. Spanish residents can get an additional allowance of up to €300,000 against the value of their main home (excluding properties owned through corporate structures). This means a married couple resident here and owning property in joint names could potentially have a total tax-free allowance of €2 million for wealth tax purposes.

2021 wealth tax rates

The 2021 state rates start at 0.2% on assets up to €167,129 and rise up to 3.5% on assets over €10,695,996. The Autonomous Regions can vary both rates and allowances, so you need to establish what the rates are in

your area.

In *Andalucía*, wealth tax rates range from 0.2% to 2.5% (this is a decrease on the 2020 rates which ranged from 0.24% to 3.03%). The state allowance of €700,000 applies.

Reducing your exposure

Depending on your circumstances, there may be options to reduce your wealth tax liability. For example, there are some tax-efficient investment structures that can allow you to reduce both your income and wealth tax bill in Spain.

So if you are worried about the impact of wealth tax – or that the value of your UK pensions may now push your worldwide assets into scope for wealth tax – make sure you review your arrangements. A specialist adviser can assess your situation to establish any wealth tax implications and recommend suitable options.

For Spanish residents with a UK personal pension or SIPP, now may be a good time to consider transferring to a Spain-compliant alternative, such as an EU-based

QROPS (Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pensions Scheme) that will qualify for the wealth tax exemption. Doing so could also unlock other benefits not usually available to UK pensions, such as currency and estate planning flexibility. Remember: when exploring your pension options, you should take extreme care to do what is right for you with personalised, regulated advice.

In any case, taking expert, cross-border advice can help you take advantage of suitable tax-efficient opportunities to prevent a higher tax bill than necessary and make the most out of living in *Andalucía*.

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

Is your cross-border tax planning in order?

Over 100 countries now exchange tax information under the Common Reporting Standard. Whether you live in Spain or the UK, if you have financial assets in another country your personal details are automatically shared with your local tax authorities – who compare it the data on your tax returns and *Modelo 720*.

You need to take great care with your tax planning, making sure you correctly declare your overseas income and assets, and in the right country. Talk to the wealth management specialists at Blevins Franks for peace of mind and advice on tax-efficient, compliant arrangements.

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Man found shot dead inside van in Torremolinos street

TORREMOLINOS

CCTV captured a hooded man approaching the van early on Monday morning; he fired three shots, killing the victim

JUAN CANO / FERNANDO TORRES

TORREMOLINOS. Police are investigating the killing of a man of Moroccan origin who was found shot dead in a bright yellow van parked in Torremolinos on Monday morning.

CCTV cameras in Plaza Pablo Ruiz Picasso captured the scene at 5.43am. The victim barely had time to sit in the driver's seat and turn on the van's lights when a hooded man came out of nowhere and fired three shots at him.

The neighbourhood was sleeping and there were no other witnesses, although some did recall hearing bangs, but not relating them to gunshots.

The victim was hit in the abdomen and lower limbs and died at the scene.

No one noticed the body until later that morning. Not even an



The man was shot inside the yellow van he had just got into. F. TORRES

employee of the municipal cleaning service who said, "At around seven o'clock I passed by the van. I saw that the lights were on, but it didn't occur to me to look to see if there was someone or something inside. It gives me chills just thinking about it."

At 8.30 am, a woman passerby noticed the broken glass and saw the man lying in a pool of blood inside the vehicle and she called the emergency services.

The victim has been identified by police as a 35-year-old Mo-

roccan man living in Spain. Apparently, he was a street vendor.

SUR has learned that the man's police file contains several reports for different crimes, although none of them related to drug trafficking or organised crime.

Despite this, and because of the modus operandi, officers from the National Police's Udyco organised crime unit are investigating the crime with the main hypothesis that it was a "settling of scores" killing.



The secret compartment. SUR

Mijas resident arrested by police after drugs found in secret compartment

MIJAS

F. TORRES. Police in Mijas have arrested a French man after they found 14 kilogrammes of hashish hidden in a vehicle's secret compartment that could only be accessed after activating a complex hydraulic system. Guardia Civil officers stopped the vehicle on 20 March after the driver tried to evade them. Police seized a total of 14.8 kilogrammes of hashish in various formats in addition to 600 euros in cash and the vehicle that was used to transport the drugs.

The driver, a French national and a resident of Mijas, was arrested.

Airport police arrest a tourist for fake jewellery theft claim on the Costa del Sol

MALAGA

J. C. / Á. F. A 32-year-old Swedish tourist has been arrested by the National Police at Malaga Airport, accused of falsely reporting a jewellery theft from the apartment where she stayed, supposedly to claim on three travel insurance policies she had taken out for her holidays.

The police investigation began on Monday morning when the woman went to Fuengirola police station to report that thieves had entered the holiday apartment. She said they had taken a suitcase and a Rolex watch valued at 15,000 euros and two gold rings.

Police found that the door of the property had not been forced and that nothing inside was disturbed. When they asked if the tourist had travel insurance and she revealed she had three policies with different companies.

Due to return to Stockholm that afternoon, the woman was stopped at the boarding control area and the Rolex watch and one of the rings reported stolen were found in her luggage.

Man who allegedly fired the shot that killed a DJ in Marbella 'didn't like the music'

JUAN CANO / ÁLVARO FRÍAS

MALAGA. More details have emerged of the National Police investigation into the death of the DJ at an illegal party at a luxury villa in Marbella when he was hit by a bullet in the neck.

Within hours of the shooting on 29 March police arrested a 30-year-old German man who allegedly fired the shot, along

with another man, in Malaga as they were planning to flee the country.

The shooting happened during a secret party at a luxury villa on the Guadalmina Alta residential development in Marbella.

Initial investigations suggested that the DJ was hit in the neck by a stray bullet that pierced a plasterboard wall following an altercation in an adjoining room.



Officers with the suspect in the DJ shooting case. SUR

Investigators now say that the 30-year-old German suspect, linked to the Hells Angels gang, had earlier in the evening threatened to kill the DJ, JM Ares, be-

cause, apparently, he did not like the music he was playing. However, police do not link these alleged threats with the shots fired and consider them more an act

of bravado. At around midnight the suspect allegedly pulled out a gun, which has not been found, and fired two shots at the ceiling but one bullet ricocheted and hit the DJ in the neck. The DJ collapsed in the kitchen and the estimated 30 to 40 people at the party all fled, taking away all evidence of the event - even the DJ's laptop. But one person felt remorse and called the police.

A further eight people have been detained in connection with the shooting including the party organisers, another DJ and three security staff.

Police investigations are continuing to identify more attendees of the party.



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No animals needlessly put down so far this year at Malaga council rescue centre

MALAGA

Only one dog and one cat had to be destroyed in the first quarter of 2021, the former due to illness and the latter because of injury

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Malaga's municipal animal rescue centre, the Centro Zoosanitario, has not had to put any animals down so far in 2021 to control numbers.

This "historic" figure, said the city's Environmental Sustainability councillor, Gemma del Corral, is due to various factors, including greater public awareness of animal neglect and the work of animal protection organisations such as the city's Society for the Protection of Animals and Dogs of Malaga, AMAN and Ciriana.

In the first quarter of this year, only two animals had to be put down at the centre, for strict health reasons: a dog with a se-

rious kidney deficiency and a cat that had been run over and had injuries it would not have recovered from.

Ten years ago, in 2011, the municipal centre took in a total of 3,621 animals, of which 1,982 had to be put to sleep due to lack of space in this rescue centre and others.

Public awareness

This prompted Malaga city council to launch a series of awareness campaigns to stop people from abandoning their pets, as this is what forces rescue centres to put some animals down in order to offer shelter to those that need it more.

The campaigns have resulted in the yearly reduction in both the number of animals found by municipal rescue services and of those handed in to rescue centres by private owners.

The rates of animal adoption are also following an encouraging trend. While in 2011, 16 per cent of dogs taken in were adopted, this figure had reached 27 per cent by 2020.



Some of the attractions at the popular Tivoli amusement park. **SUR**

Tivoli World is to be protected from developer speculation

ARROYO DE LA MIEL

MALAGA. Benalmádena has found a way of protecting the land at Tivoli so its use cannot be changed in the future in order for housing to be built on it. The solution is to adapt the Urban Plan for the municipality to prevent the land being used for speculation.

A few months ago the council approached Malaga university to ask for help in finding a legally binding way to guarantee this protection. The amusement park has been suffering financial difficulties for the past decade and has had to turn to an administra-

tor to determine whether its future is viable. The council says it is a benchmark and a symbol of the municipality.

The experts found that Tivoli features on the POTAUM Urban Land Regulation Plan for Malaga as a metropolitan cultural and social facility, on the same basis as the Picasso Museum and the Cervantes Theatre. Some sites on this list are already protected and for others, like Tivoli, protection is recommended. All the council has to do is adapt its Urban Plan (PGOU) to the POTAUM, and the use of the site will not be able to be changed in future.

HERE AND THERE

TORREMOLINOS

Owners face fines for not diluting dog urine

I. G. Dog owners in Torremolinos are now obliged to dilute their pets' urine in the streets, or face fines of between 75 and 500 euros.

"With this measure we are responding to an important demand from residents that will result in the improvement of community life and give our municipality a good image," said the mayor, José Ortiz.

Local police have said they will be "especially vigilant".

The council recommends dog owners dilute the urine using a solution consisting of water (750ml), vinegar (240ml) and soap (10ml).



Mayor José Ortiz. **SUR**

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The maximum speed limit in towns will be reduced to 30 km/h in most streets from 11 May

The DGT traffic department's new rules limit the speed on urban roads which have one lane in each direction, but it will remain at 50 km/h for those with two lanes each way

FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ



MALAGA. The speed limits in towns are to change from 11 May, when a modification to the Traffic Law comes into force. It will mean that the maximum speed for motor vehicles on urban roads which have one lane in each direction (which are the majority) will be 30 kilometres an hour, and 20 kilometres an hour on semi-pedestrian streets

where there is no difference in level between the road and the pavement. The current 50 km/h speed limit will remain the same on urban roads which have two or more lanes in each direction, apart from a few exceptions.

Spain's Directorate-General for Traffic (DGT) has introduced the new rules to improve the co-existence between different road users and reduce the number of deaths in urban areas.

According to statistics from the National Road Safety Observatory, 82 per cent of the 519 victims who died on roads in towns or cities in Spain in 2019 were considered vulnerable: 247 pedestrians (47.5%), 32 cyclists, 126 drivers or passengers and 22 motorcyclists.

Bearing in mind that nearly half of all those killed on urban streets are pedestrians, it is also useful to note that studies show that the risk of dying after being hit by a vehicle reduces by 80 per cent when speed limits are lower. The DGT

warns that if a vehicle is travelling at 30 km/h the risk of death is 10 per cent, but if it is travelling at 50 kph it rises to 90 per cent.

As well as reducing personal injuries, the measure also aims to reduce material damage and the danger of collisions, because the distance needed for a vehicle to come to a halt is also shorter when it is travelling at a lower speed.

Exceptions

Road users need to bear in mind that the maximum speed will be 30 km/h on all urban roads which have one lane in each direction. In one-way streets it can be up to 50 kph. The regulations also allow town halls to increase the speed limit on single-lane roads up to 50 km/h as an "exceptional" measure, but there must be signs to show that this is the case.

This does not cover bus lanes, so if a street has one lane for private vehicles and another for public transport, the speed limit in that street cannot exceed 30 km/h.

However, streets with the so-called '30 lanes' which are now proliferating in towns and can be

FIGURES

10%

The risk of dying after being hit by a vehicle is 10% if it is travelling at 30 km/h, but rises to 90% if it is going at 50 km/h.

47.5%

of people killed in accidents on urban roads are pedestrians, according to the National Road Safety Observatory. The percentage of those considered vulnerable rises to 82% when other users such as motorists and cyclists are included.

of 'autovía' motorways, the limit will be 80 km/h, although councils and the authorities responsible for the autovía may increase it as long as it does not exceed the maximum speed permitted outside the urban area.

In the case of Malaga city, the council intends to apply as few exceptions as possible. "We are finalising a study to see where they could be relevant, but our main intention is to just apply the new rules," says the city's councillor for Mobility, José del Río.

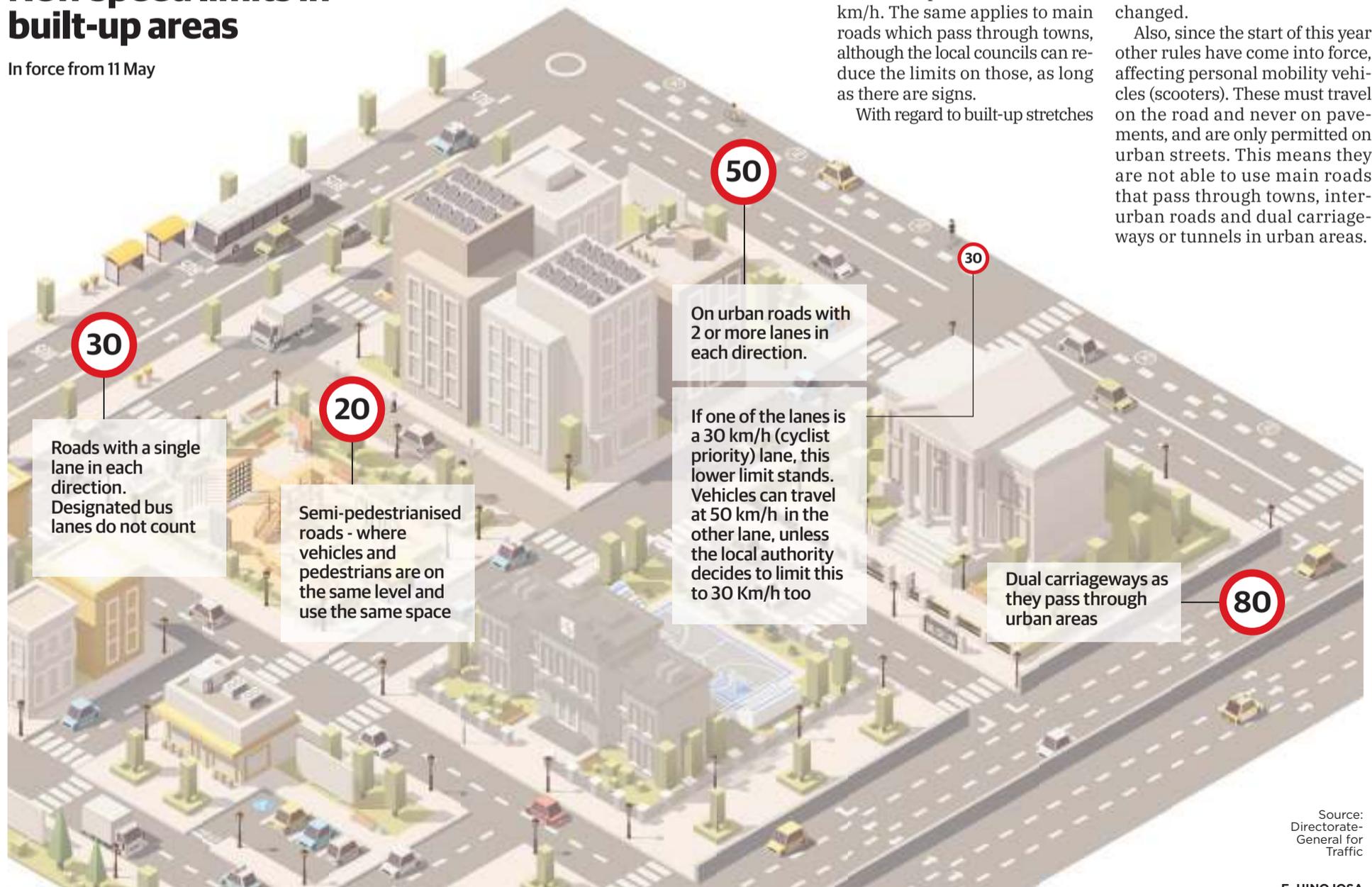
He also says speed limit signs will be removed from streets where the maximum speed is 30 km/h, because this will be the normal rule once the new limits come into effect on 11 May. In other words, there will only be signs where the speed limit is different.

This modification to the Traffic Law is the latest to come into effect as part of the packet of measures approved by the Spanish government on 10 November 2020, because there was a six-month period of grace to give the administrations time to change their road signs and for people to be made aware that the rules have changed.

Also, since the start of this year other rules have come into force, affecting personal mobility vehicles (scooters). These must travel on the road and never on pavements, and are only permitted on urban streets. This means they are not able to use main roads that pass through towns, inter-urban roads and dual carriageways or tunnels in urban areas.

New speed limits in built-up areas

In force from 11 May



Source:
Directorate-
General for
Traffic

E. HINOJOSA



Erosion had uncovered the tops of the walls. SUR

Works to protect ancient ruins near the Vega del Mar basilica and Linda Vista Baja

MARBELLA

JOSÉ MARÍA MARTÍN. The council is carrying out urgent works to protect some of the archaeological remains which lie between the Vega del Mar paleochristian basilica and Linda Vista Baja beach.

These works are primarily focused on the upper parts of some of the walls which had been discovered many years ago, because erosion left them exposed and unprotected a few months ago.

José Antonio Moreno, the gen-

eral director for Culture, says as soon as the situation was spotted, technicians marked off the area and urgently contracted a specialist firm to carry out the works.

Before starting, the company had to provide a report on what it planned to do to the Junta de Andalucía's provincial Heritage Department for approval. When this was obtained, the specialists set to work to cover the walls and they put barriers up to stop vehicles approaching the area while the works were being carried out.

Over 200 new businesses have opened in the first quarter of this year

MARBELLA

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS. Over 200 new businesses have opened in Marbella during the first quarter of this year, most of them in the services sector, something council spokesman Félix Romero says is evidence that, despite the pandemic, there is a certain reactivation in the economy.

The business community has been feeling more optimistic about the prospects for this summer now that the vaccination campaign is under way, and with this in mind the council has recently approved two new taxi licences. "With the summer coming up, it is essential that we can offer a suitable taxi service," said Romero.

The local authority has now drawn up its Beach Safety Plan for the forthcoming peak season and it has been sent to the Andalusian Civil Protection Commission for its approval.

HERE AND THERE



A previous summer fair. SUR

MALAGA

City hopes for 'some kind of feria' this year

SUR. The Malaga city councillor responsible for events and fiestas, Teresa Porras, is optimistic that this August there will be "some kind of feria, which will not be the same as usual, but more than there was in 2020". Speaking to SUR, the councillor said that for this to happen two conditions must be met: the national government's vaccination schedule must be met, with half the population immunised by mid-July; and if coronavirus control measures allow the celebration of the festivities.

MARBELLA

San Pedro streets being resurfaced

J.D. Several streets on the southern side of San Pedro Alcántara are currently being resurfaced. The deputy mayor for San Pedro, Javier García, said they were all unsuitable for people with mobility problems. The original plan was for minor modifications, but the streets are in such a bad state of repair that it has turned into a bigger project.

MARBELLA

Casino Marbella joins #ZeroHero scheme

SUR. Casino Marbella has announced that it is joining the #ZeroHero campaign, which encourages responsible driving on the Costa del Sol. The initiative was set up at the 2019 United Nationalities of Marbella Summit and seeks to promote "designated drivers" who abstain from alcohol at social events. As part of this, drivers are offered non-alcoholic drinks free of charge. The casino's commercial director, Paula Veiga, commented: "The most important thing about a night out is being able to tell the tale."

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David Bower, Andrew Southgate and James Greene.

THE BLEVINS FRANKS ESTEPONA ADVISORY TEAM

ESTEPONA

Blevins Franks Wealth Management prides itself on providing clients with a high level of financial planning expertise and personalised service, and its growth in Southern Spain continues to go from strength to strength.

Over the years, the company has prioritised client-servicing as a cornerstone of its success. In addition to the local Partners, it has a team of Private Client Managers who are dedicated to looking after existing clients.

David Bower is the long-standing Partner in the Estepona area, having joined Blevins Franks in 2000 and opening the office at Sotogrande Marina before relocating to its current premises eight years later. David holds the Diploma for Financial Advisers (DipFA) and is a member of the London Institute of Banking and Finance.

David's extensive experience in international finance and financial planning places him in a unique position to provide a personalised 'private office' experience to high net worth individuals and wealthy families across borders.

Andrew Southgate was promoted to Partner in February this year, having previously joined Blevins Franks in 2015 as a Private Client Manager. Andrew has 14 years' experience in financial services, is a Chartered Financial Planner and holds his Associateship through the London Institute of Banking and Finance. He also has a BSc (Hons) in Business and Information Technology.

Andrew has a deep understanding of the Spanish tax regime, its interaction with UK rules and the key issues faced by British expatriates living in the region. He ensures that clients and prospective clients receive quality tax, investment and wealth management advice.

Following Andrew Southgate's promotion, James Greene has been appointed as Private Client Manager for Blevins Franks Estepona office.

James started his career in financial services in 2013 and holds the Diploma in Regulated Financial Planning (Dip PFS) from the Chartered Insurance Institute plus the Investment Management Certificate from the CFA Society. James is also working towards an Advanced Diploma in Financial Planning.

James joined the Blevins Franks advisory team in Cyprus in 2018 and moved to the Estepona office in October last year. James' role as Private Client Manager is to support David and Andrew by providing ongoing investment, tax and wealth management advice to existing clients through regular reviews.

Besides the Estepona office, Blevins Franks also have offices in Marbella, La Cala de Mijas and Nerja here in Southern Spain, as well as offices in Benijofar, Altea, Javea, Mallorca and Tenerife.

All the locally based advisers are supported by teams of tax, investment and pensions specialists, based at the company's London and Malta offices.

During the pandemic, Blevins Franks has remained fully operational and continues advising clients and prospective clients on their financial planning needs.

MORE INFORMATION

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'We are doing everything humanly possible to survive'

Gloria Uribe Cifuentes Lux Mundi President

Following almost 50 years of service on the coast, the ecumenical centre has now made a desperate plea for help

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. After moving back into its old premises in Fuengirola, Lux Mundi has sent out a desperate appeal for volunteers and financial assistance to continue to offer a meeting point where unity is promoted by means of helping others. Like many charities along the Costa del Sol, the organisation's financial situation has worsened as all fundraising activities had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

SUR in English spoke with President Gloria Uribe Cifuentes, who showed her concerns for the future of the Fuengirola branch. **Why have you moved back into your old centre in Calle Nueva?** This was due to the difficulties caused by the pandemic and the fact that our ecumenical centre in the church cannot organise the regular activities anymore.

Do you think that Lux Mundi will survive the crisis?

We are doing everything humanly possible to survive, but it has been a particularly difficult time. We desperately need the help of all those who know the importance of Lux Mundi.

How has the pandemic affected the services you offer?

President Gloria Uribe Cifuentes is appealing to the public for help. **SUR**

All activities have been suspended, so we are not getting any income. Our charitable work has also changed: unfortunately, the service of feeding the homeless was stopped in March 2020, and it is impossible to offer this kind of service with the very little resources we have.

What type of service are you currently able to offer?

Our boutique is open and the centre still hosts the AA and addiction meetings. Because our aim is to help those in need, we are giving non-perishable food to families through Caritas and Adintre, but we are desperate for donations to help the hundreds of families in need in our town.

Is an appointment necessary?

No, but we prefer if people make an appointment. We can help with making appointments with different institutions, giving advice and offering translating services. **Are you offering online services?** We are starting with ecumenical training courses via the internet. We also offer a bimonthly newsletter where we inform people about our services and give information of interest

How can people help?

We understand that people are themselves in extremely difficult situations, but we are in desperate need of volunteers and donations to help us survive this terrible period, and also to help others to do the same.

www.lux-mundi.org

HERE AND THERE

FUENGIROLA

Initiative to boost local trade

T.B. Fuengirola town hall has launched a new initiative intended to help local businesses recover from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The project, which will be held from 15 May until 15 June, will be driven by a lottery-type draw for customers who spend more than 20 euros in a particular shop or service. Each customer will be entered into a draw to redeem a voucher worth 1,500 euros. Registration for the campaign can be made on www.fuengirola.org or by sending a WhatsApp message to 670 09 09 60.

The winner of the voucher will be announced on 30 June.

TORREMOLINOS

Torremolinos receives 'safe tourism' seal

T.B. Torremolinos has been awarded the 'safe tourism' seal from the Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality (ICTE), a recognition that certifies the town is a safe space to receive tourists. The resort received the seal for its continued efforts to ensure the safety of visitors and residents during the coronavirus pandemic. The local council has enforced strict measures to ensure the highest health and safety protocols in spaces like the Casa de las Navajas, the Príncipe de Asturias Auditorium, the Molino de Inca Botanical Gardens, Parque La Batería, and along its seven kilometres of beaches.

Mayor of Torremolinos José Or-

José Ortiz with the award. **SUR**

tiz said, "The fact that an autonomous body such as the ICTE grants us this seal for tourism positions us in a privileged situation for the summer season."

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HERE AND THERE

NERJA

Emergency work stops sewage plant floods

E. C. Nerja town hall has had to carry out emergency works to stop flooding caused by the town's new sewage treatment plant, which is due to complete its testing phase at the end of April.

The work has involved installing another collector in Avenida del Mediterráneo.

Premises, garages and homes have been flooded, especially during rainfall in the avenue near to the Mónica hotel, as well as in Calles Frigiliana and Antonio Ferrandis Chanquete.

TORROX

Town hall takes over car park management

E. C. Torrox town hall has taken over the management of the town's Al Almedina car park, which its previous owners, UTE Almedina, abandoned in January 2020, citing 33-million-euro losses since it opened in 2008.

The public car park has been left open since January 2020, with no security or any type of controls, leading to complaints from neighbours and deterioration of the facility and surrounding area.

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

Public invited to vote for film about flamenco

E. C. The Vélez-Málaga born flamenco singer-song-writer, Juan Brea, is the subject of a video which Vélez-Málaga flamenco associations and the town hall hope will win this year's Copa España Creativa award. The public has until 1pm on 22 May to vote via the internet. The winner will be declared in Orihuela, Alicante, which is this year's host town for the annual award. To watch the video and vote go to: <https://votopopular-copaespanacreativa2020.es>.

Parking area for 22 motorhomes opens in Canillas de Albaida**CANILLAS DE ALBAIDA**

The facility is located on a section of Malaga's Great Trail and at the start point of many walks through the Tejeda, Almirajara and Alhama mountains

EUGENIO CABEZAS

CANILLAS DE ALBAIDA. A new parking area for caravans and motorhomes was officially opened in Canillas de Albaida on Monday by the village mayor, Jorge Martín, and Francisco Salado, president of Malaga's provincial authority.

The new space can accommodate up to 22 vehicles and is equipped with facilities to dispose of waste water and fill up water deposits. There are also electric points and LED lighting.

Opening the caravan site, Martín



The mayor and Diputación president at Monday's inauguration. **SUR**

said that the new facility is located on part of Malaga's Great Trail (Gran Senda) long-distance path and next to many start points for walks in the Sierra Tejeda, Almirajara and Alhama mountains.

The officials invited people from Malaga and the Costa to use the facility while the current restrictions on movement are in place and said they hope it will attract tourists from further afield in the future.

**Hikers raise money for animals**

Around 30 people from a range of associations in the Axarquía, along with their dogs, participated in a 13-kilometre charity hike around Periana last Sunday to raise money for the Refugio de Leo animal shelter in Vélez-Málaga.

Provincial authority approves plans for raisin museum**MALAGA**

A. M. R. Malaga's provincial authority, the Diputación, approved on Wednesday plans to renovate a building in Almachar's historic centre to house the new Axarquía Muscatel raisin museum.

The museum will explain the history of the grape drying tradition in the Axarquía, including the importance of the crop as well as the techniques used.

There are also plans for a raisin study centre in Moclinejo and a visitors' centre in El Borje. The Axarquía Muscatel raisin was awarded Agricultural Heritage status in 2017.



One of the 'bookcases'. **SUR**

Village creates unique outdoor library using old street lights**CUEVAS DEL BECERRO**

A. JIMÉNEZ. A library with a difference has been launched by the local council in Cuevas del Becerro, a village in the Guadalteba area of inland Malaga. Books in the so-called Biblioteca Libre (free library) will be stored in old street lights that used to stand in the village. There are one hundred books of all genres which people will be able to take out, read and then return.

Councillor José Antonio Gallego explained: "The old street lights have been replaced by LED lighting, so we've decided to give them a new purpose." He said there will be six 'shelves' filled with books across the village, including at El Nacimiento, a public park commonly used for poetry recitals. Gallego added: "One of the shelves here will be filled with poetry books."

For the opening on Monday, the books were taken to the lights on a donkey called Pamela. Organisers are keen to get children involved in the initiative, coinciding with World Book Day this Friday (23 April).

Sites such as Paseo del Tilín will have reading spaces available to encourage as many people as possible to get involved in this cultural initiative.



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Government authorises project to stop La Cala beach erosion

Mijas council and Madrid have worked together to identify three alternative solutions to the long-standing problem

IVÁN GELIBTER

MIJAS. A long-term solution to sand erosion on La Cala's beaches could now be a step nearer after several years of deliberation.

Mayor of Mijas Josele González and the local councillor for Infrastructure José Carlos Martín have made a joint announcement with the central government's official representative in Malaga, Teófilo Ruiz,

that the council has permission to draw up a plan to stop sand disappearing from the Bombo and Butibamba beaches, especially on the stretch known as Los Cordobeses.

In addition to an ongoing EU study, the national government ordered a smaller, quicker simulation of the evolution of the Mijas coastline. This research has led to the conclusion that the need is urgent and has proposed three alternative solutions.

The mayor explained, "We have been working with the government's Coastal authority for a while and this study aims to solve a long-standing problem for Mijas residents."

Andalucía's longest zip wire is due to open on 15 May in Alhaurín de la Torre

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ

ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE. Sunview Park Adventure, a leisure park in Alhaurín de la Torre, is due to open on 15 May. It features a 1,350 metre zip wire - the longest in Andalucía.

The site will initially be open

weekly from Thursday to Sunday from 10am to 10.30pm. The owners had initially hoped to open the site near the end of 2020 but pandemic restrictions scuppered these plans.

Visitors will have the opportunity to go on the zip wire in a Superman pose which will allow them to reach speeds of 100km/h.

They will also be able to go on seated, either individually or in pairs.

The park's manager, Antonio Vallejo, added: "Guests will also be able to enjoy stunning views from our all-terrain path."

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Age Concern hosts memorial event in honour of co-founder



Age Concern members at the starting line in San Pedro. **SUR**

SAN PEDRO

T. BRYANT. Age Concern Marbella and San Pedro hosted a memorial walk to celebrate the life of Stephen Brooksbank last weekend. Stephen, who died last year, was a co-founder of the Marbella and San Pedro Branch. The walk took place along the paseo marítimo in San Pedro, a route that Stephen used to do almost every day. 60 people took part in the walk, some of whom were accompanied by their dogs. The event was followed by a lunch and a talk about Stephen's achievements, which was given by Age Concern Chairman Tom Burns.

The event raised 1,531.50 euros for the charity, which serves the English-speaking senior citizen community in the area.



Some of the dart players who helped clock-up 500 euros. **SUR**

MIJAS

Lions take flight during charity darts tournament

T. B. La Cala de Mijas Lions took to the oche to participate in a charity darts tournament held

at the Miraflores Club last weekend. Organised by President Graham Rutland, 50 people took part in the event, which raised more than 500 euros. The game was based on the '80s television show Bullseye, where players answered questions in order to secure their score.

Walk to mark International Guide Dog Day

COSTA DEL SOL

T. B. To celebrate International Guide Dog Day (28th April) and raise funds for the ONCE Foundation for Guide Dogs, Specsavers Ópticas has organised a virtual dog walk, which will take place between 26 April and 2 May. Participants are asked to donate five euros to their local Specsavers store and post pictures of their walk on social media to increase awareness of the importance of guide dogs for people with severe visual impairment.

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Prices fixed on the Caminito del Rey daredevil walkway by new management company

ANTONIO M. ROMERO

MALAGA. The spectacular Caminito del Rey walkway, suspended precariously on a rockface in a gorge some 100 metres above a river, will have a new management company at the helm for the next five years.

The provincial authority in Malaga has awarded the concession to a consortium formed by the Sando construction company, Salzillo Servicios Integrales and events organiser Mundo Management.

Although the tender document allowed an increase in ticket price to 12 euros the group behind the



The Caminito del Rey. **SUR**

winning bid will keep it at ten euros.

The consortium - in which Sando has 55 per cent stake; Salzillo, 35 per cent; and Mundo, ten per cent - replaces Hermanos Campano-Bobastro 2000, who managed the tourist attraction for

the last five years.

The new group has agreed to pay an annual fee of 350,000 euros and 46.3 per cent of the maintenance costs to the provincial authority. It is estimated that the new management company could take over the attraction from the second half of May as long as there are no appeals following the award of the concession.

In future, some 60 per cent of the tickets will be sold directly to the public through the website, 35 per cent will be allocated for authorised agencies and establishments; and five per cent are reserved for teaching, scientific and promotional visits.

There is a 1,100-person daily cap on visitors during the first year (as at present), which could be expanded to 1,300 visitors the following two years and 1,500 people in the last two years if agreed by the authorities.

Governments dusts off plans to add toll charges to more motorways

To unlock large EU Covid-19 grants, ministers are promising to look at ways to generate more income to improve maintenance and reduce pollution

I. LILLO / H. BARBOTTA

MALAGA. The government has sent proposals to Brussels in order to unlock EU Covid-19 funding for Spain that include charging tolls on many existing motorways.

As part of other initiatives to boost income and to support its large European-grant request, ministers have reawakened old suggestions that the network of free-to-use motorways (known as 'autovías') could become toll



The A-7 in Malaga- it is unclear if this city ring road would have tolls or not applied. SALVADOR SALAS

roads at some future point.

The Brussels proposal document includes the idea to collect

upkeep charges and help lower air pollution. The government has committed to looking at ways

the charges could be levied.

It is hard to know exactly which roads might be included, but gen-

erally the plan is taken to refer to the state-run two or three-lane roads known as autovías, which in Malaga and the Costa del Sol include the MA-20, A-7 coastal road and A-45 to Antequera. These could become like the current AP-7 toll motorway.

It isn't clear if regional-run autovías, such as the A-92 or the A-357 in the Guadalhorce valley, would be included or not.

Plans to charge on the motorways have existed for several years although government departments this week did not have precise details on the scheme.

The Andalusian regional government has rejected the idea. Regional development minister, Marifrán Carazo, said it was the wrong time for the national government to consider the move during such a serious crisis, although she recognised the need to improve upkeep on the roads.

Environmental group Ruedas Redondas was supportive however. "Whoever wants to use their car, should have to pay for that. Why does the rest of society have to?" said a spokesperson.

Protests over massive solar energy parks

People in Jimena de la Frontera, in the Campo de Gibraltar, are opposing plans to cover 2,400 hectares of countryside with solar panels

WILLIAM HAWKINS

CADIZ. Many residents of Jimena de la Frontera are dismayed at the prospect of 2,400 hectares of local countryside being covered with solar panels, and have set up a protest group and organised a petition to stop what they claim is uncontrolled speculation.

Environmentalists are calling for processing of all licence applications for these numerous projects to be temporarily stopped while the council draws up regu-

lations to ensure that installations of this type are subject to strict controls. They say they are in favour of clean energy, but speculation on this massive scale will destroy the environment, put many farmers out of business and affect tourism.

The plans were announced last year but few people seemed aware of them. The council said the 360-million-euro projects would provide 1500 direct and indirect jobs in the area and would put Jimena on the renewable energies map. However, concerned residents say they have had no say in the matter and there are fears that unless the licences are temporarily suspended all these projects will be approved before the regulations the council has now agreed to draw up are actually in force.



Protesters placed a banner on Jimena's castle wall. w.h.

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THE EURO ZONE
MARK NAYLER

How to spend it



Apply the brakes or splash the cash? Put bluntly, those are the two options facing Spain as it begins to deploy its EU Covid recovery funds. External powers are already shouldering their way into the debate, with Germany saying this week the main goal should be to reduce public debt. But Pedro Sánchez has higher things in mind, announcing on Tuesday the start of a process that he says will transform Spain in a way not seen since its admission to the EU in 1986.

It's often left to Germany to be the exponent of fiscal conservatism, to remind other EU members of their tedious responsibilities when no one else will. In this case, though, Angela Merkel's implied recommendation of austerity for Spain probably is misjudged and premature. The Iberian economy is only just emerging from a Covid-induced coma, which is why external bodies such as the International

Monetary Fund say its reawakening depends on stimulation, not cutbacks.

Nevertheless, Germany has a point. The chunk of EU money that's being loaned rather than granted to Spain (almost half of the total amount) will only increase the country's public debt - possibly holding it at 120% of GDP for the next few years - and as yet there's no real indication of how Sánchez's administration proposes to reduce that problematic ratio.

The Socialist leader's high-flown talk of comprehensive reform also raises another, more disquieting, possibility. If Covid had never swept the planet, are we to suppose that there would have been no such change, because in that (preferable) scenario Spain wouldn't have received the requisite EU funding? That arguably reveals the country as too reliant on Brussels, and suggests that it would be better off finding more sustainable methods of regeneration.

By definition, reform that's dependent on bailout funds awarded on the back of a global crisis will be impossible most of the time.

That's not the only problem. For Spain's EU recovery package to be effective in any of the spheres that Sánchez is targeting, it'll have to prosper in a hostile environment. Among the hazards threatening its survival are mismanagement, over-bureaucratized administrations and corruption, the scourge of Spanish politics.

Meanwhile, in an odd outburst to reporters outside parliament on Wednesday, economy minister Nadia Calviño was fretting about bankers' salaries. As is often the case with this sort of hand-wringing, she didn't say why it was specifically bankers' high salaries that she finds "unacceptable", rather than oversized pay packets in general (why not any private or public sector executive earning over a certain amount, for example?). Calviño's implication seemed to be that, because a lot of people have lost jobs or suffered reduced income due to the pandemic and politicians' attempts to manage it, NO ONE should be earning a "high" salary - an argument which is missing some logical steps, to say the least.

CaixaBank announces massive job cuts and branch closures

JOSÉ MARÍA CAMARERO

MADRID. Spain's CaixaBank, following its merger with Bankia, has announced that it will be cutting 8,291 jobs - some 18 per cent of its workforce - and it plans to close 1,534 branches.

It is the largest restructuring plan ever seen in the country's financial sector.

Since both banks announced their intention to merge at the beginning of September, cutting the workforce has always been on the table.

Of the total proposed job losses, up to 5,742 of them will affect branches and 688 in subsidiary offices; meanwhile 1,611 jobs will be cut in central services and up to 250 in regional headquarters. According to union sources, Madrid would be the most affected region - with some 1,500 job losses, followed by Valencia (500) and Murcia (about 400).

The new financial group has almost 7,000 branches spread throughout Spain but the cuts will result in the closure of 1,534 offices.

MediaMarkt opens new stores in Mijas and Vélez-Málaga after taking over Worten premises

J. M. MARTÍN / E. CABEZAS

DATA. MediaMarkt, the leading international chain for the sale of technological and domestic electrical products in Spain, has

this week opened its new stores on the Miramar retail park in Mijas and in the El ingenio shopping centre in Vélez-Málaga.

The openings come after the retail firm reached an agreement with Worten for the acquisition of 17 of its stores in Spain.

The new Mijas store, which opened its doors last Monday, has almost 1,600 square metres of floor space.

The Vélez opening adds to a recent expansion and overhaul of the El Ingenio centre, which was 20 years old last year.

EU INSURANCE DIRECT

EU Insurance, based in Elviria, has been helping and advising clients since 2005

MARBELLA

SUR. EU Insurance Direct has been in Spain since 2005 offering all types of insurance for expats in Spain. Wendy Codd, who set up the Company in 2005, has a wealth of experience in the Insurance Industry. Her Insurance experience started at the Prudential Assurance Company and later at Allied Dunbar and Rothschilds in the UK, before her move to Spain.

What services do you offer?

All insurances including: Car, Bike, Home, Commercial, Life, Pets, Accident, Funeral Plans and much more. Most of our policies are available in English with English customer Services and assistance.

What effect has Brexit had on the the Industry?

We have been busier than ever over the last year. Coming up to Brexit, the need for Private Health Insurance was popular due to the residency requirements. As far as car and home insurance is concerned, this hasn't really been affected as, if you own a vehicle in



Spain, you have to maintain at least legal liability insurance on it. For many clients, if they are not resident in Spain, then they can only spend 90 days of every 180 days legally here, so we have had to change the unoccupancy duration for some clients who will

not be here so much. What we have found, however, is that several UK-based companies, that we used to promote, have pulled out of Spain so the need to find alternative cover has been difficult. **When do you see things improving?** Well this is a difficult question, as

ex-pats from the UK not only have Brexit rules and regulations to consider but also Covid 19. No one can anticipate when things will get back to a more normal.

I would say that EU Insurance Direct are here to help and advise on all matters relating to insurance

and people's current situation. We are based in Elviria, with three staff to assist the every-day workings of the business, I feel confident that, late summer or towards the end of the year, we will see improvements and hopefully travel corridors will open again.

MORE INFORMATION

For advice and assistance in any aspect of insurance give EU Insurance a call on 952830843 951080118 or mob/whatsapp 635592610 speak to Wendy, Ashley, Emma or Claire. The Office is in Elviria, just up from the Town Hall, with opening hours (by appointment only for now) from 9.30 through to 5.30 Monday to Thursday and Friday from 10.00 till 4 pm. Weekends closed. You can also email then on info@euinsurancedirect.com or visit their website on www.euinsurancedirect.com

BLACKTOWER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

INTERVIEW. Tim Govaerts, Associate Director and Regional Manager for Blacktower Financial Management Group on the Costa del Sol

“WORLD EVENTS AND HOW MARKETS REACT TO THEM ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS”

MIJAS

SUR. Tim Govaerts is Associate Director and Regional Manager for Blacktower Financial Management Group on the Costa del Sol. Tim has been working in the Financial Services Sector as an International Financial Adviser here in Spain since 2008. Tim is originally from Belgium but has lived abroad for more than 20 years, of which the last 14 have been in Spain with his Dutch wife and children.

Can you tell us a little more about your role in Blacktower?

I look after the local office here on the Costa del Sol which is very conveniently located between Mijas and Fuengirola, just off the toll road. As financial consultants we assist our clients with their financial situation, many of our clients see us as their main port of call if they have questions that are not necessarily directly linked to their finances, but for example to life in Spain, healthcare; I have even been asked for a recommendation for where best to take your dog to whilst going on a short trip! This is why we find it important to stay at all times abreast of any changes in local taxes, residency rules, regulation and, of course, how markets are performing.

Could you tell me a little bit more about Blacktower?

Blacktower was founded in 1986 by our Managing Director, John Westwood in the UK. The business opened its first office on the European mainland in the Algarve ten years later, and Gibraltar and our Spanish offices followed not long after that. Since then, the business footprint has expanded exponentially and we now have a global presence, with offices all over Europe, the UK, and a few years ago we expanded into the Americas as well.

What are the main services that Blacktower offers to its clients?

Wealth management is probably the best term to describe what we do, or financial planning, as this includes all aspects of our services. Our service would typically start with a first meeting, during which we go through a person's current situation and future objectives. From there, we would put together a personal plan; taking into consideration the family situation, tax and residency position, any investment experience and how involved the client wants to



Tim Govaerts. Blacktower Financial Management Group

be, to name a few criteria. We can assist anyone from a young entrepreneur wanting to start saving for retirement to the person already in their retirement who is looking for a cautious plan for the money currently sitting in their bank account, not earning any interest. At the core of everything that we do is maximising growth for our clients whilst reducing their tax position wherever possible.

What makes Blacktower different from other financial advisers?

We have a very 'family-style' culture within our company, and we not only maintain this internally but also put this sentiment at the very heart of our corporate values, helping families shape and protect their financial futures.

We are one of the few companies that were very proactive in ensuring that we were covered for all possible Brexit scenarios, meaning that we could continue to look after our clients across Europe via both our MiFID and IDD license. We have also invested heavily in new technology and back-office systems during the Covid pandemic, meaning we can provide an efficient and personal service to our clients whatever the circumstances may be.

How have the last twelve months been?

Quite a rollercoaster! We first had

the pandemic and the uncertainty of how long it would take before there would be some light at the end of the tunnel. Markets don't like uncertainty which in turn caused a drop in the markets and many investors to panic. Everyone needed to adapt quickly in the way we conducted our day-to-day business, I believe everyone took a 10-year leap forward in the use of technology and videocall facilities.

Subsequently markets recovered and have remained volatile for some time. However, from an investment perspective, it turned out to be very positive 12 months for our clients.

Then there was Brexit, of course. As the Brexit deadline drew nearer, the window was closing for many Brits who had delayed decisions to obtain some form of proof of residency and enter the Spanish system. Many of those, that in the end obtained a residencia or after that a TIE, then came to us asking to have a review of how obtaining fiscal residency would affect them and their assets, which kept us very busy towards the end of the year.

What can we learn from 2020?

From an investment point of view, we can learn that world events and how markets react to them are two very different things. Terry Smith, a well-known fund manager,

«We are one of the few companies that were very proactive in ensuring that we were covered for all possible Brexit scenarios»

touched on this during his annual shareholder conference where he shared the following scenario: If someone told you last year, in January, that there would be a pandemic, with a global recession as a result, and that the GDP of the world's biggest economy, the US, would shrink by 9.5% in one quarter, would you have considered investing in equities? Probably not. Still, if you would have taken your money out of your investments in light of that prediction, you would have missed out on up to 12% return, if you were 100% invested in equities. Even with perfect foresight, it is impossible to know how markets react. Therefore, the old adage from Warren Buffet has proven very true last year, "it is TIME IN the markets that matters, not TIMING the markets".

This was definitely the message that we passed on to our clients when markets were at their lowest point somewhere halfway through March last year, and which turned out to be very true.

On another note, I believe that many will have realised the true importance of safe-guarding your future. Many people scrutinised their finances during the lockdown and indeed, a piece of research that we conducted showed that 77% of people living in Malaga started saving more during the lockdown than at the start of 2020.

What would be your general advice for 2021?

From a generic perspective, if you are living here on a more or less permanent basis and with that I mean if you are spending more time in Spain than the 183 days per year, make sure that you have taken care of the requirements to be a resident of Spain. Ignorance is not an excuse anymore, plenty of information of what needs to be done is available to you and if you need help, then visit your local Town Hall or indeed give us a call and we may be able to an-

swer your questions as well. Over the last year, all sorts of automatic exchange of information agreements between governments have been put in place, the Common Reporting Standards, FATCA, and even Gibraltar and Spain now have a new agreement in place.

From an investment perspective: last year the divergence between "winners" and "losers" was probably larger than it has been for a while. Winners were predominantly found in growth sectors such as Technology. For some years now, we have seen a strong rise in demand for so called trackers and passive funds, it was often questioned if the higher cost of active management was justified. Last year many active funds with excellent fund managers that were able to identify the "winners" considerably outperformed the passive funds. Therefore, my advice would be to check where your money is invested. Funds that adhere to the so called ESG principles (Environmental, Social and corporate Governance) have done very well recently, now that sustainability, in everything we do, is taken into consideration. We expect these principles to only further increase in importance which is why investors need to be aware of this.

What should and should not investors be doing at this moment?

What people should be doing is, as I mentioned previously, not trying to time the market, but stay in it and be patient. We are still in a low interest environment where money in a bank account is losing value in real terms due to inflation. The only real alternative where growth is made are real asset-backed investments. Solid investment funds with high quality fund managers and long track records have proven to provide solid returns in the medium to long term.

MORE INFORMATION

Blacktower Financial Management has been providing expert and localised wealth management advice for the last 35 years. We can help with specialist, independent advice on securing your financial future. Get in touch with us on +34 952 816 443 or email us at info@blacktowerfm.com.



◀ **Main Street.** Few people wear a mask in the town centre these days. **ÑITO SALAS**

▼ **Hugs.** People can greet friends and relatives with hugs and kisses again. **ÑITO SALAS**

now they don't have to wear masks," says Christine, as she sips a coffee on the café terrace. However, she is the only person there, even though it is nearly midday. The lack of visitors is rather worrying for local businesses.

With provincial borders closed within Andalucía, fewer tourists are able to walk or drive into Gibraltar from Spain. There have been no cruise ships since the pandemic began, and international travel restrictions have significantly reduced the numbers of people flying in from the UK for a holiday or short break.

The shops, bars, restaurants and hotels are noticing the change. "But we have to be optimistic," says Michael. "Until not long ago we didn't know when the vaccines would be arriving in Gibraltar, and now we are nearly all vaccinated. You can really see a difference. People here are much more motivated and cheerful now."

He is not the only one to think so. Joseph, Julio and Iván, three pensioners from Gibraltar, are enjoying a Guinness in the Horseshoe pub. "Everything's fine here, but obviously we could do with more visitors," one of them says.

We are so used to seeing people wearing masks in Spain that Gibraltar comes as a bit of a shock, with large groups of people chatting and greeting others with a hug and a kiss.

Difference in vaccinations

A recent press release from the Gibraltar government stated that every local resident who wanted to be vaccinated had been, and so had at least 10,000 of the approximately 15,000 cross-border workers by then. The difference in the vaccination rates in Spain and Gibraltar is clear. In Spain, it is considerably lower. This can lead to some strange situations. For example, Miriam, who is from Algiers, and Eli, from La Línea, work in a gift shop in Main Street. One has been vaccinated in Gibraltar, but the other is still waiting to be called, one side of the border or the other. "We're quite used to this type of situation here," she says. "I'll just have to wait. Anyway, in the meantime, it's lovely to be able to look around and see everyone much more relaxed. It makes you feel that bit by bit we are starting to return to something like normal life at last," she says.

Gibraltar, enjoying life without masks

Vaccination. Every resident of the Rock who wanted a vaccine has had one, and most of the 15,000 cross-border workers have already been vaccinated as well

IVÁN GELIBTER

The Union flag was flying at half-mast when we visited Gibraltar because, like the UK, people in this British Overseas Territory were mourning the death of the Duke of Edinburgh. But in contrast with London, their tears were not being caught by the top of a face mask because - out in the street, at least - masks are no longer compulsory in Gibraltar.

"It feels wonderful, I'm breathing fresh air again," said one lady when we asked her how it felt to have left her face mask at home.

We should point out that the Gi-

baltarians are not being irresponsible; on the contrary, nearly every resident of the Rock and many of the cross-border workers from Spain have now been vaccinated. A couple of weeks ago, the government announced that although masks will still have to be worn in some places, they are no longer needed outside.

Further measures are also gradually being relaxed, and the government hopes that others can be lifted by mid-May, as long as Covid-19 cases remain very low. However, general precautionary measures such as contact tracing,

staff monitoring and regular cleaning and sanitising are still in place on the Rock.

To visitors, the new normal here looks very similar to the situation pre-pandemic, but it is noticeably quieter than it used to be. Casemates Square, which was always full of tourists who had come for a day's shopping or sightseeing, was practically empty on this occasion.

In this epicentre of the town is Al Fresco's café, a family business run by Christine Oton and her son Michael. Both are smiling and seem very optimistic about the situation. "People seem so much happier

This could be a good summer for tourism in Gibraltar

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. This summer could bring a boost for tourism, the Gibraltar government believes, as this could be one of only a few places on the 'green list' of permitted destinations for travellers from the UK.

Gibraltar has flights from sev-

eral UK airports, is easily accessible and offers a wide variety of attractions for visitors of all ages. Its latest attraction, however, is one the tourism authorities never expected to add to the list: the vast majority of the Gibraltar population has been vaccinated.

Many people in the UK are longing to get away for a holiday

after so long with no chance to travel, and the safety of a destination is something that will undoubtedly be taken into consideration. Controls will still be in force at the airport, such as negative Covid tests or vaccine certificates, for safety reasons.

Cruise ships

Gibraltar is also looking forward to welcoming back some of the cruise ships which bring thousands of visitors to the Rock, as they are due to start arriving again next month..

IN BRIEF



Officers with the eagle. **RGP**

ENVIRONMENT

Lucky escape for a drowning eagle

D.B. An eagle that was close to drowning had a lucky escape on Tuesday, after being attacked by seagulls and injured. It was rescued by Marine Section officers from the Royal Gibraltar Police who had spotted it struggling in the sea close to Gorham's Cave while they were out on patrol.

The eagle is now being looked after by the Environmental Protection authority, and appears to be doing well.

COVID-19

Genome sequencing possible in Gibraltar

D.B. The Gibraltar Health Authority will soon be able to carry out whole genome sequencing of the SARS-CoV 2 virus that causes Covid-19. The service will be located at the GHA's Covid Laboratory, which is currently at the University of Gibraltar. It was originally set up to undertake Covid screening tests.

The laboratory is already staffed by senior scientists with extensive Molecular Biology experience.

SOCIETY

Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April

D.B. This year's Workers' Memorial Day Ceremony in Gibraltar is to be held next Wednesday, 28 April. This is a collaborative event between Unite the Union and the government, and is being organised by Gibraltar Cultural Services.

The occasion will be celebrated with a short ceremony at the Alameda Gardens, starting at 10.30am. The chief minister, Fabian Picardo, will be leading the ceremony.

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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

More than a year

One whole year and a month since Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced lockdown to us. If the lockdown had been decreed a week before it would have been possible to have saved 23,000 lives.

It was hard to know what we were facing at the time. The Prime Minister said then that we could get up to as much as 10,000 cases.

Thirteen months later and we are at three million infected people, confirmed by a positive test, and in reality there have been many more. There have been more than 80,000 deaths.

At the present time there are four million people out of work, a million people furloughed on ERTes, more than 300,000 self-employed not working: six million people who want to work but cannot.

We are the worst affected country of the OECD in economic terms. Perhaps something has not been done right.

JUAN GARCÍA

Vaccines and confidence

I've just been vaccinated with AstraZeneca. It was my turn for it based on age, although I could have waited for a different type of vaccine. It's a paradox that they ask us to have confidence those who dally in taking decisions beyond those based

on strictly medical lines. The risk of something going wrong is extremely unlikely. You take it on board and that's that. It would be more logical to keep the second dose and not cancel future contracts or change the age ranges without real arguments.

ROBERTO ARAMAYO

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THE MUSIC MAKER
PETER EDGERTON
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Super silly us

Let's face it, supermarkets aren't all that super at all; everybody knows that real markets are infinitely better places to be. Similarly, Superman isn't a particularly outstanding or popular hero - in fact, Spiderman consistently knocks him into a cocked hat in all the appropriate polls. Meanwhile the Super Bowl is, as far as I can tell, just a load of TV adverts, occasionally interrupted by some very big blokes in dodgy shoulder pads bashing their heads together. Examples of things with the prefix 'super' not being very good at all, then, are endless.

That's why it should come as no surprise to learn that football's latest hare-brained, money-grabbing scheme, which proposed a separate competition for Europe's wealthiest clubs, was given the name The Super League by its proponents.

They're quite clearly as unimaginative as they are greedy. I much prefer the description of the plan touted in Everton football club's official statement on the matter, which described it as an act of "preposterous arrogance". It would have been quite brilliant if it had been called The Preposterous Arrogance League, or PAL for short. The irony being, of course, that the teams involved would never have any pals or, indeed, fans by the time they were done, judging by the public outcry the proposal caused.

Real Madrid's president, Florentino Pérez, a key mover and shaker in the whole sorry business (it wouldn't be a show without Punch) suggested - we can only presume with a straight face - that such a change would "save soccer". Leaving aside the fact that anyone who uses the word "soccer" to talk about foot-

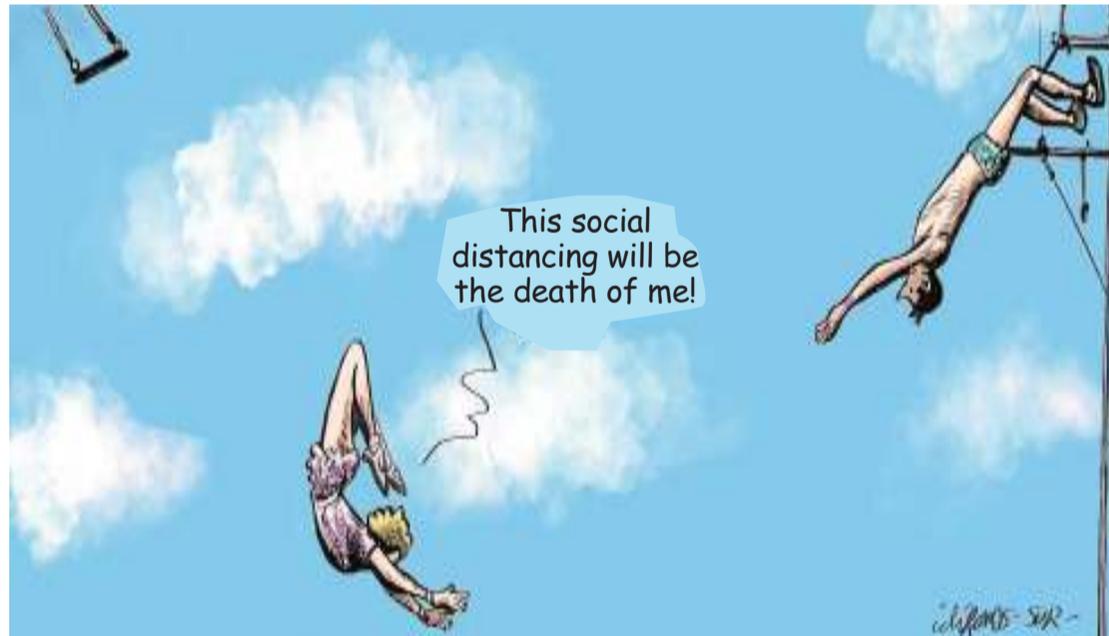
ball - even when it's via a translator - isn't fit to be involved in the game, a bloke worth 2.3 billion US dollars should not, I think, be preaching to the common man about what might be good for his favourite sport.

No, what might "save soccer", Señor Pérez, is a reduction in top players' astronomical wages and a modicum of humility on the part of the myriad nefarious characters in expensive, ill-fitting suits who appear to spend every second of every day rubbing their hands together in a miserly fashion, while attempting to squeeze every last miserable cent of profitability out of what is, in its purest form, a quite magnificent sport.

The prefix 'super' comes from the Latin meaning above, over or beyond.

Beyond parody, in this particular case.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

Published by: PRENSA MALAGUEÑA S. A.
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IGNACIO LILLO

Zero euthanasia

The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated. That's what Gandhi said, and from the first time I read it, it impressed me and I have remembered it ever since.

On these opinion pages, ever since I first started a weekly column in SUR back in 2016, I have often denounced the inhumanity of some people towards weaker beings. I have tried to talk about cases which have brought me to tears, cases

which bring us as a society down to the same level as an underdeveloped suburb of Burundi.

Ill-treatment, cruelty and systematic neglect were common in this city, which used to be more dangerous for a stray dog than Tijuana was for a police officer. Thousands of strays were put down every year until recently, because of their sheer numbers and a lack of resources to help them. That's not counting those who were injured and already dying, after being

used to train fighting dogs and for other savagery.

Today, however, for the first time, I am not going to complain or to criticise, but to give praise. I'm going to applaud the people of Malaga, most of whom understand that the pain in the eyes of an animal is also worthy of the utmost respect. Their ability to learn never ceases to surprise me. I applaud Malaga council's Environmental Department, who provided the funds necessary to make it possible, and above all I applaud the organisations like the Protectora and their volunteers, people with a vocation so strong that they drop everything if you tell them an animal is in danger in the middle of a road.

So far this year, the pens at the refuge have not held any abandoned cats, for the first time ever. Nor have they had to put down any healthy pets, when just ten

years ago thousands had to be given that lethal injection. I guess this means they have actually achieved their target of zero euthanasia.

This has been a titanic advance, bearing in mind the underworld from which we got here, but it isn't over yet. We must not forget that there are still 800 animals in the shelter at the Protectora, most of them dogs who have been abandoned, and unwanted litters are still being brought here every single week. There are still too many savages who treat animals as if they were objects instead of beings, who breed them time and time again to make money out of them, use them and then throw them out as if they were broken toys or even worse. The day that we no longer fear being judged by how we treat other living beings is the day that this will be a truly great city.

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IN THE FRAME

The international world of pianos on our doorstep

Restorer. Cornelius Musters travels with his custom-made instruments to deliver them to clients and restores secondhand pianos in Malaga

JENNIE RHODES



Cornelius tunes one of his custom-made pianos. SUR

After a career in the piano industry that has spanned four decades, Cornelius Musters is still passionate about what he does.

When he was 20, Cornelius did a three-year piano technician course in his native Holland. He tells the story of how he went on to acquire his first customer: “The gas man came to my house to disconnect the gas because I couldn’t pay the bill. But then he asked me what I did and when I explained that I restored and tuned pianos he said that if I tuned his piano he would pay my gas bill and that was my first customer.”

By the age of 23, Cornelius had his own company and eventually built up to 800 customers.

However, in his mid-30s Cornelius and a group of close friends were struck with the tragedy of the death of a friend from cancer. He was just 37 years old.

This made the group re-evaluate life and vow to follow their dreams. “We decided, just go and follow our dreams.” One of the couples came to Pizarra in Malaga province where they bought an old house. They asked Cornelius to help them restore it after two weeks in the area he says, “I never wanted to go back to

Holland.”

He returned for a while and continued to build his business, but 17 years ago he finally followed his own dream. After two years in Torre del Mar while his house was being built in Riogordo, he settled in the Axarquía village.

Knowing that his passion was still pianos, combined with the need to work, he says he asked himself: “OK what am I going to do now?”

So he decided to place an advert to sell a piano.

“It was really to see how many people would respond. I didn’t actually have a piano to sell,” he laughs. But the response he reveals was “incredible”. He shipped 30 second-hand instruments from Holland, which he sold “very quickly” in Spain.

One of his first customers was a man from Malaga with whom Cornelius still works today. In fact the pair work in partnership to design bespoke pianos which are made in Germany and shipped all around the world.

Cornelius explains that his business partner designs the pianos while he deals with the technical aspects and travels with the instruments to their



A transparent piano. SUR

“We always talk about food and music, never religion and politics. I learn a lot from the people I meet through my pianos”

destinations. The designs include classic wooden grand and upright pianos as well as different coloured and even transparent ones.

The work has taken Cornelius all over the world to the houses and super yachts of Sheikhs and royal families - from Dubai, to Iran, Morocco and beyond.

“The rich don’t ask about the price. They just want something that’s unique. They allow artists to create and provide work in a world where most people are just looking for the cheapest version of something,” he argues.

Piano restoration

Cornelius also continues to restore secondhand pianos that he imports from northern Europe. He sells them mainly to Spanish and foreign residents in Spain and says that demand for pianos at music

conservatories and schools was “exploding” at least before the pandemic, as young people are wanting to learn different genres of music.

“Traditionally the most popular instrument here was the guitar and in fact the last piano factory in Spain closed down about 100 years ago, so new pianos are quite hard to buy here,” he claims.

Cornelius has recently donated one of his restored pianos to the primary school in Riogordo. “I hope it will inspire children to play an instrument,” he says.

When asked about how Covid-19 has affected business, Cornelius admits, “I have never sold so many pianos. People are at home, bored and the pandemic has been a sign of how short life can be. People who always wanted a piano, or have a piano which they have never played, so it needs tuning, are deciding that now is the time.” Due to the travel restrictions, sales have been mainly in Andalucía and to people of all ages: “It is never too late to do whatever you want to do,” he says.

Cornelius believes that his is “the most beautiful profession”. He gets to learn about many different cultures while spending time with his clients.

“We always end up talking about food and music and never religion or politics. I also know that life in some of the countries I have been to isn’t always what you read in the papers. You can learn a lot from people,” he concludes.

Further information :
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The first modern European novel - Don Quixote - was published in two volumes, the first in 1605, and the second in 1615. Miguel de Cervantes' book was widely read around Europe. After the bible, it holds the distinction of being the second most-translated book in the world. On 23 April each year Spain remembers his death in 1616.

Seven years after the original Don Quixote appeared, the first part was translated into four languages - French, German, Italian and English. Thomas Shelton was the first translator of Don Quixote. In 1620, he translated the second part into English. According to critics, Shelton's version was far from satisfactory.

Around 1700, Pierre Antoine Motteux, a French-born English playwright and translator, produced an important translation of the Cervantes novel that received lasting popularity though it was also criticised by his followers for failing to represent the spirit and flavour of the original.

To understand better the gist and spirit of the book, Alexander James Duffield, a mining engineer and writer, had to learn Spanish and become a Hispanist by travelling to Spain.

This year is the 200th anniversary of his birth. In 1881, Duffield published a book under the title - Don Quixote, his Critics and Commentators, with a brief Account of the Minor Works of Cervantes and a Statement of the Aim of the greatest of them all.

English-speaking children learned about the immature middle-aged Spanish man fighting with windmills 100 years ago.

In 1921, the book under the title The Adventures of Don Quixote appeared in London, Edinburgh and New York. The version was abridged and adapted for



An edition dated in 1605 of Miguel de Cervantes famous novel Don Quixote. REUTERS

Don Quixote, a challenge for translators

Cervantes. On April 23 many in Spain remember the death of the author of the much-translated Don Quixote. This year, a French translator from Vélez-Málaga has finished his "less boring" English version of the story



▲ Laurent Sueur. The French historian who says his translation of Don Quixote makes it easy to understand. SUR

ALEKK M. SAANDERS



children by Emily Underdown, and left out the risqué sections as well as chapters that young readers might consider dull. Probably, due to the embellishment of the original text, the title page actually omitted any mention of Cervantes.

The 21st century has already seen several new translations of Don Quixote into English. Edith Grossman's translation of the Spanish masterpiece, with an expanded PS edition, was nominated as one of America's best-loved novels. On Amazon.co.uk

her English version is described as the most transparent and least impeded among more than a dozen English translations going back to the 17th century.

This year, the English version by Laurent Paul Sueur joined Amazon's Don Quixote collection.

Laurent is a historian whose describes his speciality as "the relationship between reason and madness". Ten years ago, he left Paris and settled in Vélez-Málaga. Here, he started translating classics from French into English because, in his opinion, "The old translations are full of mistakes."

Living in Spain, Laurent Sueur was able to deepen his understanding of the Spanish mentality and culture. As a result, he managed to translate Lorca's Gypsy Ballads, which sells well on Amazon. Two years ago, he started translating Cervantes' Don Quixote.

Laurent said: "In four centuries nobody has been able to understand what was written for various reasons. There are lots of mistakes in the editions of this book because the people who prepared the publications did not always understand what was written. I guess this book is like a papyrus with lots of holes in it: you must guess what the author wanted to write."

After scrupulously working at the language, Laurent says he did not try to copy Cervantes' style, as other translators had. "I have chosen to explain this novel, not to reproduce its style, which is awful. Unsurprisingly, when one tries to translate Don Quixote into any other language, the result is weird. In fact, I have removed all the words that were useless, shortened the sentences and changed the word-order for better understanding. As for the puns, they are also closely related to the meaning of the original, although they are more idiomatic and sophisticated.

"It is less boring. For the first time in four centuries, this opus is comprehensible and funny," he explains.

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Chef to chocolatier; Scotland to Spain

Handmade chocolates. Sam Sloan's creations are sold at farmers' markets in Malaga province and orders come in from as far afield as Canada and Japan via his online shop

JENNIE RHODES



If a craving for Belgian chocolate truffles has been exacerbated by not being able to travel to the country itself to sample some, or indeed you have ever wondered what combinations like salted liquorice caramel or Amaretto, honey and fig might taste like, then you need look no further than the Axarquía.

Sam Sloan is a Scottish chef turned chocolatier who has lived in the area for 20 years and has been preparing his creations from his kitchen, since selling his two restaurants in Nerja in 2013.

Sam, 65, who is originally from Paisley, started off in the catering industry in his native country, before deciding that he wanted to combine cooking with travelling and began working as a chef on cruise ships, a job that has taken him all over the world.

It was while on the ships that Sam discovered his talent for creating incredible taste combinations for petits fours and in particular chocolates.

"I started out preparing them for the midnight buffets and it

went from there," he reveals.

The chef has also worked "on land" in the UK as well as France and Italy. However, in 2001 he and his late wife came to Nerja where he opened two restaurants. Here he made his chocolates to serve with coffee and sell to customers. He eventually sold both premises after suffering a heart attack in 2013.

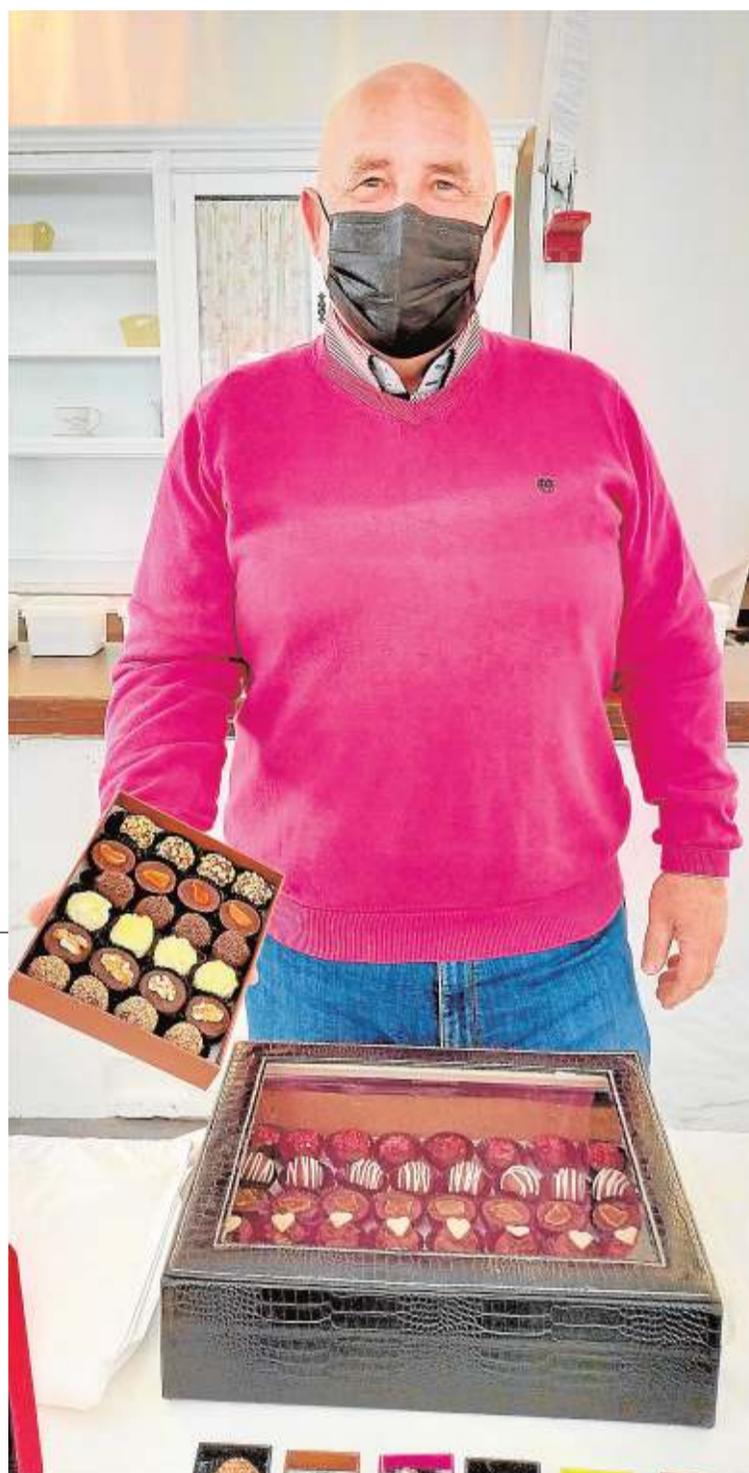
A slower pace

Shortly afterwards, Sam tragically lost his wife to cancer and while he wanted to continue working after a period of recuperation, he knew he needed a slower pace of life.

"Working in kitchens is such high pressure," says Sam, explaining why it is not uncommon for chefs to suffer from heart attacks, bouts of depression and even contemplate or indeed commit suicide.

"I have learned to live without stress. I have adopted the 'mañana' attitude to life and not worry about anything," Sam says.

He decided to continue making his popular chocolates from



his own kitchen and started selling his creations online, mainly to the UK, but also as far afield as Canada and Japan. "Some Japanese people tasted my chocolates while they were on holiday here and now they order them from me twice a year."

Since Brexit the UK market has died, he explains, largely due to the import tax the buyer would be subject to if they were to buy chocolate from an European Union country.

The chocolatier still sells to other EU countries - including Belgium and Switzerland - "talk about coals to Newcastle" Sam laughs. He is also a regular at Malaga's farmers and charity markets, including those at Trapiche and Sotogrande.

Sam explains that his creations have no additives or added sugar and as such they have a shelf-life of around six months.

He sources his raw chocolate from Venezuela and makes sure

◀ Sam Sloan behind his stall at Trapiche market where his creations can be sampled before buying. J. R.

that he uses fair trade suppliers. Each truffle is made from between 70 to 82 per cent cocoa, depending on the blend.

Many of the ingredients he uses are grown locally, or even in his own or friends' gardens, like the raspberries that go into the raspberry truffles or the lemons that go into the lemon and lime chocolates.

Combining flavours

Sam says of his combinations, "As a writer knows which words go together, I know which flavours marry. I've been a chef since 1969, so I know what works well."

He currently has 28 different truffles, but admits that he's always experimenting with new combinations.

The chocolatier points out that as he doesn't smoke or drink alcohol, he has a "very delicate palette" which allows him to really taste the different flavours.

Sam is passionate about chocolate-making and says he has researched the history of chocolate dating back to the Aztecs and adds that anything he does he likes "to know about".

That passion is helped by the "instant feedback" he gets from people when they sample his chocolates. He says it's a job which is "guaranteed to make people happy" and that he loves seeing people's reactions when they try one of his chocolates.

"There's nothing better than seeing someone's eyes light up when they taste a chocolate they really like," he says.

i Further information :
www.chocolatesbysamsloan.co.uk

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Reporting back

Taking the temperature of the art scene, here and now

REVIEW
GEORGINA OLIVER



Fast-rewinding the reviews I wrote last summer, I wonder if I was not over optimistic. The first of my post-lockdown 'art-icles' was entitled "Art unlocked - Broken habits, fresh sensations..." What fresh sensations? You may well ask.

There's a limit to the charm of crowd-less museums. Sometimes I feel as if I've landed on a strange planet: a "Lonely Planet" peopled by a rare and endangered species of art-world survivors. "New Mutants".

Has the general public become immune to bathing in a relatively eventless cultural climate? Having to juggle on-again off-again pandemic restrictions appears to have taken the zing out of getting out and about.

The shift in values is glaring. Something is broken inside of us, and we're not even sure that we want to fix it. "It's as if we didn't mind not going out," mused one friend recently, echoing the mood of another, who has "gone off" shopping: "I don't care about things anymore; I only care about people."

After The Gold Rush

I was lost in my thoughts - taking the temperature of the local art scene; looking up terms like "anhedonia" (the opposite of hedonism, the inability to feel pleasure) - when an introduction to the universe of a mainstream French artist featured at the CAC, Malaga's contemporary centre (till 30 May), put me back on track: "Oscillating between utopia and dystopia, Jules de Balincourt's paintings explore indoor and outdoor spaces that suggest ever-changing landscapes - both physical and psychological."

Born in Paris in 1972, raised in California, based chiefly in New York and Costa Rica, de

Balincourt is a surfer and it shows. His visual shorthand hovers on the cusp of figuration with a techie-primitive 'New-Agey' edge and semi-abstract archetypes intimating the emergence of a yet-to-be-invented tribe of post-cool post-apocalyptic trailblazers.

"A sense of things breaking apart and reconnecting" infuses his bold-hued imaginary gathering spots. The dichotomy between urban constraints and back-to-nature escapism is recurrent, uncannily relevant to our present predicament. Go see - and enjoy - this riveting show dubbed After The Gold Rush.

Mare Nostrum

Can art help us to weather the pandemic? Hopefully. How are artists faring? Fine on the work front; confinement "comes with the job". Less well, sales-wise. A prominent Malaga-based artist confirms the diagnosis; "less mobility means less attendance, fewer potential buyers."

Rereading a review pitched as the "Staircase effect" and subtitled "See you later, Charo Carrera... at the Pompidou Centre, Malaga" (my first under lockdown) is doubly moving, not only as it spotlights a project that suddenly found itself under lock and key just a few days after the aforementioned Charo had unveiled it, but also because - as I write - this ephemeral artistic commission (scheduled to greet visitors for no more than a year) is being obliterated from the museum's walls.

In retrospect, many consider the concept underlying Carrera's painstakingly painted mural, which had graced the Pompidou's main staircase since February

2020, to have been "positively premonitory". Combining a blood-red frieze and gothic lettering, it extended "an invitation to change" to the onlooker, whilst surfing on the Spanish language's conditional use of the imperfect subjunctive: "Si yo, si tú..." ("What if I, if you...") could change our ways - our attitude to the planet / animals / fellow human beings (...)?

Pursuing her philosophical reflections "at the crossroads of utopia and dystopia" - not unlike Jules de Balincourt, though in a different vein - Charo Carrera



A visitor studies a piece by Jules de Balincourt. F. HINOJOSA

has mounted a mixed media show called La Fría Intemperie (The Cold Spell) at Mare Nostrum, a former station converted into a seafront gallery, situated in La Cala del Moral, east of Malaga city. To be seen until 7th May, it envelops the visitor in a wave-like swell of poetic propo-

sitions. The ideal antidote to the frosty anonymity of contemporary society, to the "rampant banality and injustices", which she denounces with such fervour: "It all started long before the pandemic. We have to question and combat it, notably through creative action."



◀ **Memory.** Last year's review of Charo Carrera's mural that is now being removed.

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DENISE BUSH



GARDENING

Millettia grandis

Millettia grandis, also called umzimbeet, is a semi-deciduous tree native to South Africa where it can be found growing wild on river banks and in thickets. It is a tropical plant and a popular shade tree with dark-green glossy leaves and upright pinnacles of purple flowers at the ends of the branches from the middle of spring onwards.

It has a wide network of lat-

eral roots, making it invaluable for preventing soil erosion, but is not damaging to foundations. A member of the legume family (Fabaceae), Millettia grandis has a symbiotic relationship with some bacteria present in soil and forms nodules on the roots to fix nitrogen. Some of the nitrogen is used by the plant itself and some is taken up

by plants growing nearby.

In ideal locations it can grow up to 25 metres tall but is usually a lot shorter and can even be grown as a specimen tree in a large container.

In exceptionally dry seasons it may shed all its leaves, shooting new coppery-red leaves as soon as the temperatures drop a little. In temperate climates it may not shed much at all and the glossy, compound leaves which are covered by silky hairs underneath, are attractive all year round.

After flowering is over, pods covered in light brown hairs form and as they dry, they split open and twist, expelling flat, oblong seeds.

Millettia grandis can be propagated from fresh seeds but they may need to be scarified first (placed in near boiling water and left to soak overnight).

Species in the Millettia genus contain a range of toxic substances which are concentrated in the roots and seeds. Decoctions of the roots and bark are used to treat intestinal worms and as a laxative and an extract from the leaves is used to treat diarrhoea and dysentery. The heartwood is very dense and flexible and is used for handles of tools and in furniture making.

Although drought resistant when established, Mellittia flourishes better with some irrigation. It can also withstand some frost. An ideal location would be where it gets full sun and is sheltered from strong winds.



Millettia grandis in flower and a new leaf. (inset). EBAY / PINTEREST,

READERS' PHOTOS



ANNIE PENNINGTON

Bird of Paradise plant

Strelitzia reginae, commonly called the bird of paradise or crane flower, is indigenous to South Africa and grows well in the Mediterranean climate. This beautiful specimen was photographed and sent in by Annie Pennington.



SOLANGE GONZALEZ DIAZ

Pelargonium perfection

Solange Gonzalez sent in this photo and says, "This beautiful plant is native to South Africa and thrives in the Mediterranean climate. I have it growing in a pot on my balcony in Malaga city. It is a real treat for the eyes."

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 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) or Twitter (@SUR_English).

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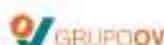
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WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

23 APRIL 303

St George beheaded for refusing to renounce Christianity

Although identified with English ideals of honour, bravery and gallantry, his life remains somewhat mysterious

The feast of St George is celebrated in numerous countries around the world, including Lithuania, Portugal, Germany and Greece, but it is probably St George's association with England that most people will relate to on 23 April.

Although identified with English ideals of honour, bravery and gallantry, St George was not the first patron saint of England - that honour was originally held by St Edmund in the ninth century. In 1348, Edward III founded the Knights of the Gar-

ter, and made St George the patron of the Order and also declared him Patron Saint of England. However, he was not English and he is not thought to have visited Britain.

Even though St George is perhaps one of Christianity's most venerated saints, his achievements have been questioned by the scholarly and his life is something of a mystery. He is believed to have served as a soldier in the Roman army during the latter part of the 3rd century AD, but resigned in protest of the Emperor's persecution of Christians. He was then imprisoned for refusing to renounce Christianity and was beheaded by the Emperor Diocletian on 23 April 303 AD.

It was his supposed taming and slaying of a fierce dragon



The legend of the dragon was popularised in the 13th century. SUR

that set him apart from most of his fellow martyrs. The account of his heroism is found in the Golden Legend, a collection of biographies based on saints and ecclesiastical leaders written in the 13th century. The legend of George and the Dragon was popularised in the middle ages, becoming a favourite literary and pictorial subject and an integral part of the Christian traditions relating to St George.

St George also holds the honour of being patron saint of sol-

diers, archers, cavalry and chivalry, farmers and field workers, while in recent years, he has been adopted as patron saint of the Scouts.

He is not only the patron saint of England, but also of Catalonia (San Jordi), Aragón and Cáceres in Extremadura (San Jorge).

The St George's Cross - Creu de San Jordi - is one of the highest civil distinctions awarded in Catalonia; although 23 April is not a public holiday, unlike

in Aragón, where it is a fiesta known as the Día de Aragón.

Legend says that God sent St George, who descended from Heaven riding on a horse, to aid the King of Aragón, Pedro I, in his conquest of Huesca in 1096. To celebrate this victory, Saint George's cross was used as the insignia of Huesca and Aragón.

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Santo	Saint
Jorge	George
Valentía	Gallantry
Cristianismo	Christianity
Inglaterra	England
Siglo	Century
Caballero	Knight
Caballería	Cavalry
Patrón	Patron saint
Arquero	Archer
Granjero	Farmer
Otorgar	To award
Mártir	Martyr
Martirio	Martyrdom
Vencedor	Victor
Leyenda	Legend
Creencias	Beliefs
Dragón	Dragon

Bilingual crossword inside back page

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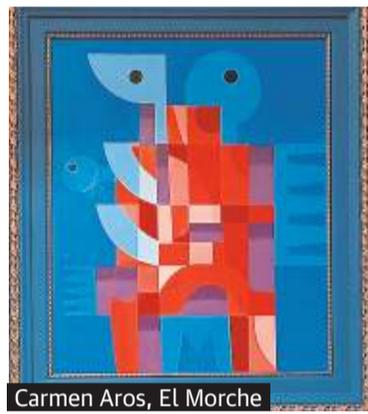
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EXHIBITIONS**Carmen Aros**

EL MORCHE. From 29 April to 26 May. Biobeach Club restaurant. Exhibition of works by Chilean painter Carmen Aros.

Tatiana Pirogova-Saulskaya

ESTEPONA. Until 29 April. Casa de Las Tejerinas, Plaza de las Flores. The exhibition by this Russian artist consists of 28 paintings inspired by nature and can be visited from Tuesday to Saturday, 9am to 8pm. Free entry.



Carmen Aros, El Morche

Satirical art

NERJA. Until 24 April. Sala Municipal de Exposiciones.

Artist Gonzalo Monserrate has compiled a tongue-in-cheek series of pictures, entitled 2020 Días Extraños, of the personalities (such as Vladimir Putin) that were prominent in 2020. Some of them are in strange poses, others have their heads superimposed onto others' bodies.

Gallery Art Club

FUENGIROLA. Until 18 May. Calle Quemada. Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11am - 2pm.

The new exhibition consists of a collection of paintings by Elena Shcherbakova, Larissa Golubeva, Michele Uzac, Elizabeth Williams, Magga Nancy, Daniel Huss and Lars Hedin.

El Arte de un Principante

MIJAS. Until 26 April. Casa Museo de Mijas.

Miguel Ángel García Moreno uses discarded items and stones and sea-washed glass to create these amazingly intricate sculptures.

Malaga Picasso Museum

MALAGA. Museo Picasso Málaga, Calle San Agustín.

It is possible to see works from the Meret Oppenheim exhibition in the museum on the website www.museopicassomalaga.org under 'exposiciones digitales'.

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.



Manuel Camino in front of one of his works. FERNANDO TORRES

Manuel Camino tames the monsters in his mind by painting his dreams

The artist is exhibiting a collection of works in the Archivo Municipal which are detailed images from his dreams

FERNANDO TORRES

MALAGA. Manuel Camino has a philosophy acquired during his years living in Europe and Asia; "I try not to label myself and let things flow," a philosophy which has made this Malaga native a visual communication professional who goes beyond the visual arts.

He was the lead designer of the Xbox 360 and is an old acquaintance of many major brands including Nike, Suzuki, Nestlé, Heineken, Kia and Mi-

crosoft, that count on his ideas for their advertising campaigns.

The Municipal Archive is currently exhibiting his collection entitled Xebius y el Arte de los Sueños, a dreamlike journey into his own mind.

He explains that the idea for the paintings came when he attempted to explain his dream to someone and it occurred to him how brilliant it would be if someone invented technology that could record the images we see when we sleep.

"When I tried to explain to people what I had dreamt, they thought I was crazy so in frustration I started to take mental pictures and then transfer them into paintings to show the images from my dreams in detail."

He found the practice very therapeutic; "the frustrations and fears we have manifest themselves in our dreams through our subconscious, when you capture the images in your head you can suddenly see it from the outside. With some pieces I was able to identify the source of the fears that created them." One of the paintings he has labelled Tame the Monster of Your Mind and it shows a boy with a serene expression riding a huge angry-looking toad.

The Xebius y el Arte de los Sueños exhibition is being held in the Salas Mingorance of the Archivo Municipal (Municipal Archive) in the Alameda Principal, Malaga, until 13 June.



Gallery Art Club, Fuengirola

Metamorfosis. Until September. An exhibition of around one hundred paintings, ceramics, drawings and bronzes by artist Miquel Barceló will be on display.

Picasso exchange. Until February 2022. The MPM has made an exchange with the Musée National Picasso-Paris and will be able to exhibit the wood and oil paint sculpture Copa, Periódico y Dado that Pablo Picasso created in 1914. The same year he created the sculpture

The Absinthe Cup which is currently on loan to the museum in Paris. www.museopicassomalaga.org.

Colección del Museo Ruso

MALAGA. Edificio Tabacalera, Avda Sor Teresa Prat.

Temporary exhibitions. From 30 April until 12 October. The two temporary exhibitions currently at the museum are Iván Konstantínovich Aivazovsky and the Russian sea painters which includes 26 of Aivazovsky's own works and 13 of other famous seascape artists such as Konstantín Krugovijin, Aleksandr Dórogov, Alekséi Bogoliubov, Konstantín Istomin, Vasili Shujaev, Borís Yákovlev, Vasili Meshkov and Izraíl Lizak.

Annual exhibition. From 30 April until 29 May 2022, the museum will be exhibiting 183 works entitled Guerra y Paz en el arte Ruso (War and Peace in Russian arte). Many leading artists with close ties to Russia formed an international school of battle painting. Among them were Gottfried Willewalde, Theodor Horschelt, Aleksandr Kotzebue, Adolph Charlemagne, Franz Roubaud and Rudolf Frenz, with Englishman George Dawe excelling in military



Aivazovsky, Russian Museum

portraiture. Sculptors Piotr Klodt and Yevgueni Lanceray also devoted themselves to this theme. The paintings weren't limited to battles but also reflected the effect of war on every day living. The exhibition includes works on this theme by Kazimir Malévich, Sofia Dímshtits-Tolstaia, Aleksandr Labás, Izraíl Lizak and Yuri Jrzhanovski among others.

Melancolía Papel y Tinta

MALAGA. Until 30 April. Ateneo de

Málaga, C/Compañía, 2. Free.

The museum is exhibiting a selection of prints by artists such as Matisse, Dalí, Miró, Tàpies and Goya.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

MALAGA. CAC Málaga. C/Alemania.

Jules de Balincourt. Until 30 May. After The Gold Rush is a series of 40 paintings by artist Jules de Balincourt.

Rafa Macarrón, Quince. Until 6 June.

The exhibition consists of canvases, drawings and four large bronze sculptures.

Pasión II. Permanent collection. From the collection of Carmen Buqueras on permanent loan to the CAC.

MALAGA. CAC Málaga - La Coracha. Museo del Patrimonio Municipal.

Ana S. Valderrábanos. Borderline.

Until 20 June. The artist's first solo exhibition features more than fifty works, including paintings and embroidery on different mediums, using vibrant colours, prominently featuring a woman's silhouette.

La Huella de Manolo Prieto

MALAGA. Museo de Patrimonio Municipal (MUPAM).

The life works of the designer Manolo Prieto, creator of the famous Osborne Bull, are on show at this exhibition in MUPAM which is open 10am - 6pm. Free entry.

Galería JM

MALAGA. C/ Duquesa de Parcent, 12.

Selva de Tiempo is the title of the current exhibition at the gallery. It consists of works created by artist José Luis Valverde.

Melancolía Papel y Tinta

MALAGA. Until 30 April. Ateneo de Málaga, C/Compañía, 2. Free.

The museum is exhibiting a selection of prints by artists such as Matisse, Dalí, Miró, Tàpies and Goya.

LIVE CONCERTS AND MUSIC

Please note: dates and times of live concerts and events are subject to change due to Covid-19 regulations.

OFM Chamber Music concerts

MALAGA. Auditorio del Museo Picasso de Málaga.

11 May, 8pm. Cuarteto con Fuoco and Tilman Mahrenholz.

1 June, 8pm. Trío Círculo.

Tickets: www.museopicasso-malaga.org

International Jazz Day

MALAGA. 30 April, 1 May, 6 to 8pm. Plaza de la Merced.

Two-day event to coincide with International Jazz Day (30 April) presents some of the region's most-celebrated jazz musicians: The Lito Blues Band, The Pepa Niebla Quintet, the Malaga Jazz Collective and more. Capacity limited to 300 but spectators can enjoy the sound from nearby bar terraces.

Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

MALAGA. Various venues.

6, 7 May, 7pm. Schuman's Overture to Genoveva, Brahms Concerto for violin and orchestra in D major in the first half followed by Brahms Second Symphony in D major. Teatro Cervantes.

9 May, 12pm. The Orfeón Univer-



Ábrego, La Cochera Cabaret

istario de Málaga will be playing a wide selection of music in the Museo de Málaga.

Tickets: www.entradas.mientrada.net

La Cochera Cabaret

MÁLAGA. Avda de los Guindos.

24 April, 12.30pm. Ricardo Marín will be performing songs from his new album Cuando.

24 April, 8pm. El José, composer, vocalist, instrumentalist and former member of Microjachis and La Banda de Trapo is in concert.

Tickets: <https://lacocheraentradas.com/>

Rock of the Ages

RIVIERA DEL SOL. 5 May, 7pm. Village Inn Bar and Restaurant, C/Esmeralda. 15€.

Lucy Pardoe and Ollie Hughes are in concert. The ticket price includes a choice of three main courses and small glass of beer or wine. Call: 622399366 or email: lucypardoe@hotmail.co.uk

Ruta del Rock

TORREMOLINOS. 14-16, 21-23 May. Various venues.

The outside seating areas of bars and restaurants of Torremolinos will be the venues for the annual Ruta del Rock. More information on the bands and venues can be found on the Ruta del Rock Facebook page or <http://jamminlivemusic.com/ruta-del-rock-2021-torremolinos>

Fíguro

ONLINE. 8 May, 7pm. Via Zoom. 10€ Three operas, three composers and one protagonist: the immortal Fíguro. Call: 654013232. Reservations: reservas@musicaconencanto.org / 654013232 / www.musicaconencanto.org

Sophie Newick

ALMUÑÉCAR. 27 May, 7pm. Casa de la Cultura.

British singer Sophie Newick will be performing her own songs which feature elements of jazz, ragtime, lindy hop, swing and flamenco fusion. Tickets from the Casa de Cultura.

FLAMENCO

Flamenco for all the family

MÁLAGA. 25 April, 12pm. La Cochera Cabaret, Avda de los Guindos.

A Compás is an educational flamenco show by the AidaLaut Company created to encourage families to dance, sing and play together.

Ábrego

MÁLAGA. 8 May, 12pm. La Cochera Cabaret, Avda de los Guindos.

A flamenco concert formed by the quartet made up of flautist Javi León, saxophonist Juan Diego Sáez, guitarist Alberto Torres and drummer Chico Carmona.

The Hall

MÁLAGA. 7 May, 8pm. Calle Heroe de Sostoa, 65. 10€.

Flamenco and jazz jam session with special guest Juan José Suarez (Paquete). Reservations: 679441801

THEATRE AND DANCE

Dani Daniela circus company

MÁLAGA. 24, 25 April, 12pm. Teatro Cánovas, Plaza de El Ejido.

Daniel Corbalán and Úrsula Rosma present Arena Roja, circus act with acrobatics and balancing acts etc.

Todo Danza

MARBELLA. From 24 April until 15 May. Teatro Ciudad de Marbella.

One of the most prestigious dance festivals in Spain, Marbella Todo Danza offers a wide variety of dance performances including classical, contemporary, flamenco and shows especially for children. All the performances take place at 8pm except for those for children which will start at 12pm. More information: www.marbella.es

Presley and Jackson acts join forces for tribute concert

MIJAS

The show offers all the panache and flamboyance of the kings of rock and pop

TONY BRYANT

The music of the King of Rock and Roll and the undisputed King of Pop will be reproduced during the Festival of Legends, which returns to the Teatro Las Lagunas in Mijas Costa tomorrow (Saturday).

The first part of the show will recreate the energised interpretations of songs and sexually provocative performance style of the man regarded as one of the most significant cultural icons of the 20th century. Mark T Connor has been performing his Elvis tribute show to audiences around the world for more than 20 years. The show, which is complemented by a full backing band, offers all the panache of Elvis' Las Vegas shows, complete with replica outfits, gyrating hips and, of course, the iconic voice behind hits like All Shook Up, Love Me Tender and Jailhouse Rock.

Cuban singer and choreographer Miguel Concha will perform his Legend Continues



Cuban singer and choreographer Miguel Concha as Jackson. SUR

show, which is based on Jackson's last concert tour to announce his farewell from the stage, a tour that was interrupted by the singer's unexpected death in 2009.

A former Got Talent Spain contestant, Concha, who has become Sony Music's official impersonator, reproduces the flamboyant essence of Jackson: his close resemblance to

Michael Jackson in appearance, dance, costumes and gestures has earned him recognition as one of the best Jackson imitators in the world.

Tickets for the show, which starts at 7pm, cost 15 euros in advance or 20 euros on the door and can be reserved by phone (633 647 260) or from <https://www.eventbrite.es>

CHARITY

St George's Day for the Poppy Appeal

NERJA. 23 April, 2pm. Chapel Bar. A fundraising event for the Poppy Appeal by the Royal British Legion Nerja branch. Tombola, raffle and fun games. The event is being held outside to enable social distancing..

ARCH

ALHAURÍN EL GRANDE. Open every Sunday 9am - 2pm. The ARCH team at the Rescue Centre for Horses and Donkeys have resumed their popular Sunday open mornings. Children can groom the donkeys and ponies, and volunteers are on hand to explain the charity's work. More information on Facebook: Centro Andalusi de Rescate de Caballos or www.horserescuespain.org



Cudeca WalkaHOME, Benalmádena

WalkaHOME for Cudeca

BENALMÁDEN. 23 May, 9am - 2pm.

Walk at Home for Cudeca Cancer Hospice is a fundraising event. Par-

ticipants can register at www.dorsalchip.es or at www.cudeca.org. 4€ (bib number) or 8€ (bib + T-shirt).

MORE IDEAS

Photography workshops

MIJAS. Casa Museo de Mijas. Free. Learn how to take good photos. Register by email: cultura@mijas.es or call: 952590380. Free but each participant should donate 3kg of non-perishable foodstuffs to the food bank at the start of the course.

Workshop for travel photos. 24 April. 10am-2pm, 4-8pm. With Alex Jaime.

Lux Mundi

TORRE DEL MAR. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, Avda Moscatel.

Taizé Prayer. 30 April, 8.45pm. San Andrés church. Taizé prayer is a



ARCH charity, Alhaurín el Grande

monthly invitation to join in prayer. Send an email to be included in them: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org.

FUENGIROLA. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, C/Nueva 3.

The Boutique is open from Tuesday to Friday 10am to 1pm. Call: 952474840

Taizé Prayer. 29 April, 7.45pm. San José church. Send an email to be included in the prayers: luxmundif@gmail.com.

Natura Málaga

MALAGA. 14-16 May. Palacio de Ferias y Congresos, Malaga.

The annual health and sustainable living fair is planning to be held in May as usual. This year it will include the new Naturauto where the latest in ecological and sustainable vehicles will be on display. There will also be stands promoting a variety of products, workshops and conferences. www.naturamálaga.com



Natura Málaga, Malaga

O. V. FILMS

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

Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

MALAGA. Centro de Ocio, Plaza Mayor, Avda Alfonso Ponce León. Tel: 902902103. www.yelmocines.es.

Godzilla vs Kong: 13.10 (Sun).

Mortal Kombat: 12.10 (Sun).

Nomadland: 20.00 (Tues).

Promising Young Woman: 20.10 (Tues).

Carmen Opera from the MET: 18.30 (Fri.).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. C/ Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922. www.yelmocines.es

Promising Young Woman: 20.10 (Tues).

Minari: 17.55 (Tues).

Nomadland: 20.20 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MALAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902220922

Promising Young Woman: 19.35 (Tues).

Minari: 17.25 (Tues).

Nomadland: 19.05 (Tues).

The Father: 19.45 (Tues).

Carmen Opera from the MET: 18.30 (Fri.).

Original Version films

MARBELLA/SAN PEDRO. IES Río Verde, Marbella. Centro Municipal de Música, San Pedro.

The Peanut Butter Falcon: 6 May (Marbella), 7 May (San Pedro).

Cine Albéniz

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

Nomadland: 17.00, 19.45.

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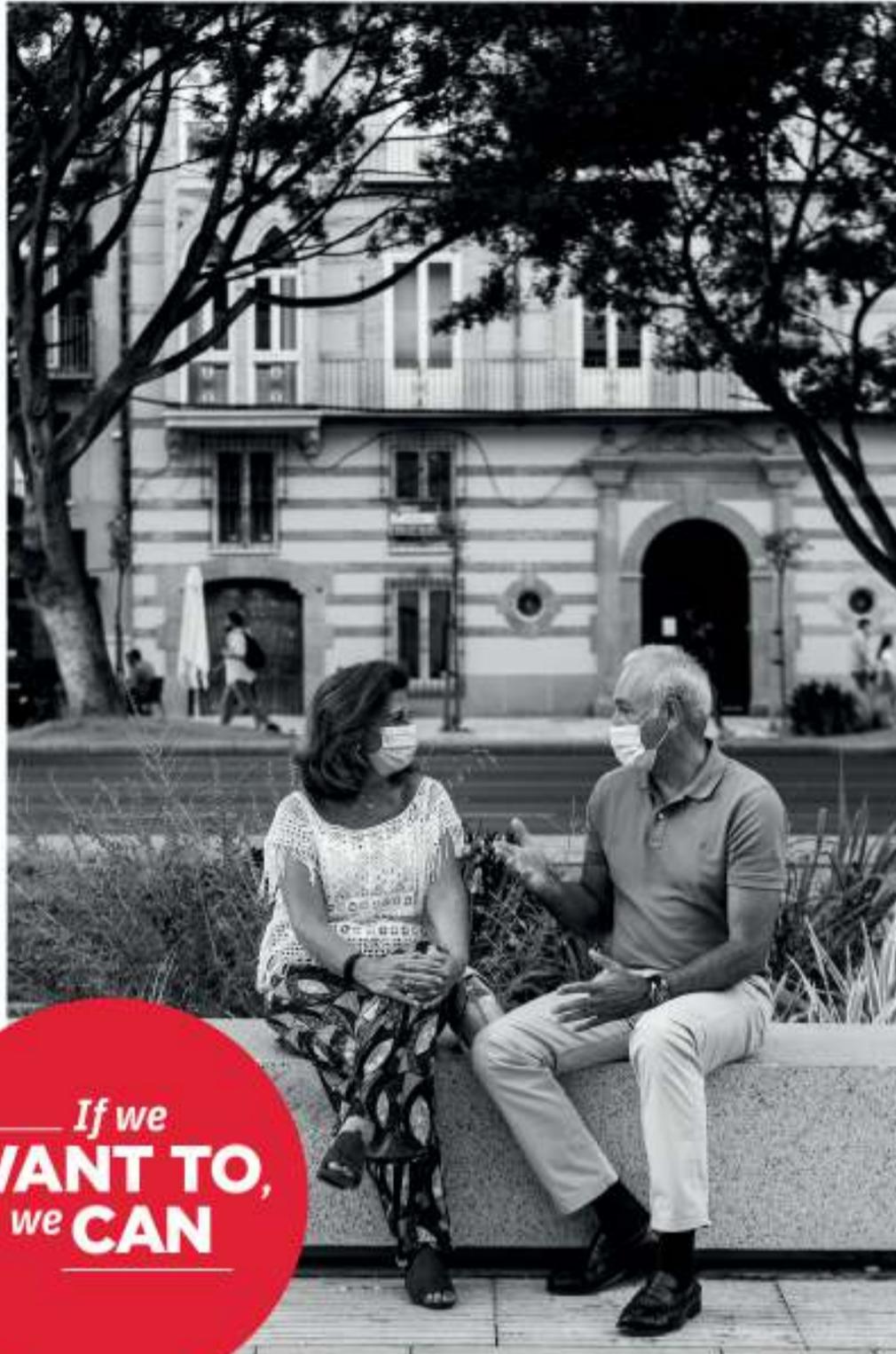
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More than a year after masks, hand sanitisers and Covid vaccines became part of everyday life in Malaga, this is a good time to remember that epidemics are nothing new and their effects have been equally as devastating as this one over the centuries.

Malaga city was no exception; in fact, as a port city which was open to all types of trade and business, it was the epicentre of health disasters of this type until not that long ago.

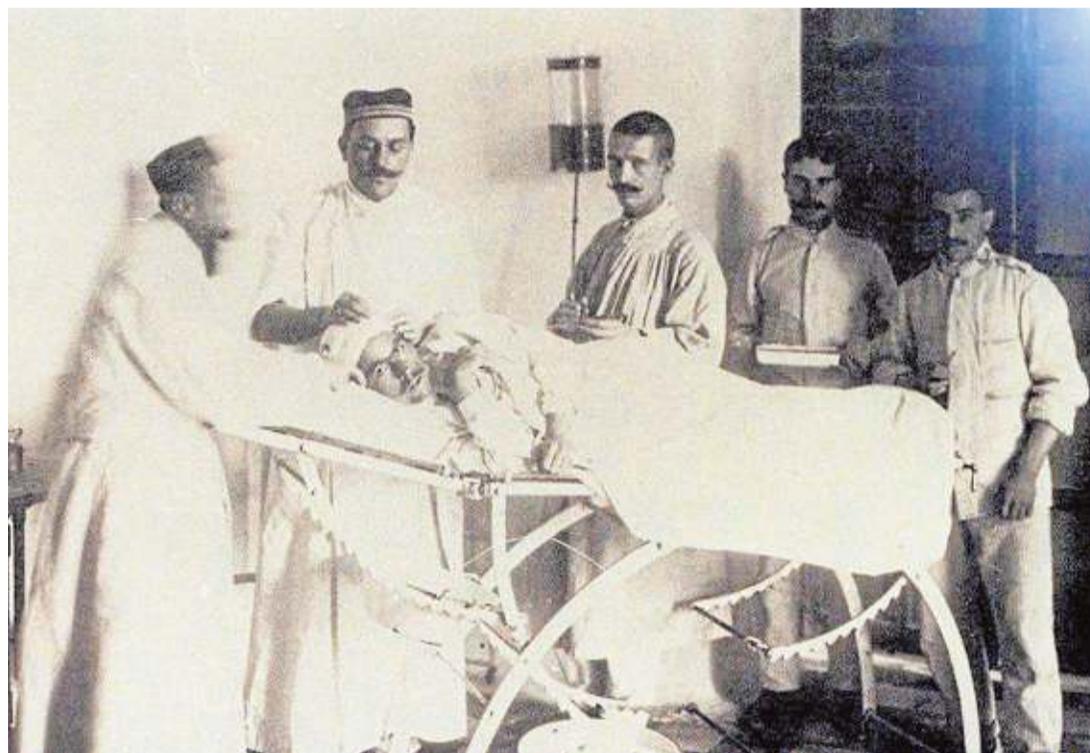
From the Middle Ages until early in the 20th century, local people had to coexist alongside the propagation of illnesses such as black death, yellow fever and cholera and, above all, could only fight them with the limited resources available to medical science of the time.

History books and local archives have plenty of references to these outbreaks, which sometimes lasted for five or six years and killed entire families, says historian and researcher Jorge Jiménez. He explains that Malaga's port was the entry point for foodstuffs which saved the city at times when harvests were bad, but also for illnesses which decimated the local population if not detected in time.

So how did they combat these outbreaks? How prepared were the hospitals? And above all, what role did the doctors play? First, it should be pointed out that the spacious and well-equipped hospitals and even the possibility to choose the type of healthcare (public or private) we receive these days are very recent advances. For centuries these facilities left a great deal to be desired and resources were limited: most of the hospitals were charitable ones, in other words run by religious orders or powerful families and maintained thanks to donations. This meant that the less money they had, the fewer beds there were.

Nearly all of them were in the city centre, for example in Calle Convalecientes, the Santa Ana (Plaza de la Merced), the San Julián (by the San Julián wall), the Santo Tomás (opposite the Sagrario church), the San Juan de Dios in the Calle Strachan area, the one at the Atarazanas market (a military hospital at that time) and the one in Malaga prison, which for centuries was in the Plaza de la Constitución.

In all of these the outbreaks were fought with limited resources, and living alongside death was something literal. It is known that before the cemeteries were moved to the outskirts of the city for sanitary reasons, the bodies were buried inside the city walls or in the churches. It is



◀ Archive photo of an operation at the Hospital Civil. SUR

Epidemics in Malaga before these times of Covid

History. Black death, cholera and yellow fever killed entire families in a city which, because of its port, was exposed and vulnerable to a multitude of outbreaks. Small hospitals, burials in courtyards and superstitions made it very difficult to have any control over infectious illnesses

ANA PÉREZ-BRYAN



not so well known that they were also buried in the courtyards of the hospitals. "Imagine what that was like, with no ventilation and zero hygiene," says Jiménez, graphically describing "rats that started with the dead bodies and then attacked the patients".

The limitations of these hospitals were made worse by matters that had nothing to do with health, because the major confiscation of ecclesiastical assets in the 19th century forced the closure of the scarce infrastructure that existed. Most of it was in the hands of religious orders and was therefore expropriated.

"At that time", says Jorge Jiménez,

"the middle-class of the city realised the need to sustain the hospitals financially and the State was also becoming more aware." To mention two examples, this was the context in which the first stone of the Hospital Civil was laid by Queen Isabel II in 1862 and was at that time outside the city, with adequate ventilation because of its proximity to the river and also in close contact with the convents in the area if the nuns were needed to provide assistance with patients.

The second was the Hospital Noble, begun in 1867 by the descendants of Joseph William Noble, the doctor and British MP,

whose path crossed with Malaga when he moved there to recover his delicate state of health. Unfortunately, Dr Noble died as a victim of the cholera epidemic that devastated the city in 1861 when he went to treat a guest at an inn in the Alameda Principal, who had been taken ill. The disease was highly contagious and spread very fast.

Apart from these hospitals, control of the epidemics clashed head-on with a social reality which was very deep-rooted, for example in the Baroque period, when greater importance was afforded to saving the soul than paying any attention to advice from doctors.

With regard to that, Jiménez tells of an episode in history which reflects the extent to which the local population took notice of religion rather than paying attention to science. It took place in 1637, during one of the black death epidemics, when a group of worshippers took the image of the Virgen de la Victoria from its shrine to the San Francisco convent. "When they arrived they flagellated themselves so much to expiate their sins that the walls had to be washed down with water and vinegar and then whitewashed, because of the blood stains." Contagion was guaranteed.

Oracles and horoscopes

However, this phenomenon was not only limited to religion. It also affected the world of trickery, oracles and horoscopes. In fact, in times of epidemics, the soothsayers who dedicated themselves to these dark businesses made a good living among a population who, as well as very little education, had very limited resources. As an illustration, there was a custom that if relatives or acquaintances died they would take their clothes and wear them instead of burning them. So, if they were infected, the disease continued to spread.

To try to prevent this, the port authorities and Malaga council were obliged to have what was called a 'health ship' anchored at a sufficient distance from the coast to ensure that in the case of an illness or outbreak among the crews who were arriving at Malaga, they could be placed into quarantine. Unfortunately, this was little more than a sticking plaster to cover a hemorrhage during epidemics. First, if the illness did not cause any physical symptoms it was difficult to detect cases, and also because the health ships were the responsibility of the port authority: if there was enough money, these ships were laid on, and if there wasn't, then everybody who arrived was able to come onshore.

Also, if there were health ships they tended to be old vessels which were not really suitable for real control of patients. And, of course, infected travellers could also enter the city by land.

It is not surprising that the doctors of the time began to raise the alarm to convince the authorities that they needed to take action to do away with, for example, the crowded housing and seedy inns and gambling dens around the port which, it times of epidemics, were the perfect setting for the illness to spread.

And that, in fact, was precisely how the project for Calle Larios started. However, that's a story for another day.

'People need psychological care, but they just get stuffed with antidepressants'

Manuel Mariano Vera **Head of the College of Psychologists**

"The contradictory messages which are given out are very bad for people's emotional balance," is his warning to the authorities

MATÍAS STUBER

MALAGA. For some time now, psychologists and psychiatrists have been warning of an unprecedented deterioration in people's mental health. The pandemic and its restrictions are proving too heavy a burden for many to cope with. Manuel Mariano Vera is the head of the College of Psychology of Eastern Andalucía, which is the one at which the professionals who work in Malaga are registered. "Mental health is going to be a very serious problem," he says. **-As the head of a college of psychologists, how do you feel at a time like this?**

-Very anxious. People are in need of immediate psychological attention and not everyone is receiving it. Only the ones who can afford to pay. The administrations have no measures in place to provide professional mental health facilities. That makes me very uncomfortable.

-Has your mental health been affected during all these months?

-I admit that many times during the pandemic I have felt very sad. It was a depressive situation, and emotional instability. I feel very emotional. I get over it because I have ways and tools to help me, but we don't always know how to apply them to ourselves.

-We have spent over a year on a rollercoaster of emotions...

-It has been a real rollercoaster, one of the types that leave you open-mouthed a lot of the time. The discourse has changed so many times already. Contradictory messages are very bad for people's emotional balance.

-Do we handle expectations badly?

-The way expectations are managed is important. Expectations can be one thing or another, but they need to be fulfilled. If not, we feel very upset indeed. It's often best to expect the worst.

-The health crisis has also been a major challenge for our minds.

-Obviously. The circumstances have put us on the edge of a precipice which has no comparison. Our generation has been a



Manuel Mariano Vera. SUR

CORONAVIRUS

"In managing the pandemic, they paid no attention whatsoever to mental health"

lucky one. Everything has been good for us until now.

-Do you think the way the pandemic has been managed has paid enough attention to mental health?

-No, not at all. They have paid no attention whatsoever to mental health. Mental health problems seem to be invisible to everyone except the people who suffer from them and their families. I would like us all to think about what it would be like to have a serious problem with distress and anxiety and have no help available anywhere. That is the situation a lot of people are in. The WHO has already said that by 2030 mental health is going to be a very serious problem.

-Of all the restrictions we have, which do you think has been potentially the worst for mental health?

-For someone who already had a mental health problem, anything that affects their already vulnerable psychological balance will cause them to suffer. The contradictory predicament of politicians is already causing damage to people's health. Imag-

ine those who are unbalanced. We don't know the drama these people are going through in their homes, think of that.

-The demand for psychologists has greatly increased but their numbers haven't ...

-We have a public health problem. There aren't enough psychologists in the public health system, and consultations have increased by 30 per cent.

-What do people want most?

-What they want is psychological attention, but what do they get? Medication. If you are treated under the health service, at your local health centre, they stuff you full of anxiolytics and antidepressants.

-Do they abuse the use of psychotropic drugs at health centres?

-Yes, I am totally convinced they do. It is supported by the figures. We know how much is spent on prescriptions for psychotropic drugs.

-Which aspects associated with the pandemic are affecting mental health the most?

-That will depend on the person and the age. Elderly people have suffered a great deal from loneliness. In general, uncertainty has affected people most.

-The figures in Malaga are clear: 50 clinical psychologists for a population of 1.6 million. What does that mean to you?

-It is the bare minimum. Actually, it isn't even that. We only have three psychologists for every 100,000 inhabitants in Andalucía. In Europe the average is 18 psychologists for every 100,000 inhabitants. It is extraordinarily disproportionate here. In Andalucía, someone using the health service has to wait two months to see a psychologist. If they ever do.

-What is the College of Psychologists going to do to improve the mental health situation in the Andalusian Health Service?

-We have been in contact with the authorities over many years, especially the Andalusian Health Service because so much depends on them. The administrations have a major problem when it comes to mental health. This is something that is going to have a perverse effect, because if I am ill, but I have nowhere to go for help, I will look for someone else. What on earth are we doing? It is encouraging people to go to non-professionals. That is going to cause even more damage. A mental health problem is something serious, it's not like having a broken leg.

There are only 50 health service psychologists for Malaga province

MATÍAS STUBER

MALAGA. The province of Malaga, with its 1.6 million inhabitants, has one of the lowest ratios of psychologists in the country, so many people are not receiving the care they need for many

months, unless they can afford to pay for it privately. The cost is normally between 60 and 80 euros per session.

In Andalucía the ratio is 3.3 psychologists per 100,000 people, compared with the national average of six.

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Marbella wine awards

ANDREW J. LINN



With the exception of investment fraud, the wine business is rarely host to dubious enterprises, but if your sights are low and you like to drink wine for free, there is apparently some low-hanging fruit. An event referred to as the 'International Marbella Wine Awards' was ostensibly cele-

brated in 2019 and 2020, and photographs of the modest affair were published in some local media.

The awards ceremony was scheduled for June 2020 but was cancelled owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, finding out who were the winners, if indeed winners there were, is not an easy task - in

fact to date it has proved impossible. The entry rules demanded the supply of six bottles of each wine submitted for the competition to be delivered to a private address in La Cala, with a payment from 150 euros for one sample, ranging up to 575 euros for five samples. The 'professional judging panel' is shown as having been made up of importers, distributors, buyers of wine,

The awards ceremony was scheduled for June 2020 but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic

oenologists, sommeliers, journalists and wine critics. Very exciting. An impressive range of medals is still waiting to be claimed, such as a double gold, gold, silver and bronze, topped off with 'honourable mentions'.

After one initial phone call several months ago in which the organiser told me the list of winners was being prepared and would be published, zero information has since been forthcoming.

So, if everything went according to plan, the organisers may possibly have received hundreds of bottles of wine for an event that does not appear to have taken place.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Curvas de Gredos 2017

It is now generally accepted in the wine trade that Spain is the place for making red wines with the Garnacha grape variety. This wine from the Sierra de Gredos is made by some young wine-makers known as Comando G and is particularly interesting at around 9 €.



Restaurante Santiago, the return of a classic

The iconic restaurant in Marbella reopened a month ago and has added a wine museum with memorabilia and 2,500 bottles

JOSÉ MARÍA MARTÍN

MARBELLA. The classics always come back and Marbella is celebrating as one of its flagship restaurants, Santiago, has reopened.

Santiago Domínguez, with over 60 years of professional experience, continues at the helm. He is something of an institution among Spanish restaurateurs. Originally from northern Spain, this life and soul of the restaurant has returned, accompanied by the same team of twenty-five professionals that he has managed to keep on despite current difficulties.

Although the sector is going through the most difficult time in its history, Santiago feels the

same desire and enthusiasm as always.

"Things were very quiet the first few days after we reopened," admitted the restaurateur. "We need things to gradually pick up, little by little, a few steps at a time as so many people are being forced out onto the street with no income," he said about the crisis which has hit the sector. "I have talked a lot with my colleagues and it is clear they are working their way through their life savings not knowing if they will be able to last out the pandemic."

The problem has been exacerbated by the fact that the sector has received no tax reductions. "We are paying as if we are working 100%, and we have only been able to open half a day, we aren't able to open nights and it's a year since we served evening meals," lamented Santiago.

Hope for the summer

Despite this, the restaurateur



Santiago Domínguez, in one of the dining rooms with the wine museum in the background. JOSELE

The vintage wines are displayed in showcases around the dining rooms giving a certain touch of decadence and glamour

remains confident that, like last year, the summer will bring a surge in customers and the vac-

ation campaign will provide diners with the confidence to sit down at one of the most privileged terraces in Marbella and enjoy some of the restaurant's authentic classics accompanied by a good wine.

The wine museum

Wine forms a big part of the reopening. He has for many years wanted to create a wine museum and at last the project has come

to fruition.

The vintage and historical bottles of wine are displayed in showcases around the dining rooms where the rich and famous including presidents, Salvador Dalí, Camilo José Cela and Morgan Freeman among many others have sat, giving a certain touch of decadence and glamour. He holds some 2,500 bottles of wine and much wine memorabilia.

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Malaga come away from Las Palmas with a draw after late equaliser

The Blue & Whites' faint hopes of promotion were dented last weekend, although they remain ninth in the table

SERGIO CORTÉS

MALAGA. Malaga's faint chances of securing a promotion playoff place were dealt a big blow after being pegged back to a 1-1 draw away to Las Palmas on Saturday evening. Sergio Pellicer's men were on their way to a third successive win when their hosts equalised five minutes from time.

The first chance of the game fell for the Canarians when Sergio Araujo was found in space but his first-time shot could only sting the palms of keeper Juan Soriano. Malaga's biggest opportunity of the half came at the midway mark when Jairo Sampeiro found Jozabed just inside the box but he blazed his shot over the bar. Overall, both sides struggled to get into a rhythm in the first 45 minutes and, as has often been the case, Malaga were unable to find that final pass in attacking areas.

Into the second half, Las Palmas came close to leading when Soriano could only parry Aridai's cross-turned-shot into Araujo's path. Fortunately for Malaga, cap-



Joaquín (l) got past two opponents and played a lay-off to Scepovic, which led to Malaga's goal. AGENCIA LOF

tain David Lombán was on hand to hook the Argentine's header off the line. As the half went on, Malaga started to look the more dangerous and had a penalty shout which was dismissed when VAR revealed the ball went out of play in the build-up. Eventually, the visitors took the lead in the 78th minute through Stefan Scepovic. Joaquín Muñoz made a good run down the right-hand

side and played a delightful lay-off to the Serbian who duly swept home.

Just as Malaga thought they had secured the three points, Las Palmas won a corner and found Araujo unmarked in the box. He was not to be denied this time and powered his header into the bottom right-hand corner to earn his team a point.

Commenting after the game,

Pellicer said: "It's frustrating because we had the points within reach. If we'd won, we would've got onto 51 points and mathematically secured safety."

The coach singled out goalscorer Scepovic for praise, saying: "Players making an impact from the bench has been an issue this season so I'm really happy that he's done just that."

However, he went on to add:

1-1

LAS PALMAS-MALAGA

Malaga: Soriano; Benítez; Juande, Lombán, Matos; Ramón (Quintana, 89'); Jairo (Joaquín, 60'), Jozabed (Benkhemassa, 60'), Cristian, Rahmani, & Caye Quintana (Scepovic, 71'). Unused substitutes: Dani Barrio, Dani Strindholm, Alexander, Cristo, Larrubia & Julio.

Las Palmas: Álvaro Valles; Lemos (Ale Díez, 89'), Álex Suárez, Curbelo, Benito; Sergio Ruiz, Maikel Mesa; Rober, Óscar Clemente (Edu Espiau, 74'), Pejiño (Aridai, 57'), & Araujo. Unused substitutes: Álex Domínguez, Cardona, Athuman, Jonathan, Javi Castellano, Rivera & Fabio.

Goals: 0-1 Scepovic (78'), 1-1 Araujo (85').

Referee: Gorostegui Fernández Ortega. Yellow cards for Óscar Clemente, Benítez, Juande, Lemos and both coaches, Mel & Pellicer.

Venue: Gran Canaria.

"As a team, we need to get better at dealing with high-pressure situations".

Malaga remain in 9th place, seven points off the final playoff spot with seven games to play. Next up, they welcome Fuenlabrada to La Rosaleda on Saturday afternoon (kick-off 4pm).

Three wins on the bounce for new manager García at Marbella

The Costa side won 2-1 at home to Lorca Deportiva amid its quest to avoid double relegation

MARBELLA 2
LORCA 1

JULIO RODRÍGUEZ

MARBELLA. New coach Abraham García kept up his 100 per cent record as Marbella made it three wins from three in their relegation play-off group with a 2-1 home win against Lorca Deportiva on Sunday evening. Álex Bernal finished off a good team move to secure the win for the Costa del Sol side.

After a couple of half-chances for each side, it was the hosts who made the breakthrough when a well-worked corner fell



Marbella goalscorer, Bernal. J. R.

to Chumbi and he scored from close range. However, Marbella's lead was short-lived and the Murcia side equalised through Carrasco barely a minute later.

At the beginning of the second half, it was Lorca who seemed more likely to score again and Herrero was needed to maintain parity. Nonetheless, in the 80th minute Granero found Redru on the byline and he played the ball into Bernal in the box who duly dispatched the winner for Marbella.

The goal triggered scenes of jubilation from the 800-strong crowd and takes Marbella closer to avoiding double relegation to the new Tercera RFEF (fifth-tier).

Currently, Marbella are second in the eight-team group, which would be enough to only drop into the Segunda RFEF (fourth-tier) next season. Next up is a trip to Yeclano on Sunday.

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A LOOK AT LA LIGA
ROB PALMER
Commentator, Sky Sports

A collective hissy fit - and useful distraction

The fuss over the short-lived Super League has meant that ridiculous changes to the Champions League have slipped under the radar



Don't be distracted by the celebrations and back-slapping at the short-lived life of the European Super League; the rich clubs will win the war, even if they lost the battle.

Ok, a competition that was launched on Sunday and disbanded by midnight the following Tuesday is now resigned to the history books as football's most ill-conceived idea. In the long term, the billionaires will succeed, and the fans won't even realise it.

Let me explain. This week, the Champions League was revamped. Normally it would have

been scrutinised and criticised, but the ridiculous changes slipped under the radar.

The global entities demanded a greater guarantee of a place in the annual meeting of Europe's elite. They also wanted a louder voice at the negotiating table. UEFA fought against this but did promise compromises. If they are to flog television rights and negotiate multimillion-dollar sponsorship to global tyre manufacturers they need internationally recognised clubs on the marketing literature.

If the season were to stop abruptly - let's say for a global



Florentino Pérez. AFP

pandemic - West Ham and Leicester would take two of the English places, Atalanta are pushing Juventus in the Italian standings, Barcelona are third on the Spanish grid and Lille are ahead of Paris Saint Germain in France.

It's like a Hollywood party. They want Brad Pitt and J-Lo on the guest-list, but they haven't put in a performance in the last year worthy of an Oscar nomination, so they won't make it past security. Potentially displaced, the A-listers decided to throw their own party where they are guaranteed a place on the dance floor.

It was a collective hissy fit. A bunch of billionaires lit fat cigars, poured glasses of vintage wine, and staged several zoom calls. They didn't expect the backlash.

To make this work, they needed television money. Media executives lined up to state they wouldn't invest. Fans staged protests, players asked their social media teams to publish disapproval, nobody offered any support. The PR campaign, which looked like it had been devised by an intern collapsed.

As Real Madrid's Florentino Pérez waffled on about cutting matches down to just sixty minutes because the millennials

have no attention span, his fellow presidents all started to conduct individual U-turns.

The plan was dead. Across Europe, there was festivity as club owners recorded apologies to fans.

Meanwhile, few noticed that UEFA had issued their press release outlining the new-style Champions League. You will hear lots of talk about the 'Swiss model'. No, it's not one of George Best's old flames, but a complicated league of 36 teams which is loaded in favour of the bigger clubs.

The mention of UEFA-coefficients drew one big yawn, and few took any interest. In a nutshell, it's more games, more money - a stitch-up for clubs from lesser recognised European leagues.

Still called the Champions League, there will be fewer champions and a greater leeway for fifth-placed clubs from the noisy countries to qualify. Title-winners in the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Scotland, Ukraine, Poland and Turkey will have to enter the knockout qualifiers whilst the fourth-placed teams from the so-called big leagues are given automatic entry.

It has been messy but the mission has been accomplished.

New managerial reign begins with defeat for Malaga women

0-2

MALAGA-FEMARGUÍN

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. New boss Javi Ramos fell to a defeat in his first game in charge of Malaga Women as the Blue & Whites were beaten 2-0 at home to bottom-of-the-table Femarguín on Sunday morning.

This is Malaga's fourth defeat in five games of the relegation phase of the Segunda División season.

In the first half, Malaga were unable to impose themselves and struggled to create attacking chances. This was perhaps unsurprising given that Ramos had made several changes and only had a few days with the team before the game.

In an uneventful first half, Farfán and Clo provided some joy for Malaga on the wings but could not make the breakthrough.

It was the visitors who broke the deadlock in the 62nd minute through a header from Patri inside the box.



Clo battles for the ball with a rival. SALVADOR SALAS

It was a familiar story for Malaga, who have often conceded this season just when they appear to be on top.

Things got worse eleven minutes later as Femarguín doubled their advantage through a powerful

shot from Brenda.

With five games remaining, Malaga are sixth in the nine-team Group South D where the bottom four will be relegated.

Next up is a trip to Valencia B on Sunday.

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The president of the competition committee for the 81st Copa Iberia, Miguel Pérez, at the 18th hole at the Parador de Golf. **MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ**

The Copa Iberia, 80 years in Malaga

The amateur tournament is the oldest of its kind in Spain and has been celebrated every year without interruption since 1941

PEDRO LUIS ALONSO



Few sports have coped better during the pandemic than golf, and few tournaments have stood the test of time better than the Copa Iberia. This national amateur competition, organised by the Real Club de Campo, will return to the Parador de Málaga Golf Club this Friday and Saturday for its 81st edition.

Postponed twice due to Covid-19, the Copa Iberia 2020 eventually took place in September. This year, though, the tournament will be played at the end of April, as in previous years, when more hours of sunlight allow for a greater number of participants.

The Real Club de Campo, founded 1926, is one of the oldest

golf clubs in Malaga and was one of the first three to be established in Spain. The Copa Iberia is the oldest amateur golf competition in Spain and has taken place annually without interruption since 1941.

It benefits from the support of the Malaga provincial authority and pits a maximum of 42 teams against one other, each consisting of four players who represent clubs from around the country.

The form of the competition is 36-hole Medal Play Handicap, with the first 18 played as four-somes (where the players alternate shots) and the second 18 individually. The net total of each team's six rounds makes up its final score. Originally, Portu-



▲ Trophy. The Iberia Cup, on the lawn at the Parador golf course.

guese golfers used to take part as well - hence the name - and the tournament was held around January.

"The last week of April is the best time for the tournament," explained Miguel Pérez, President of the Copa Iberia competition committee. "We have more than 170 players."

Pérez is pleased with the excellent response to the tourna-

"People have taken up golf, as it's in the open air and safer," said the president of the cup committee, Miguel Pérez

ments organised in 2021 by the Real Club de Campo and believes that things will continue to improve this year.

"We host some 30 competitions annually at the club. When it reopened in June, there was another increase. The competition calendar for 2021 has remained the same and the number of people signing up for in each event is increasing by 20 per cent compared to 2019 (before the pandemic). We think it is because other sports take place in enclosed areas and so the players have taken up golf, which is very safe as it takes place in the open air."

For Pérez, it is important to distinguish between commercial golf courses and members' ones.

"The latter are getting by, but those which are primarily commercial are not doing so well, because there is currently no tourism or commercial golf packages."

The Real Club de Campo sees 230 members take to its fairways each day, though it is the Parador de Golf that manages the green fees for visitors and guests. Most of the members are pensioners, and the club lacks players of younger generations.

"Fifteen years ago, we managed the golf school and had more young players," explained Pérez. Nonetheless, he is pleased to count 90-year-old Francisco Santamaría among his members, who continues to compete in tournaments and complete all 18 holes on foot, without the help of a buggy.

What is it like to play golf dur-

Authority launches Spain's oldest amateur cup

P. L. A.

MALAGA. The oldest amateur golf tournament in Spain, the Copa Iberia, was officially launched on Monday by the vice-president of the Malaga provincial government, Juan Carlos Maldonado.

Since 1941, the year the tournament was first held, Maldonado said that "the passion and enthusiasm for this sport has grown and grown."

He added that every year half a million tourists come to the Costa del Sol to play golf on the province's more than 70 courses.

This year the authority's support for this tournament was more important than ever, he said, "because the pandemic and the absence of foreign players are having a serious affect on the sport."

ing the pandemic and with the various restrictions? As well as adhering to the health and safety measures, the golfers appreciate the care taken by the clubs so that they can continue to play risk-free.

Health measures

"There is a precise procedure. Before the start of each competition, the players fill in a form with their personal data and information regarding whether they have had contact with an infected person or if they have had the virus," explained Pérez.

"They enter on one side and exit by another. They don't touch the flags or the rakes, and when leaving the course they are given hand sanitiser," he added.

"People have taken up golf because it's played in the open air and is safer."

Those are not the only measures in place, though. If two players travel in a buggy together, they must use a mask, and a maximum of four golfers are allowed on a tee box. If they are not two metres apart, they must wear a mask, although after teeing off they play the hole without their masks, maintaining social distance.

"We also have red lines on the course, which are for the entrances, and yellow ones for the exits," explained Pérez, adding that, in any case, "golf is played in the open air and is very safe."

"We are very happy. It's not the same to play with the measures as it is without them, but this has not stopped people from taking part nor from becoming members."

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ESTEPONA

Bus Station	955038665
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Tourist Office	952802002
Town Hall	952801100
Foreign Residents Dept.	952809031

FUENGIROLA

Bus Station	952475066
Taxi Service	952471000
Tourist Office	952467625
Town Hall	952589300
Foreign Residents Dept.	952589440

MALAGA

Bus Station	952350061
Railway Station	902240202
Taxi Service	952345693
Tourist Office	951926020

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Bus Station	955038665
Taxi Service	952774488
Tourist Office	952768760
Town Hall	952761100
Foreign Residents Dept.	952768760

MIJAS

Town Hall	952485900
Town Hall Las Lagunas	952473125
Taxi	952478288
Tourism Office	952589034
Foreign Resident Dept.	952589010

NERJA

Bus Station	902422242
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Taxi Service	952520537
Tourist Information	952521531
Town Hall	952548400
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Taxi Service	952380600
Tourist Office	952371909
Town Hall	952379400
Foreign Residents Dept.	952374231

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Bus Station	902450550
Taxi Service	952441545
Tourist Office	952442494
Town Hall	952374231
Foreign Residents Dept.	952442494

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

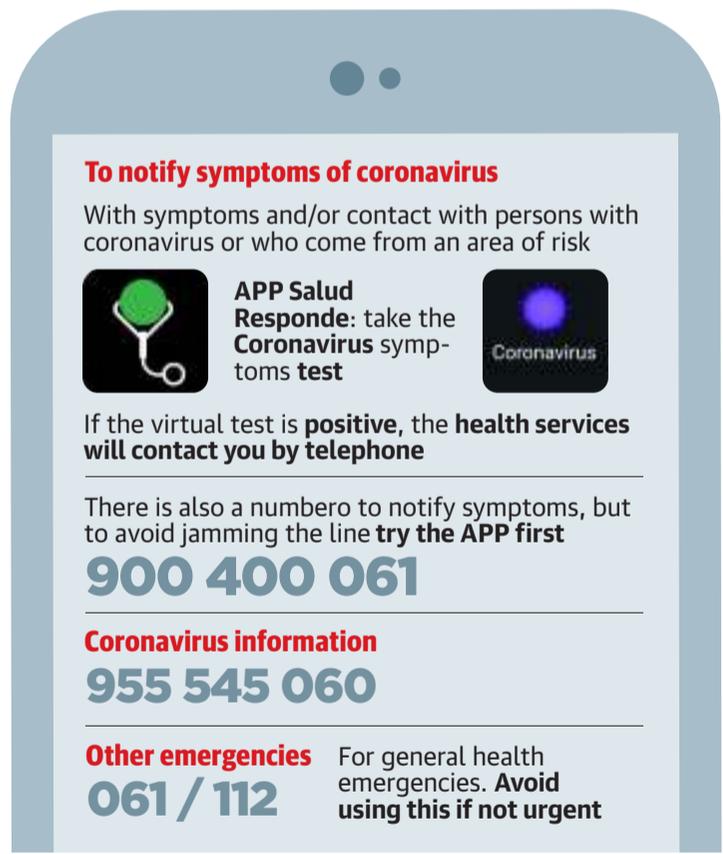
Bus Station	952503162
Taxi	952540016
Town Hall	952559100
Tourist Office	952541104

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Fire/ambulance (emergency)	190
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Sweden	Calle Córdoba 6, 5th floor, Malaga	952604383	Philippines	C/Marqués de Larios 4, 2º, Malaga	952771850
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With symptoms and/or contact with persons with coronavirus or who come from an area of risk

APP Salud Responde: take the Coronavirus symptoms test

If the virtual test is **positive**, the health services will contact you by telephone

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900 400 061

Coronavirus information

955 545 060

Other emergencies For general health emergencies. **Avoid using this if not urgent**

061 / 112

THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
An exceptional release of pent-up energy goes towards your family and friends as this week begins. A romance that tried to blossom earlier in the year may seem to have dried up, but has it?



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
Short, important trips this week visiting folk you have not seen for a while. This can be emotional but it will just remind others how much you care for them.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
The temptation to spend, spend, spend is very strong this week. Maybe you are due a treat or two? Just be aware that a big bill could be around the corner.



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Where you encounter difficult people, keep the chat cool to avoid disagreement. Still, the control is yours and you just need to let others know what you want and expect.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Someone who gave you helpful tips earlier in the month is back to give some more. Finances need a careful hand as retrograde planets, including Jupiter, try to upset the apple cart!



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
Avoid arguments with family and friends. Things change for the better as the new month begins and words said in haste now could sting.



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
Someone who criticises or is pushy about what you should do may have a plan of their own. Remember, though, that some criticism can be useful if you listen with an open mind.



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
A lively time on the work front also finds you trying to catch up with things at home. Small moments of peace and calm can keep you going in these times.



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Pushy folk won't get past you this week and rightly so! Being a generally easy-going soul, people new to you may see a soft touch. How wrong they are!



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
Both a Full Moon and Pluto retrograde are a warning to keep on your toes. This is especially true when buying something expensive or making investments.



Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
Maybe money is short here and there but your charm and humour can make up for that. Someone who is honest and open is needed to rekindle your confidence in others.

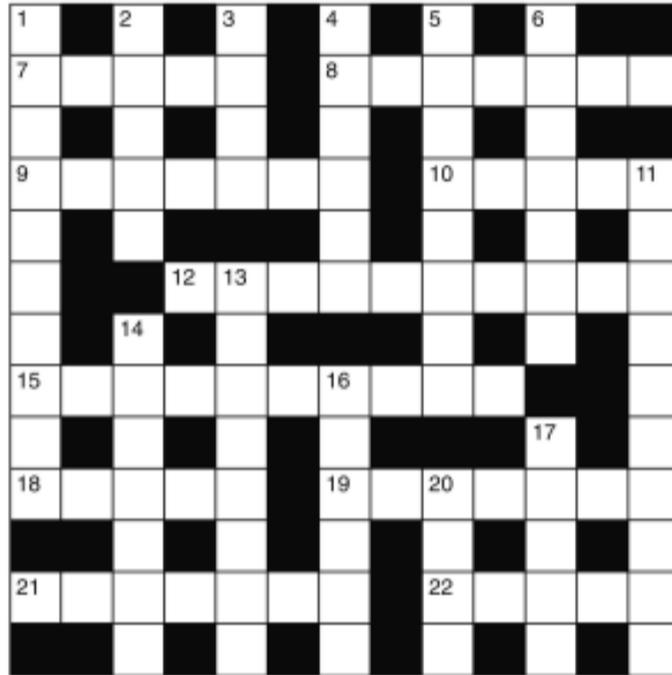


Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
Double-check your solution to a problem as it could be the wrong one. Younger folk keep you on your toes and, although you may be busy, these prove to be precious times with them.

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11458



Across

- 7 Hoard turns out to be female (5)
- 8 Rustic gives vegetables to worker (7)
- 9 Old soldier puts wrong tree in vehicle (7)
- 10 Currency drain (5)
- 12 Mariner's closely guarded bit of knowledge? (4,6)
- 15 Mascot for a family emblem (4,2,4)
- 18 Area of Singapore, almost (5)
- 19 Victory by monarch with one eye closed (7)
- 21 Not well matched in fortune, qualities, etc. (7)
- 22 Spell causes injury to 100 (5)

Down

- 1 Transport for the ordinary soldier? (7,3)
- 2 Weeks of freedom on the run (5)
- 3 Light-coloured article in tree (4)
- 4 Unlock the door to freer speech? (4,2)
- 5 Made yard untidy in reverie (8)
- 6 Apparently the French have wet washing (7)
- 11 Rue garment torn in second leg of fixture (6,4)
- 13 So huge, could give us no more (8)
- 14 Nude in awful act in floor show (7)
- 16 A material produced when one wants (2,4)
- 17 Clergyman puts half a dozen on vehicle (5)
- 20 Sibling's girl loses heart in resort (4)

SUDOKU BY HANZO

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

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

THE WORDPUZZLER

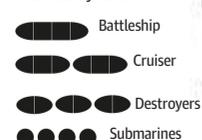
A	X	E	N	E	E	P	A	C	T
P	E	P	A	N	C	A	P	X	A
A	T	E	N	C	A	N	E	A	X
E	N	E	X	A	C	E	A	N	T
T	E	X	A	N	T	A	E	X	E
C	A	T	E	T	E	T	C	E	C
A	C	A	P	C	E	A	T	A	P
P	A	N	X	E	C	P	A	C	E
C	A	T	A	C	T	E	P	P	A
E	X	A	P	A	E	X	A	C	T

Can you identify the words that may be made from the letters of EXPECTANT from the clues listed below?

- 1. Bamboo stem
- 2. Existing
- 3. Agreement
- 4. Fuel
- 5. Tire
- 6. Diplomacy
- 7. Hypocrisy
- 8. Stride
- 9. Sheet of glass
- 10. American

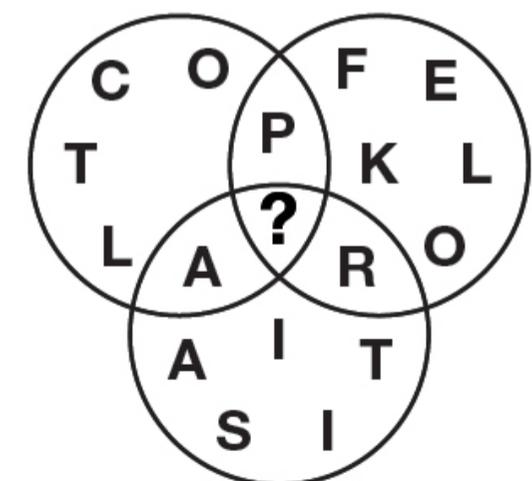
BATTLESHIPS

Instructions Find where the fleet of ships (1 battleship, 2 cruisers, 3 destroyers, 4 submarines) are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some have been filled in to start you off.



										1
A										3
B										2
C										1
D										1
E										0
F										1
G										4
H										3
I										1
J										1
	1	2	1	4	0	7	0	3	1	1

CIRCLEGRAM



Instructions
Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

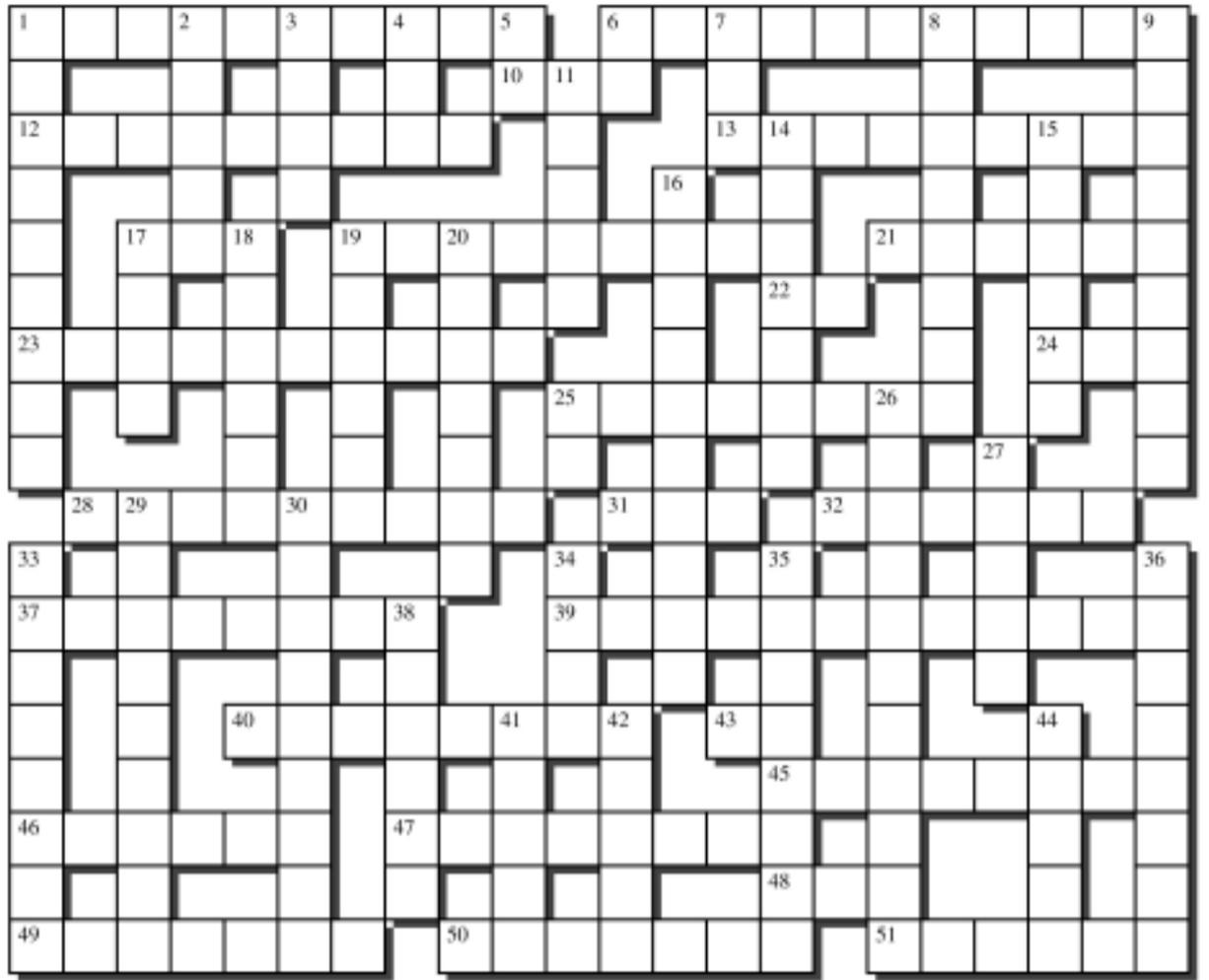
LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD

Across

- 1) Cavalry (10)
- 6) To identify (11)
- 10) To be (3)
- 12) Emperor (9)
- 13) They were learning (9)
- 17) Thirst (3)
- 19) Knight (9)
- 21) They loved (6)
- 22) Nor (2)
- 23) England (10)
- 24) Like that (3)
- 25) Venerated (m) (8)
- 28) Farmers (9)
- 31) Bread (3)
- 32) Grandmother (6)
- 37) Archers (8)
- 39) Christianity (12)
- 40) Victor (8)
- 43) Faith (2)
- 45) Gallantry (8)
- 46) You laughed (6)
- 47) I discovered (8)
- 48) He gave (3)
- 49) To award (7)
- 50) Legend (7)
- 51) Centuries (6)

Down

- 1) Beliefs (9)
- 2) Young garlic (5)
- 3) Loyal (4)
- 4) River (3)
- 5) Ace (2)
- 6) To go (2)
- 7) It was (3)
- 8) Phenomenon (8)
- 9) To renounce (9)
- 11) He emulates (5)
- 14) Pioneer (n) (7)
- 15) Unreal (6)
- 16) Legendary (m) (10)
- 17) I follow (4)
- 18) Dragon (6)
- 19) Closure (6)
- 20) Cheap (m.pl) (7)
- 25) I saw (2)
- 26) Hems (11)
- 27) To ask for (5)
- 29) Requirement (9)
- 30) Garter (Order) (9)
- 33) Martyrdom (8)
- 34) Leisure (4)
- 35) Daring (f) (8)
- 36) Soldiers (8)
- 38) Drying (6)
- 41) Since (5)
- 42) It brings together (5)
- 44) Lectern (5)



ANSWERS

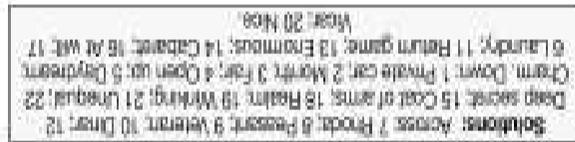
Quiz answers

Answer: Penguin
Of interest: Macaroni, yellow-eyed and chinstrap are all types of penguins found in the southern hemisphere.
Answer: Swatch
Of interest: Originally called the Swatchmobile, the little car developed by the CEO of Swatch watches, Nicolas Hayek, was manufactured by Daimler-Benz AG after being turned down by Volkswagen, Fiat and Renault. It was decided to change the name to Smart (Swatch Mercedes Art) with the Smart Fortwo making its debut in 1997.

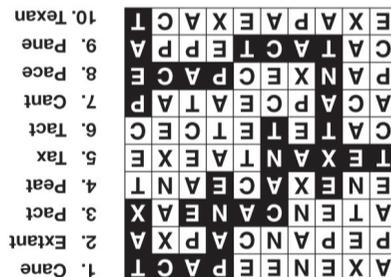
Language Crossword



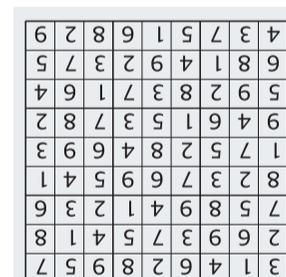
Cryptic Crossword



Wordpuzzler solution



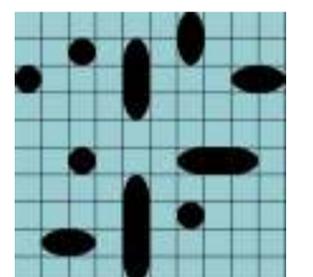
Sudoku solution



Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is N. Clapton, Knopfer, Satranj, all guitarists.

Battleships



WHERE IS THIS?



Last week: Almayate

The view of this modern clocktower is taken from Calle Maestro Antonio Marquez Robles, near the Plaza la Iglesia.



St John the Baptist church

THE SUR IN ENGLISH CORNER

How do you see Mijas?

This month SUR in English plans to continue its series of In The Spotlight supplements, which focus on individual towns or municipalities in the area.

This time it will be the turn of Mijas to shine in the special edition, which will highlight the place and its people at the end of April.

As usual we would like to invite readers who share a love for both Mijas and photography to send in images that could be selected to be published in the supplement.

It's not a difficult challenge in the case of Mijas, with its picturesque Pueblo, the busy Las Lagunas area, La Cala by the sea and the beautiful mountains behind.

So capture the essence of Mijas and send the images (no more than three per person) by 25 April to english@diariosures

And don't forget to keep up with events meanwhile at www.surinenglish.com, on Facebook @surenenglish and Twitter @SUR_english

Ibn Gabirol: a legacy that has lasted a thousand years

Events this week commemorated the 11th-century philosopher and poet, who was born in Malaga city

FERNANDO TORRES



MALAGA. The thoughts, verses and ideas of Solomon Ibn Gabirol have become a fundamental pillar of the Sephardi legacy to the world and they have been kept alive for 1,000 years. His work is essential in Jewish studies, but many people will never have heard of him. This influential 11th century Andalusian poet and philosopher was born in Malaga but became an orphan at a young age and was taken in by a prominent political figure of the time. He became a prolific writer who published over a hundred poems, as well as works of religious explanation, philosophy, ethics and satire.

To prevent him being forgotten, the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain recently organised a two-day conference in Malaga to mark 1,000 years since he was born. Many local institu-

tions took part, including Malaga council, the university, the Picasso Museum, the Unicaja Foundation, the Tres Culturas Foundation, the Federation of Jewish Communities and the recently-created Ibn Gabirol Association, which is headed by Salomón Castiel.

The aim was to pass on the message of tolerance and community which lies behind the poems and writings of the Sephardi poet, and the conference featured different aspects of his life, in the form of round-table discussions.

Expert opinions

On the first day, three experts talked about the figure of Ibn Gabirol as a philosopher: Dr Miguel Ángel Espinosa, professor of History and Culture of the Jewish People at Granada University; Dr Ángel Galán, a professor of Medieval History at Malaga university, who gave the historical context of the time in which Gabirol lived, saying that in the 11th century Malaga already had a sizeable port and commercial activity; and Dr Amparo Alba Cecilia of the Complutense university of Madrid, who revealed that Ibn Gabirol is known by three names, a Jewish one, a Christian one and a Muslim one, and that his poems differed greatly from his philosophical works. "For Judaism, he is one of the greatest religious poets in the world," she explained,



Salva Reina and Natalia Verbeke, by the statue of Solomon Ibn Gabirol in central Malaga. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ

while his philosophical thought captivated Christian scholars in the 13th century.

Also participating in the round table discussions was Line Amselem, professor at the Hauts-de-France polytechnic university. She spoke of "the different identities" that can be seen in the writings of Gabirol, and pointed out that centuries went by before it was finally realised that the works he published under his Christian name and his Sephardi writings were by the same person.

The president of the Malaga provincial authority, Francis Salado, said that the ideas of this philosopher are as vital today as

Flowers and poems to remember Ibn Gabirol

Before the conference began, there was a short ceremony in which flowers were laid at the statue of the poet and philosopher in Calle Alcazabilla, by the Roman Theatre. Several transcriptions of his poems were read out by actor Salva Reina and actress Natalia Verbeke. This simple tribute was the starting point for two intense days of study and analysis.

they were 1,000 years ago. The mayor of Malaga, Francisco de la Torre, stressed the importance of the city embracing the values of "tolerance and respect" which Gabirol had promoted in his writings. The president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain, Isaac Benzaquén, defined Gabirol as "a great man who was relegated to a second place in culture".

Concha de Santa Ana, director of the Tres Culturas Foundation pointed out that "knowledge is the greatest antidote to hatred" and María Jesús Morales of Malaga university described Gabirol as "a mirror" for academics to look into.

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