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Huge rise in electricity prices puts more local businesses at risk

Energy bills have surged 35% so far this year and many Malaga province firms are slashing margins in order to survive

As if the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic weren't enough, the local economy is now taking another blow.

With electricity bills spiralling

ever upwards, companies that use a lot of power, such as on summer air-conditioning, are facing hard choices over how to cut energy use to reduce their costs.

Many smaller firms say they would rather eat into the money they make than raise prices, in order to keep customers happy, while others fear for their future as recent IVA tax reductions have made little difference. **P2**



There were few vantage points remaining near the podium in Rincón de la Victoria on Tuesday. **ÑITO SALAS**

The return of La Vuelta

Thousands of people lined the streets as the finish of stage 10 of the iconic round-Spain cycle race rolled on to the Costa. **P40**

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Air-conditioning units keep the courts cool at Pádel Málaga, a typical business having to cope with the surge in energy costs. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ

THE FACTS

35

per cent is the average amount that the bill has increased in July for entrepreneurs compared to the bill in July 2020, according to the Malaga Chamber of Commerce.

28 square metres,” explains Arrabal.

There are more examples. Sergio Guzmán is the owner of Pádel Málaga. Six padel tennis courts are located in a warehouse. “Being indoors, the lights always have to be on. The air-conditioning, the same. I have gone from an invoice of 700 to now paying about 1,100 euros for electricity,” he says, adding that this increase puts the viability of his business at risk: “We cannot pass this increase on to the client, we would lose them. This increase in electricity leaves us without margins.”

Sleeping soundly?

If it weren't because he has a good bed at home, says Jorge Guerrero, it would be hard for him to sleep at night. He is the head of Malaga mattress-group Mi Colchón, which has several stores in the city. Guerrero directly manages six, the rest are in the hands of franchisees. Since the price of electricity began to climb, the bill became a headache for this businessman. “We are talking about an increase of 30 per cent,” says Guerrero.

For the month of July the energy bill of his six stores amounted to 4,300 euros. Guerrero, with bills in hand, points out that “the increase in electricity bills is unsustainable”. In July 2020 the bill was 3,100 euros.

Guerrero recently undertook a comprehensive revamp to equip the Mi Colchón stores with low-consumption LED lights. “We invest to save money but even now we pay more than before,” he says. The problem, he confirms, is that this added expense cannot be passed on to the client. “It is not like before, the margins we have now are very thin,” he explains.

Record electricity prices push many Costa del Sol businesses against the ropes

The average 35 per cent increase in energy bills isn't just affecting households, but also the profit margins of small and medium-sized companies

MATÍAS STUBER

MALAGA. Energy costs have risen an average of 35 per cent this year and the viability of many small and medium-sized companies, already affected by Covid, is now under threat according to Malaga's Chamber of Commerce.

The price of electricity in Spain is more expensive than ever. The government's decision, in June, to lower the IVA sales tax on the electricity bill from 21 to 10 per cent has already been absorbed by a market that does not stop in-

creasing, and in which the final consumer is the biggest victim.

Sergio Violeros is a 46-year-old fitness fan. In 2014, he decided to turn his passion into work and opened his own gym. It is a 200-square-metre space and, apart from the fitness equipment, the ceiling holds two essential elements for the gym to function: a long string of powerful spotlights and an air-conditioning system that cools the high summer temperatures.

If the rise in electricity rates affects households, now the viability of Sergio's business is at risk from the hike in energy prices, following the hardship of the months in 2020 when the gym had to close due to the pandemic.

“I have never had an electricity bill like July's,” he points out before going on to list his energy

consumption: “April, 103.41 euros; May, 142.30 euros; June, 240.75 euros and July, 441.20 euros.”

“Actually, I know I can't afford to have the air-conditioning on all the time, but if I turn it off, customers immediately complain about the heat - and rightly so,” explains Violeros.

The dilemma of the owner of this gym is one shared with many other small and medium businesses along the Costa, who see how their already narrow margins are being hit by the electricity bills.

The president of Malaga Chamber of Commerce, Sergio Cuberos, said that every day they receive complaints from small firms who are “scared” and “outraged” at the increase in their electricity bill. “The average rise in Malaga is between 30 and 35 per

cent and it is hurting businesses. So much so that some companies are already considering closing,” he told SUR.

Cuberos has appealed to the government to find solutions to a problem. “They have to do something for these small businesses. As we try and recover from the blow of the pandemic, this increase in the price of electricity comes along - it is leaving many without a profit margin,” he says.

Sweating at the salon

One of them is Jorge Arrabal, who has a small hairdressing salon near the Teatinos university campus in Malaga. “I have to have the air-conditioning on all day for my customers who are already sweating under the cape I put on them. In July, the bill has skyrocketed and my premises are only

Malaga is planning a Christmas light show in its historic La Concepción botanical gardens

JESÚS HINOJOSA

MALAGA. The city of Malaga is already well-known for its Christmas lights. But now it has launched the tendering process to find a private company to stage a new - additional - festive light and sound show in the grounds of the La Concepción

botanical gardens, five kilometres north of the city centre.

The move is seen as another effort from the city to fend off the challenge from the Galician city of Vigo to the unofficial title of Spain's best Christmas decorations.

The council plans to run them from 23 November to 10 Janu-

ary once the historic park closes its doors to daytime visitors. It will reopen from 6.30pm to 11pm to take ticketholders on a “journey through the spirit of Christmas”.

Floating stars in the lakes; snowmen and animal figures; a tunnel of lights in harmony with background music; floodlighting

of the gardens, waterfall and temple are some of the things that the council is seeking a private company to install and operate. Likewise, the town hall specification for the contract requests that a “historical merry-go-round, festooned with lights, with a diameter of 6.5 metres” be installed, as well as “a food stall with a gabled roof and decorations and lighting”.

Companies interested in bidding for the contract for the installation and operation of this Christmas garden have until 7

September to present their offers. The city council has asked interested parties to prove that they have the necessary technical experience - demonstrated by carrying out similar services or work in the last three years - as well as being financially solvent and having civil liability insurance.

If there is more than one company interested in the project and they all meet the requirements, the final selection will be made in a draw at La Concepción garden's mansion house.

Tunnel plan for city centre coast road would see diversions

A report for Malaga council has given more details of how this megaproject, which will create 2,500 construction jobs, would be built

JESÚS HINOJOSA

MALAGA. More details have been emerging of how Malaga city council proposes to implement the complicated building work in its plan to put the entire west to east coastal road through the city centre underground, and so free up space for more gardens and pedestrianisation.

The ambitious project is called Plan Málaga Litoral (Malaga shoreline plan) and, if given the go ahead, would cost over 400 million euros.

As well as fulfilling the long-held ambition of linking the Plaza de la Marina, by the tourist office, with the newly developed port area, it would allow new bus and coach stations to be built in the

city: under Plaza de la Marina itself and under the entrance to the city's main railway station. A large underground parking area would also be built by the entrance to the port.

A report carried out by ARCS, consultants working on the detailed plan for the town hall, estimates that the building work will generate 2,500 jobs, but it also warns that construction on this scale would inevitably cause, "inconvenience and different types of negative impact on a wide range of people; local residents, shopkeepers, hoteliers, delivery drivers, children and young people, people with mobility restrictions etc".

No phased implementation

The consultants urge careful planning to limit the inconvenience, but they recommend carrying out the work in one go and not dividing it into phases, in order to avoid, "having to build temporary access roads that would have a further impact on traffic and city life".



Artists impression of the proposed extension to the gardens in the centre of Malaga. **sur**

Starting from the west, the first road to be affected would be Avenida Manuel Agustín Heredia - the traffic along this busy route along the dock wall by the Soho district would be diverted onto the quayside itself.

The current bus station on this avenue, where buses can be caught to destinations around Malaga province and the Costa, would be temporarily moved to in front of the Port Authority office, opposite Plaza de la Marina.

Eventually, this bus station would be put underground at Plaza de la Marina itself.

Traffic running along this port-side route would then be tempo-

rarily rerouted during the works along the Paseo del Parque, by the town hall, while the Paseo de las Curas road immediately between the tropical gardens and the port was also put underground.

Finally, there would be diversions in the La Malagueta area between Muelle Uno and the beach to allow the Avenida de Cánovas main road through that district to be placed underground.

It is hoped that the work can go out to tender in 2024.

The consultants urge careful planning to limit the inconvenience, but they recommend carrying out the work in one go

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No decision taken yet on Covid-19 booster jab

The rolling 14-day case rate in Malaga province including the Costa was 276 on Thursday (26 August) down from 610 two weeks before

SUR

MALAGA. Experts advising national government on the Covid-19 vaccination campaign are still studying who should receive the talked-about third, booster jab and when it should be administered, the Minister of Health Carolina Darias explained on Wednesday. She was speaking after the weekly meeting with all Spain's regional Health ministries.

The authorities have delayed the decision for at least one more week until more scientific information is available.

Darias said that the experts are following a "rigorous" process and waiting to see two new studies from Pfizer and Moderna, as well as waiting to hear the opinion of the European Medicines Agency, which was originally scheduled for the beginning of this week. However, Darias made it clear that her department will have the last word.

Also on Wednesday, the Ministry of Education agreed with the regions the rules for the up-

coming back-to-school period. The same safety guidelines drafted in June, before the Delta variant took hold, will be used. They mandate: masks for those over six years; staying in bubble groups; keeping a distance in class of at least 1.2 metres between students; cross ventilation in classrooms.

The Education department and the regions had pinned their hopes on high vaccination-rates of 12 to 19-year-olds to be able to relax the rules. Although teenagers are now being jabbed - in the Andalucía region, for example, those 12 years and over are having vaccinations - not enough are judged to be fully vaccinated yet.

Improving case rates

The rolling Covid-19 cases rate continued to drop again this week in the Andalucía region, including in Malaga province, as well as in Spain as a whole.

On Thursday (26 August), the average 14-day case rate per 100,000 people across the eight

provinces of Andalucía was 289.5, down from 390 a week earlier.

Locally, in Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, the 14-day rate on Thursday was 276.5, down from 420 a week earlier and 610 two weeks before.

In terms of hospitalisations locally, there were 337 in Malaga province hospitals on Thursday this week with coronavirus, down from 401 a week earlier and a peak of 505 on 5 August. The number in intensive care (57) was also dropping week on week.

With the improving rates, the committee monitoring coronavirus restrictions for Malaga province decided that all the local health districts, including along the Costa del Sol, should continue at health alert Level 2 for at least another week.

Consequently, there will be no changes to the existing coronavirus control measures in force across the province.

Like last week, no restriction on night mobility has been requested in any municipality in the province, since there was only one town, although with fewer than 5,000 people, that exceeds the rate of 1,000 cases per 100,000 residents in two weeks.

i More information: For the latest on case rates in each local municipality and an up-to-date map, see www.surinenglish.com

Festival suspended in Torremolinos after police raid nightspot

Torremolinos council officials suspended a festival this week after police raided a nightclub and other venues in the resort last weekend over failure to follow Covid-19 restrictions. The Freedom Party Dirty West, within the Matrix Sun Festival, was cancelled following police intervention on the dance floor at the well-know Palladium. Images had been shared on social media of some 750 inside, which was within legal limits. However revellers were packed onto the dance floor without wearing masks, which contravenes current coronavirus prevention rules.



Andalucía is now vaccinating those aged 12 years and over. EFE

There will be no changes this week to the existing coronavirus control measures in force across Malaga province

Junta urges pregnant women to get vaccinated against Covid-19

J. L. PIEDRA / R. APARICIO

SEVILLE / MALAGA. The Junta de Andalucía is urging all pregnant women to get vaccinated against Covid-19, and also the nearly 50,000 people in Andalucía, some 0.60 per cent of the population, who have so far rejected a vaccine.

To help with the process, the regional health service set up a total of 92 drop-in vaccination points during this week.

The locations offer anyone over 12 years of age who qualify for vaccination a dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna

vaccines.

An emphasis is being placed on reaching pregnant women due to their greater risk of more serious effects if infected.

So far, two pregnant women have died from Covid at the Virgen del Rocío hospital in Seville after giving birth to their babies, who were not affected by the disease.

In addition, earlier this week there were a total of 28 pregnant women in hospital with Covid-19, of whom seven were seriously ill and were in intensive care units.

Most of those being treated in

hospital were not vaccinated, except for two who had received only one dose.

Currently in Andalucía 46.7 per cent of pregnant women already have the complete vaccination schedule, while two out of three pregnant women (66.7 per cent) already have at least one dose, regional government sources said.

Drop in centres locally today

In Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, drop in vaccination centres announced for this Friday are at; Benalmádena hospital in the morning; Cortijo Don Elías (Mijas Costa) until 6pm; Carpa de San Pedro (San Pedro Alcántara) until 7pm; Congress centre in Malaga city until 7pm. Any future dates and places have yet to be announced.



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Balancing the Chancellor's books... could your pensions be affected?

By Chris McCann, Senior Partner, Blevins Franks

The UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak, like his counterparts in Spain, has a difficult balancing act to find ways of raising revenue while keeping public support strong for the government. And pensions and property are being brought into sharp focus in the media when it comes to the options he has available.

With the pandemic having caused governments to provide huge financial support to keep their economies afloat, they now need to raise money over the coming years to pay what effectively is massive government debt – and taxation is one of the most obvious routes.

Changes that may be made by the Spanish government could over time make tax-efficient investing trickier and capital taxes more encompassing. So careful planning with expert advice becomes even more important now to legitimately avoid paying any more tax than you have to.

Additionally, if you have a pension fund or UK assets (such as property) they could be adversely hit by changes the UK government may bring in to start repaying its pandemic debts.

Pensions 'triple lock'

In terms of pensions, there has been much press speculation that the Chancellor may tinker with the 'triple lock'. The UK state pension increases each year in line with inflation, increasing average wages, or 2.5% – whichever is highest. His remarks about wanting to see 'fairness for pensioners and taxpayers' has caused some to see this as an option being seriously examined.

UK expatriates in places like Australia and Canada no longer benefit from the triple lock as their state pension is frozen. The UK Department for Work and Pensions confirmed the government will still uprate the UK state pension paid to EU residents until March 2023 – but we don't know what will happen after that.

Lifetime allowance

For those with established pension funds built over their working life, of equal concern may be the speculation that the lifetime allowance, which was cut several times, may be further reduced. This would bring many more people and their pensions (final

salary or money purchase) into the higher taxation regime.

The lifetime allowance – currently £1,073,100 – is the maximum amount of tax-relieved pension savings that an individual can build up over their lifetime. Tax relief on any pension benefits taken over this limit is recovered by the application of a 25% charge if the excess is taken as a pension income or 55% for lump sums.

Although this allowance normally rises in line with inflation, in March the government announced it is frozen for the next five years. And recent press speculation suggests that one option being considered is potentially cutting it to £800,000 or £900,000.

Do you know how much your pension fund is valued at? It may be worth checking.

UK pensions and Spanish wealth tax

British expatriates living in Spain also need to be aware of a 2019 local ruling which may mean their UK pension is subject to wealth tax post Brexit.

Pension plans are generally listed as one of the assets exempt from wealth tax. However, although the current wording of wealth tax law does not distinguish between Spanish and foreign pension/EU and non-EU plans, a ruling by Spain's Directorate-General for Tax (DGT) concluded that **non-EU pension plans do not qualify for the wealth tax exemption.**

Binding ruling V1049-19 of May 16, 2019 states that: "the consolidated rights and economic rights of pension plans established in non-EU Members States may not benefit from the exemption".

If you have a pension plan in the UK, you need to consider your options as they are fully subject to wealth tax from the point at which the member can take benefits (currently age 55 for UK pensions).

You essentially have a choice between retaining your UK pension and potentially having to defend the pension plan with the Spanish tax authorities, or transferring your funds into a Spanish or EU pension plan, such as an EU based Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme (QROPS).

The UK's 25% Overseas Transfer Charge

And with the UK's Overseas Transfer Charge not having been extended yet – enabling pension transfers to be made within the EU without the penal 25% tax being applied as it would outside the EU – maybe now is a good time to review your position.

Nobody can know what the Chancellor will do until he announces it, but waiting for an official announcement may mean you miss the opportunity to take action under the current rules.

If you haven't reviewed your financial affairs recently with your adviser, now may be an excellent time to do so, and to establish what options and solutions are available here for you.

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.

With so many options for your UK pension funds, which is best for you?

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

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Filling up your tank can cost up to 15 euros more depending on where you go locally

The price of fuel in Malaga province has shot up around 20% over the last year but money can still be saved with some planning

FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ



MALAGA. Both the price of electricity and fuel have gone crazy in the last few months. To get around the rise in your energy bill, the only alternative is to try to use power in off-peak periods. But in terms of filling up at the pump, not much can be done to get around the 20% increase since August 2020. A tank of fuel now costs some 13 euros more on average than a year ago for unleaded 95 (79.6 euros versus 66.23) and 11 more on diesel (71.4 vs. 60.7).

However, there are ways to lessen the impact on your wallet by searching out the cheapest petrol stations - local ones of course so as not to spend more getting there than you would be saving.

If we take a typical tank with a 55 litre capacity - the average for a family car - you could be saving from 12 euros (unleaded 95 or diesel, the most common) to 15 euros (diésel A+) depending on where you pull up in Malaga province including the Costa del Sol. Generally speaking, the lowest-cost self-service stations, regionally based firms and those alongside the big supermarkets are the cheapest.

According to the daily report from the Ministry for Ecological Transition, which looks at 286 petrol stations in Malaga province, the cheapest unleaded 95 on Wednesday 25 August was at three stations in inland Antequera (Petroprix, Plenoil and ASC Carburantes) at 1.297 euros per litre. This is somewhat below the



Filling up can mean savings or more costs depending where you choose. BLANCA SAENZ DEL CASTILLO

average in the province of 1.447 and the 1.514 being charged on the A-7 at Calahonda on Mijas Costa (Cepsa), which was the highest in the area, followed by 1.509 nearby at Shell in Cabopino (Marbella). Using these prices, the extra spend is 11.93 euros (83.27 and 71.33 euros, respectively).

Diesel

It's a pretty similar situation in the case of 'gasóleo A' (the most popular type of diesel). The best option for drivers is, once again, going to Antequera, where a litre was at 1.147 euros at Plenoil and ASC filling stations. On the other hand, it was the same situation with the dearest on Mijas Costa (1.359) and Marbella (1.354). This translates into a maximum difference of 11.66 euros to fill up (63.08 against 74.74 euros). The average price in the province for

PRICE RISES

1.447 €/l

is the average price of unleaded 95 in Malaga province, which is 20% more than a year ago (1.204 euros) and 21% more than when prices started going up in November last year, according to Spanish government data.

1.298 €/l

is the average price for 'gasóleo A' diesel in the province versus 1.092 in August 2020 (+18,8%) and 1.0652 last November (+21,8%).

this diesel is 1.298 euros per litre, 18.8% more than a year ago.

In the case of unleaded 98, the average in Malaga province is 1.6 euros per litre, versus 1.35 a year ago (+17.8%). The cheapest for this on Wednesday this week was the Galp station on the industrial estate in Marbella (1.42 euros a litre), which, interestingly, was the municipality with the highest, once again at Cabopino (1.49).

The biggest differences are on 'diésel A' or Premium, where to fill an average car, the difference is 15.4 euros comparing 1.59 euros/litre (63.74 euros) at Las Palmeras filling station on Guadalhorce industrial estate in Malaga with the 1.439 (79.14) of Cepsa in Calahonda or Galp in Nueva Andalucía.

Ministry fuel price map website (in Spanish):
www.geoportalgasolineras.es

Forecasters predict highs of up to 35 degrees in the province

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MALAGA. Localised showers and storms could affect large swathes of the south, east and central areas of the Spanish mainland this Thursday (26 August) and in some parts they could be very strong, Spain's State Meteorological Agency (Aemet), has warned.

The recent instability in the weather is expected to continue and showers could threaten the extreme south of the Andalucía region, the Strait of Gibraltar and Melilla, although in these areas the instability will gradually subside.

Looking ahead to this weekend, Aemet expects a change in the weather, with maximums of up to 37 degrees being forecast in some areas.

The national weather agency spokesman, Rubén del Campo, predicts that the weekend will be hot again although on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (27, 28 and 29 August) the possibility of stormy showers will persist - with the highest probability being in mountain areas.

In Malaga

In Malaga, minimums of between 25-26 degrees are expected and highs of between 32 degrees and 35 expected for Saturday, although the local terral wind could make a reappearance - even if only for a short time.

"This coming Saturday there is a high probability that we will have terral in the usual areas of Malaga province, but it is not expected to last more than a day and a half, with strong gusts from the west on Saturday along the Malaga coastline," says José Luis Escudero on his SUR weather.

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Teenager dies after electric scooter accident in Mijas

Police are combing the area for CCTV cameras to see if there was any other vehicle involved in the incident

JUAN CANO / ÁLVARO FRÍAS

MALAGA. A young man has died at the Hospital Costa del Sol in Marbella after suffering a fall from an electric scooter in Mijas Costa. Local Police are now investigating the circumstances of the incident to clarify if it was an accidental fall or if there was another vehicle involved.

It happened at around 4.30pm on Sunday, 15 August, on Calle Adarves in the Riviera del Sol-Calahonda area.

The 112 Andalucía emergency control centre received a call to say that a young man had been injured after falling from an electric scooter.

The victim was rushed to the Costa del Sol hospital and admitted with a broken collarbone and two broken ribs. He also suffered a blow to the head that caused two blood clots, which needed operating on, and he was put into an induced coma.

After the first operation, the doctors detected that the young



An electric scooter similar to the one involved. SUR (FILE PHOTO)

man had mobility problems on the right side of the body, so they operated on him again. Apparently, the operation went well but last Friday he passed away in the hospital.

Mijas Local Police officers have taken over the investigation to clarify the circumstances of the accident. It will focus on determining if the fall was acci-

dental or if there was another vehicle involved.

Police are scouring the area in search of security cameras that could have captured the incident.

It is reported that the young man had been using his electric scooter for more than a year and he was working to get his motorcycle licence.

British man on holiday dies while crossing the A-7 in Puerto Banús

Á. FRÍAS / F. TORRES

MALAGA. A 20-year-old British man on holiday died early on Monday morning after being hit while crossing the main A-7 coast road on foot. The DGT highways authority said the incident happened at 2am, when the emergency services were alerted to the accident on the busy road at kilometre 173 in Puerto Banús.

Witnesses said there was a young man lying in the road with a serious head injury. Parts of this stretch of the A-7 have had extra barriers put in in the past to encourage people to use the underpasses after other accidents.

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Ferrari driver clocked doing more than 240km/h on the Costa del Sol

After being spotted 'driving recklessly' in Marbella he was eventually stopped near Torremolinos and told police he was running late for a flight

A. FRÍAS / F. TORRES

MALAGA. A Ferrari driver who was caught speeding along the Costa del Sol at more than 240km/h told police, who eventually pulled him over, that he was running late to catch a flight at Malaga Airport.

The sports car was first spotted being 'driven recklessly' on the AP-7 toll motorway near Marbella by traffic officers and cameras onboard a Pegasus helicopter, operated by the DGT highways authority.

It happened on the morning of 13 August and, according to sources, the driver was making constant lane changes to overtake the vehicles in his path, even going so far as to use the hard shoulder to avoid other cars.

The traffic helicopter flew above the Ferrari and began recording images, as well as taking measurements to check its speed which peaked at 270 km/h – although it averaged 241 kilometres per hour in an area limited to 120.

The Pegasus aircraft followed the Ferrari for several kilometres and, after alerting officers on the ground, it was eventually stopped by a Guardia Civil patrol on the A-7 road near Torremolinos.

The driver, a Dutch man driving the Belgian-registered Ferrari, said he was rushing because he was running late to catch a flight at Malaga Airport. The man was detained and will now face road safety charges.



The waterspout captured on the Costa del Sol. @CARDOAMARTA

Spectacular waterspout snapped on Nerja's coastline

ALMUDENA NOGUÉS. Holiday-makers and residents in Nerja were treated to the spectacular sight of a waterspout over the Mediterranean on Wednesday morning. It was around 10am when the towering flume made an appearance in the Arquía sky.

The national met office (Ae-

met) confirmed the phenomenon on its Singular Atmospheric Observations Notification System (Sinobas) as images were widely shared by users on social networks.

One of them @Storm_Malaga said the waterspout was spotted on the road down to Playa de Maro at around 10am. No rain was falling at the time although it had in the earlier hours. The twister lasted about 20 minutes.

According to Aemet, waterspouts are tornadoes over water. "They consist of vortices or eddies frequently connected to cumuliform clouds."



Onboard the DGT's eye-in-the-sky Pegasus helicopter. SUR (FILE PHOTO)

MARIPOSA ENERGÍA

Switching with Mariposa Energía is incredibly easy

There is no need for any new cables or equipment or for any work to be done whatsoever

MARBELLA

SUR. Many households across Spain have found themselves hit with rocketing electricity bills this summer, due to the change in how electricity is charged for.

Back in June, by Royal Decree, new tariffs came into force which, among other changes, have made the use of electricity on weekdays between the hours of 10am to 2pm and 6pm to 10pm more expensive, a move which has hit some residents hard.

While steps can be taken to use electricity outside of these peak hours, it's not always possible, particularly for families, homeworkers and those who are retired, who have no option but to consume electricity in their homes during the day.

However, help is at hand as green energy supplier, Mariposa Energía is offering cheaper electricity tariffs to households and businesses alike and are confident they can reduce consumers' bills.

Switching with Mariposa Energía is incredibly easy. There is no need for any new cables or equipment or for any work to be done whatsoever. The switch of energy supplier is simply made and the new cheaper, greener electricity is provided. Consumers only notice the change has occurred when they start to receive cheaper bills.

Not only is the electricity cheaper, it is also 100% green, coming exclusively from Spanish wind farms, which allows con-



The Mariposa Energía Team.SUR

sumers to reduce their carbon footprints and 'do their bit' for the environment, while saving money at the same time.

Martin Tye, Mariposa Energía CEO, said: "It's been a difficult few years financially for many residents in Spain and we know that the recent changes are putting even more financial strain on many households.

"We would urge consumers to get in touch and find out how much they could save. We've been helping residents and bu-

sinesses reduce their electricity bills across the country for nearly two years now and we're confident we can help many more."

Mariposa Energía offers a free, no obligation review in which they will calculate the savings that can be made, based on a recent energy bill and will present the findings prior to any decision to switch supplier.

What's more the friendly team pride themselves on excellent customer service and electricity bills that are clear and easy-to-

understand. There is a customer support team on hand (who answer the phone!) providing assistance in consumers' native languages.

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To get a quote or to find out more, contact the team today on +34 951 120 830, by email at info@mariposaenergia.es or visit the website: www.mariposaenergia.es

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'We believe in physical shops and have no immediate plans to sell online'

Carlos Inacio Director of Primark in Spain and Portugal

The Irish low-cost fashion giant is still committed 100% to its offline model as it opens its new store in Marbella's La Cañada

NURIA TRIGUERO



MALAGA. He is not yet 40 (his 39th birthday is coming up) but Carlos Inacio, who is from Lisbon, is in charge of the 62 Primark stores on the Iberian peninsula. After a meteoric career with the Irish company, where he began as a store manager in 2009 after working for H&M and Inditex, two years ago he was made director in Spain and Portugal. He has had to deal with the effects of the pandemic, especially as Primark does not sell online. Despite this, the firm is proceeding with its expansion plan in Spain, which includes a new store in La Cañada shopping centre in Marbella, which opened this week.

–While your rivals are closing stores, you are opening new ones. Did you not modify your expansion plans as a result of the pandemic?

–We opened our first store in Spain in 2006 and we have been growing year by year. The plan is to continue doing that, because Spain is one of the most important markets for the company. We believe in real shops, not online shopping. Between now and 2023 we will have seven new stores: we have just opened Madrid, Bilbao and Marbella, and the others will be in San Fernando, Gerona, Vigo and another in Madrid. We want to continue developing our business in Spain, we are very clear about that. **–It is interesting that you don't have an online store, when oth-**



Carlos Inacio of Primark for Spain and Portugal in the new La Cañada store in Marbella this week. **JOSELE**

ers in the fashion sector have expanded their e-commerce.

–For us as a company, all our decisions have to be sustainable. This business has been going for 51 years and we never take any decision which could jeopardise the good work we have put in so far, just because of a trend. Online shopping is a reality which cannot be ignored, and the pandemic has accelerated it, but we are committed to physical shopping, which we believe is something that is here to stay. In fact, there are some purely online operators who are now opening shops, like Amazon and Aliexpress.

–Has your business model, based

100% on actual shops, made you more vulnerable to the crisis caused by the pandemic?

–The pandemic has greatly affected us, of course. Imagine: we had no cash flow. When that awful day arrived when they told us we were going to have to close for 15 days, which then turned out to be three months, my thoughts were not about closing the stores, because that had been planned since the February; I was thinking about how and when we were going to open them again. I wasn't just worried about the responsibility of generating cash flow for the company, but about the whole team of people at Primark. Around 7,000

people suddenly had to be furloughed.

–So we cannot expect Primark to sell online any time soon?

–The company has decided to do it when the time is right, and at the moment there is no date in mind. We are studying different business models. Maybe the one that would suit us best is click and collect. We do, however, have a very strong presence on social media, with more than 20 million followers, nine million on Instagram. That helped us to keep in touch with customers during lockdown.

–To what extent are people buying again? Has there been the so-called champagne effect that eve-

ryone was hoping for?

–I was asked about that when the lockdown ended and I said that the next three years are likely to be very difficult. Sales have improved gradually, but are still nothing like they were. The champagne effect? It depends. Some stores have been busier than others, depending on the restrictions and tourism. The shop in Fuengirola, for example, relies strongly on tourism and there are practically no tourists at present. The tax-free transactions have fallen by about 80 per cent. And things are still not stable: we still don't know what is going to happen this winter.

–The store in Marbella is your third in the province. Is that it, or are you planning to open more here?

–We're not ruling out opening more, because there is a margin here. In Andalucía we have 12 stores, and with San Fernando that will be 13. It is the region with the most stores, and Malaga province has the third highest number after Madrid and Barcelona.

–The production model and consumption of low-cost fashion has been criticised because of its effects on the environment. Is it possible to combine fast fashion with sustainability?

–Is a company that charges 20 euros for a tee-shirt more responsible than one that charges five? Why should what a company does be judged by the price of its product? For me, low cost doesn't mean low values. Our way of thinking is that fashion needs to be accessible and also responsible in terms of the environment and people.

I would like to tell you everything we do in that sense. A year and a half ago we launched our A Better Future project, based on three factors: to continue developing our organic cotton collection, reduce single-use plastics and promote recycled fabrics. The map of our suppliers is open: on our website you can see where our products are made and who makes them, and we carry out more than 3,000 audits a year in our production countries to ensure that things are being done properly. Those measures are in place. But we are not going to stop offering the best possible prices. People shouldn't have to pay more for sustainable fashion, that wouldn't be fair.



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Bank charges keep on rising and some customers now pay 240 euros a year just to have an account

The biggest high-street names in Spain have also tightened their special conditions for clients who want to be exempt from maintenance charges

NURIA TRIGUERO



MALAGA. Some banks are charging their customers up to 240 euros a year - in other words 20 euros a month - just for having an account with them. The commissions for the most basic financial services keep going up and the conditions demanded by some banks to exempt their clients from these charges are increasingly severe. This is the way the banking sector has decided to increase its own income in a scenario of negative interest rates and it is determined to squeeze the most out of it.

In the first six months of this year all the big banks increased their earnings from commissions, as they themselves reveal in their results. The five biggest banks in the country alone earned more than 10 billion euros just through charges and commissions.

In the case of Malaga-based Unicaja Banco (which after finalising its merger with Liberbank has replaced Bankinter as the fifth biggest in the country), between January and June this year it earned 10.6 per cent more from commissions than in the same period last year.

This increased income from commissions is not coincidental, but the result of an active policy of charging more and imposing conditions which are difficult to fulfil. There is a double objective to this policy: they want to get more of their most loyal customers to contract financial products such as insurance, pension plans and investment funds, and they want to earn more from customers who merely have an account with them.

Numerous complaints

This strategy of increasing commissions and making it harder for clients to be exempt from them has resulted in increased conflict between the banks and consumers. According to the Bank of Spain, the number of complaints from customers about current accounts rose last year by 49.4 per cent to 4,153. Most of the complaints were about the higher charges: the



It has become more expensive to run a bank account recently. **sur**

number almost doubled, to 2,134. Complaints about bank commissions now account for ten per cent of the total.

Santander

At the end of last year the leading Spanish bank, Santander, began to charge 240 euros a year instead of 144 (in other words, 66.7 per cent more), just for maintaining its One account. That charge applies to clients who do not fulfil the requirements for exemption: having a salary or pension of at least 600 euros a month paid into their account, three direct debits every three months and paying with a card six times in three months. If a client does not fulfil any of those three requirements, they will pay 240 euros a year. If they only fulfil the first one, they will pay 120 euros and if they fulfil the first one and one of the others they won't pay any account maintenance charges at all.

CaixaBank

CaixaBank is the other bank at the top of the list of maintenance charges for account holders. Since October 2020 it has been charging 240 euros a year. If customers don't want to pay charges, they have to fulfil several requirements: receive a salary of at least 600 euros a month or a pension of 300 euros paid directly into

their account, or have more than 20,000 euros in investment funds, savings or pensions plans, as well as paying three bills through the account or making three purchases with their card every three months. If they only have their salary or pension paid in, and no other products, the bank charges 60 euros a year.

BBVA

In June, BBVA also tightened its conditions for those who want to avoid maintenance charges. The group announced that it would be charging 160 euros a year for clients who did not meet its conditions, justifying the decision by "the economic situation following the health crisis, and the evolution of the financial markets". To avoid paying commissions,

customers have to fulfil three criteria: income paid in (salary of more than 800 euros, pension or benefit of more than 300 euros, or periodic credits of more than 800 euros a month), payments through the account (five bills in four months or seven credit card purchases in four months) and products (loan, mortgage, insurance, investment funds, savings plans or insured incomes, or they payments of 200 euros by card in four months).

Sabadell

Sabadell, in the meantime, increased its commissions for account maintenance twice last year, the first to 60 euros a year and the second to 120. To avoid having to pay these, clients have to take out some type of insur-

ance or loan or have at least 10,000 euros in investment funds with the bank, as well as having income of at least 700 euros a month paid directly into their account.

Unicaja Banco

In March, Unicaja Banco told its customers that charges were going up for those who did not fulfil the requirements of its Zero Commission Plan: a salary, pension or unemployment payment of 600 euros or more paid directly into the account, or regular credits of at least 7,200 euros a year; pay at least 1,200 euros a year by credit card or a minimum of two operations a month and have an insurance policy through the bank, or have a minimum balance of 6,000 euros in the account or in other products (investment funds, pension plans or savings). Only those who fulfil all these requirements will be exempt from commissions. Those who only fulfil some of them will pay 60 euros a year and those who don't fulfil any of them will have to pay 120 euros.

In addition to the cost involved in having a simple bank account there is commission for other basic services such as a debit card. Most banks have stopped offering these free of charge, unless the client fulfils the conditions listed above.

"This is a breeding ground for increased financial exclusion"

For Asufin, the Association of Financial Users, this generalised policy of increasing commissions is "creating a breeding ground for increased financial exclusion, especially for the most vulnerable consumers, because those customers who don't have enough income

are having to pay more for having a bank account and a credit card".

In addition there is another commission which has also gone up, which is the charge for being overdrawn. Although the rates of interest have remained the same, some banks which did not charge a minimum amount have now begun to do so, and the practice has become more widespread as a result.



THE SPECTRUM IFA GROUP

PLANNING YOUR RETIREMENT TO SPAIN?

That (residencia) has all changed since becoming non EU citizens; the whole procedure is now more complicated

MARBELLA

Jeremy Ferguson. For anyone now considering a full time move to Spain from the UK, the whole procedure is significantly different to what we were all used to before the end of last year pre-Brexit.

Most people I meet have taken holidays here for many years, coming more and more frequently as they eased towards retirement. With children having left home, and the ties of having to come during school holidays removed, trips became easier and easier, and more and more frequent. Eventually, as is so typical, people decide to turn their lives around by taking the plunge and making Spain their main home.

Very often, the first thing to do is put your UK home on the market, hopefully selling it quickly, and using these funds to buy your home in Spain. If this can be found for less, which makes perfect sense if you are downsizing, then realising some capital to put aside for a rainy day is a comforting feeling. Pension income from private and state pensions will now be the source of your income, as well as maybe using your savings to create any extra income needed, or just to be there in the case of any unexpected expense (or a luxury cruise now and again!).

Before we left the EU, once you had done all of the aforementioned and taken the plunge to move here, you would apply for your Residencia, change your driving licence, and register at the town hall and with the healthcare system etc.

That has all changed since becoming non EU citizens; the whole procedure is now more complicated. First, you need to make an application for a non lucrative visa

at the Spanish embassy in the UK, making sure you have all of the relevant translated documentation, as well as satisfying the much stricter financial requirements. If you pass that 'test' you will be through the first stage of settling here. On arrival, you will then need to apply for your TIE card (Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero). Once granted it means you can stay here, but this will need to be extended until such time as permanent residency is eventually obtained. You will also need to make sure you have the necessary private medical insurance to support your application.

Selling your primary residence in the UK does not create any tax charge when you are tax resident there. But a really important point is to pay particular attention to when the move finally takes place, as there can be serious tax consequences if your timing is wrong. Very often (particularly at the moment with the UK housing market being so buoyant) planning your move may

involve renting for a while in the UK if your house sale happens quickly before you come here, to make sure the timings are correct with regard to taxes here. It is important to note that the tax year in Spain is the calendar year.

As an example, if you sold your house in February of next year, moving here in March, then tax will be due in Spain on the profits of the sale as you would be deemed a Spanish tax resident in the year it was sold (because you spent greater than 183 days here). If you also took your 25% pension commencement lump sum in the same year, this again would be taxed here, as well as any profits taken by selling your UK ISAs.

However, with a bit of careful planning, if you delayed your move here until October (selling the house in February but opting to rent in the UK during the 'planning' period), all of these events would have happened in a year when you were not deemed tax resident here, so no tax would be applied under either the UK regime (as all of the 'events' are non taxable there), or the Spanish regime, as you wouldn't be deemed tax resident in 2021 due to the minimal time spent here.

As you can imagine, the whole process is daunting and needs careful planning. My favourite expression to describe this to clients



Jeremy Ferguson, SUR

is it like "trying to eat an elephant, something that can only be done a mouthful at a time!"

Most of my days at the moment are being spent helping people deal with all of the elements of making their move to Spain as least stressful and tax efficient as possible, so if you are thinking of moving to Spain from the UK to retire, maybe a quick chat will help you understand the things you need to consider, and how best to plan them.

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Sánchez draws praise from the EU for the Afghan evacuation

The two US bases in Andalucía will be the temporary home for collaborators of the Americans in Afghanistan

SUR

MADRID. The Spanish government has won praise and support from the EU for its handling of the rescue operation so far from Afghanistan.

Last Saturday Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez was joined at the Torrejón de Ardoz airbase outside Madrid by the presidents of the European Commission and European Council, Ursula Von der Leyen and Charles Michel. The base is being used as a European hub for processing Afghan refugees.

Despite initial criticism from the opposition over the PM's response to getting Spaniards and people that had supported Spain out of Afghanistan, the EU representatives were full of praise for Madrid's support.

"In times of need, Spain has shown humanity, and Spain has proven a great sense of solidarity," said Ursula Von der Leyen.

Agreement with Biden

The American government has also shown its support for Spain's evacuation activity. On Saturday Sánchez spoke by phone to the US president, Joe Biden. Sánchez had previously been criticised for lack of contact with Biden since the new president came to power.

The two leaders agreed to use the two military bases that America has in Andalucía, at Morón de la Frontera, in Seville province, and Rota, near Cadiz, to tempo-



Sánchez (2nd right) with Michel (1st right) and Von der Leyen (2nd left). EFE

Malaga prepares to welcome a family evacuated from Kabul

An Afghan family will be welcomed to Malaga by the Red Cross after being evacuated from Kabul. They are just a handful of the thousands trying to leave the country after the advance of the Taliban in response to the withdrawal of Western troops. The family group is made up of seven people who will be cared for by these NGO experts who have been working in similar situations for more than 25 years.

rarily house people who had supported the US in Afghanistan. Reports said that America planned to transfer up to 4,000 Afghan refugees to these two military bases, under the agreement, before they are transferred on to America or other countries.

In a sign that the opposition parties were now supporting Sánchez's initiatives, the president of the Andalusian regional government, Juan Moreno of the rival PP party, said, "the bases of Rota and Morón are essential in the shared objective of working together to save the lives."

Like the other western allies, Spain said earlier this week that they were up against the clock to evacuate people with no guarantee all would be got out in time.

THE EURO ZONE MARK NAYLER

Border control



In April this year, Spain's prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, revealed "Focus Africa", his flagship plan to reform infrastructure and education in Sub Saharan Africa over the next decade. The hope is that improved conditions in the region will reduce the flow of illegal migration to Spain, specifically to the Canary Islands and the North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the Mediterranean coast.

Despite its practical shortcomings, "Focus Africa" has theoretical appeal, because it seeks to solve a formidably difficult problem once and for all, rather than to just manage its effects. Paradoxically, though, this is also its biggest flaw: if the project ever launches - a huge "if", given the amount of resources required and the reluctance of Spain's private sector to invest in a notoriously corrupt region - it will take years, if not decades, to reduce migratory flows from Sub Saharan Africa to Spain. In the meantime, what's to be done about the crises in the Canaries, Ceuta and Melilla?

Events this week have raised that question once again. On Tuesday night, a group of over forty migrants attempted to swim around a fenced breakwater from a neighbouring Moroccan town into Ceuta, but were stopped by police. Earlier that day, a lone survivor was found lying next to two dead bodies on an overturned boat, 217 kilometres off the coast of Gran Canaria. The 30 year-old woman told rescuers that she'd left North Africa with

"about forty people", all of whom are now feared dead. As of the end of July this year, 7,531 migrants had arrived in the Canaries, more than double the amount during the first seven months of 2020.

The Spanish government has already started sending unaccompanied minors back from Ceuta, although human rights organisations have expressed concerns about the legality of these group deportations. Deportations have also been carried out from the Canaries, without having much impact on the number of migrants living in improvised camps or sleeping rough. In May this year - a month in which 10,000 migrants crossed from Morocco into Ceuta - Sánchez said that Spain's borders will be defended "under any circumstance and with all the necessary measures."

Sánchez adopted a rather different stance in June 2018, when he took in a rescue ship carrying 629 migrants that had been rejected by Italy and Malta.

That same month, the Socialist leader also announced his intention to restore free healthcare to all undocumented people arriving in Spain, in a reversal of cuts made by his Conservative predecessor, Mariano Rajoy.

Whereas previously Sánchez flung Spain open and welcomed migrants with open arms, he's now promising tighter border control and returning new arrivals to places they've risked their lives trying to escape. What, exactly, is the Socialist leader's stance on migration?

R.I.P.

GEORGE CHARLES HOFFMEIR

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Always in our hearts

Some 40,000 chickens killed in a fire at a poultry farm near Cuenca

J.M.L.

CUENCA. The Guardia Civil has opened an investigation into the causes of a fire that destroyed a poultry farm at Villanueva de la Jara in Cuenca province, central Spain, on Monday.

Some 40,000 chickens died of burns or fumes, reports said that day.

One whole building was destroyed and firefighters called to the scene managed to stop the flames spreading to neighbouring ones.

Second fire

By coincidence, this is the second fire at a chicken farm in the same village - with a population of just 2,300 - in the last few years. In summer 2017 another fire burned a building used for breeding chickens.

Fortunately, on that occasion, no birds were killed as the site was empty, although fire spread rapidly when straw on the floor was ignited.



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The Gorham's Cave complex is a World Heritage Site. **sur**

Fascinating news for ornithologists and history lovers this week

GIBRALTAR

A new study at the Gorham's Cave World Heritage Site shows that crag martins have been using the caverns since the Neanderthal period

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. Fascinating information was released by the Gibraltar National Museum this week which will be of interest to ornithologists and history lovers alike.

It announced that a new study at the Gorham's Cave complex, which is a World Heritage Site, has shown that crag martins wintering in Gibraltar show remarkable faithfulness to their roosting caves. It is the first time that such a high degree of faithfulness has been demonstrated in birds over suc-

cessive years.

Gibraltar has the largest known number of crag martins in the world; there were a record 12,000 of these birds last winter, representing 1-2 per cent of the entire European population.

In a thread on Twitter, the Museum explained that crag martins have used the caves at the Gorham's complex consistently since the Pleistocene period, when they shared them with the Neanderthals. The birds gather in the caves in their thousands for shelter on winter nights.

The study shows that not only do the same birds return to the same caves within and between years, but that the birds in the different caves differ in body condition, indicating that some of the caves provide better roosting sites than others.

The Museum believes that these differences in quality of caves could

have translated to other species that have used them in the past.

The findings shed light on the winter ecology of a bird with a very long association with Gibraltar, the Museum said, indicating that fidelity and assortment may have evolved over thousands of years, which enables experts to hypothesise about the relative value of the caves to fauna more generally.

They also illustrate the outstanding value of the Gorham's Cave complex as a site for original research on faunas past and present.

Gibraltar is a haven for birds, and the local Ornithology and Natural History Society (GONHS) says at least 316 different species have been seen there. The most emblematic breeding bird is the Barbary partridge, which is found nowhere else in mainland Europe. They are not easy to spot, but can sometimes be seen in the Nature Reserve.

Local rower to represent Britain at under-23 European Championships

D.B. Local rower Jack Prior has been confirmed as a member of the British team which will compete in the Under-23 European rowing championships in Kruszwica, Poland, next month. The U23 championship will take place on 4 and 5 September, amid strict precautions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.

This will be the fifth European under-23 championships and athletes from 30 countries will be competing to claim the European Champion title.

'Our Gibraltar' art and photography competition winners receive their prizes

D.B. The winners of the National Celebrations 'Our Gibraltar' art competition have now been announced. Karl Ullger has won the Ministry of Culture Award of £2,000 for his work *Shy Rock Horse Patio*, Leslie Gaduzo received the Our Gibraltar Art Award of £750 for *Magenta Skies* and Monica Popham was the winner of the Our Gibraltar Photography Award, also £750, for *Orange Blinds*. These and the other entries can be seen at the Fine Arts Gallery on weekdays until 24 September, from 10am to 2pm and 3pm to 6pm.

Catalan Bay. **sur**

Caleta hotel to be demolished next year and there are plans to replace it with a Hilton

D. BARTLETT The emblematic Caleta Hotel in Catalan Bay is to close on 1 January next year and will then be demolished. The hotel opened as the Caleta Palace in 1964 and has always been run as a family business, but the idea is now that it will be replaced with a Hilton Hotel with about twice the capacity.

If that plan goes ahead, the new hotel is expected to take about three years to complete.

Speaking to a local television channel, the director of the hotel, Bruno Callaghan, said he believes that, although this is a bittersweet situation, the new project will be wonderful news for Gibraltar because it will be the second internationally branded hotel on the Rock. The first was the Holiday Inn Express, which opened in 2018.

However, news of the Caleta's demolition was greeted with sadness and nostalgia in Gibraltar as many people have very happy memories of the hotel over the past 57 years.






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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

End of the big screen?

I wanted to share my opinion about something that is creating great uncertainty for me nowadays - the stagnation of cinema in recent years. Have digital platforms overtaken this great phenomenon? If we look backwards in time, we can see just how exciting the cinema was - that big screen release that you waited so long for, that smell of popcorn which wafted all over the place and the list of 'now showing' that you eagerly waited to be updated.

Maybe none of this has changed, right? What if it's us that have actually changed? In recent years, and with new technology, most people have at least one digital platform from which to choose numerous films or series, in a cost-effective, comfortable and contenting way. Why go to the cinema indeed?

From my point of view, it is incomparably and truly sad that this is happening - of course it is easier to watch a film in your living room but where is the sense of excitement in that? **CELIA GALINDO**

Taking its toll

I refer to your article (SUR in English, 20 August) about the high toll charges on the AP-7 Costa motorway. I could not agree more how ridiculous it is and laugh at Spanish politicians idle talk of green credentials while they watch tourists choke fumes from the overcrowded 'free' coastal main road.

Finding a traffic jam just

after La Cañada towards La Cala the other day, I was able to turn round in time to the AP-7 and leave at Calahonda - 4.80 euros for the privilege. On reaching Calahonda, the traffic was still stopped, so back on to the AP-7 to Fuen-girola - a further 4.80 euros.

I deplore this unofficial tax on the local economy - did anybody notice how some of the cheapest tolls in your list are around Madrid? Fancy that. **ALAN HUMPHRIES**

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I see no chips

Nowadays, people still tell supermarket cashiers when they'd like to pay by card, although it can't be long before it's those who want to use cash who will need to pre-state their intentions.

When we opened The Shakespeare six years ago, card payments were about 15-20% of the day's takings, now it's more like 50-60%. People wanting to use money in shops will soon have to make the fact clear to sales staff who will then, presumably, need to wheel out a big, old, dusty cash register from the back room and open it, all the while being careful not to unleash a plague of moths onto an unsuspecting neighbourhood.

It's not just cards either. Mobile phone transactions are on the up, as are wrist watch payments, although the latter do tend to make the customer look like

he's arm-wrestling with a mischievous, effeminate ghost.

All of this brings me to a rather disconcerting episode in The Shakespeare the other night.

Imagine one of those martial arts blokes chopping a brick in half and then try to picture him doing so in slow-motion. Now imagine he's dressed in jeans and a jacket rather than a white suit with black belt and that the 'brick' is, in fact, a credit card payment machine - this will give you a perfect mind image of how somebody settled their bill. That's right - he had a chip buried under the skin in the side of his hand. It's quite possible my face turned the colour of cold rice pudding as I witnessed all of this and matters weren't improved much by the robotic tone of his voice.

"I know, I'm a cyberman. It's the future," he muttered, looking straight through me with an unnerving thousand yard stare. At

this point, I think I may have gulped like a cartoon character confronting his Nemesis.

The next day I was giving an English class to some bright young things and I asked if any of them had seen anything like this before. They looked as horrified as I had been which, if nothing else, gives us hope for the future.

There are so many questions. Do you wake up one morning and decide that today would be a good day to get a chip fitted? Imagine the scene at your GP's surgery.

After you've had a look at my bunions, doctor, would you mind referring me to the chip-fitting surgeon. I have this uncontrollable urge to pay for things with my hand. Do you think they also offer a rail season ticket option?

No, sorry. Healthy progress is to be lauded but this is a step too far. Now then, I'm off for a swift pint or two - to be paid for in cash, naturally.

IDÍGORAS

SHE WOULD NEVER DO THAT



SUR in English

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ALEKK M. SAANDERS

Software in the sun - forty years of the PC in Spain

In August 1981, the first IBM PC, or rather the most influential personal computer of all time, was introduced. After just 12 months of development under the code name 'Chess', the Model 5150 was released. However, it paved the way for an entire industry, and that way lead directly to Europe, especially to Great Britain and Spain.

Not everyone knows that in the beginning of the '80s, Spain actively joined that new software era, and eventually became the second largest 8 bit computer entertainment software producer in Europe. Only the United Kingdom was more advanced - this fact will surprise anybody who still associ-

ates the Spain of the '80s with sunny resorts, tourist charters and sangría.

That technological process coincided with the Spanish transition from the Francoist dictatorship to democracy. The '80s were a very significant decade in Spain's history politically and creatively. Revolutionary spirits in the world's technology and Spain's democracy with artistic explosion helped the country to become a computer power with creative programmers. Unsurprisingly, the period from 1983 to 1992 is marked in Spanish history as 'edad de oro del software español' (the golden age of Spanish software).

In the year 1983, the first home personal

8 bit machines arrived in Spain, and in the same year the first Spanish company named 'Made in Spain' was founded. It was successful with Fred, commercialised in the United Kingdom as Roland on the Ropes, though only the Amstrad CPC version. The game character, Roland, was indeed a fruitful cooperation of the British business magnate and the founder of CEO of Amstrad Alan Sugar and the Spanish game designer Jose Luis Domínguez.

Made in Spain was successful in creativity but not in the distribution of their software products. So, the programmers and owners decided to concentrate solely on programming. Meanwhile, in 1986, they launched another company, Zigurat, which would be entirely dedicated to distribution. Eventually, all the titles by Made in Spain were marketed by Zigurat.

Additionally, in that period the Spanish software production was enhanced with the launch of Bugaboo, by PACO & PACO, the first Spanish video game. The Spanish Di-

amic Software, Topo Soft, Opera Soft were also known on the world's market.

However, the disappearance of the 8 bit technology and its replacement by the 16 bit machines lead to the end of 'The Golden Age'.

Nevertheless, Spain remains a place where software is still developed. As for computers, Spain indeed has its own computer brands. One of them is Primux, a Galician company, known for its desktops and laptops, designed in Spain though now manufactured abroad. Very light ultraportables but with spectacular features, Slimbooks are assembled and designed in Spain with Linux OS. Amongst others, Vant and Mountain deserve to be mentioned.

Malaga is also a part of software-Spain. The city hosts the headquarters of Kaiju Games, which for 20 years have been working on national and international titles for PC, consoles and mobiles. Fraxel Games and Altivasoft are also contributing to Malaga's fame for software.



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A cooler alternative in Portugal

When a hotel owner in one of the villages on the border between Malaga and Cadiz provinces told me that he closes everything in August because of hot weather and temperatures often soaring as high as 40C, I started looking for other locations to enjoy my holiday. It was logical to head north to find somewhere cooler and definitely with some mountains to enjoy peace and quiet.

Finally, my travels brought me to the rugged centre of Portugal, another country but with a landscape similar to Andalucía's, though more pleasant with much cooler temperatures.

On the road

Entering Portugal was actually unnoticeable. If you miss a humble Portugal sign along a quite road, you will only realise later, thanks to other signs and posters written in Portuguese. And of course my watch changed time, (our neighbours live like in Britain with GMT), and big black bull signs appearing from time to time at the roadside were suddenly substituted for huge black hens. The anticipated border check never came despite the Covid-19 restrictions and worsening situa-

Serra da Estrela Natural Park. Within a few hours of the Costa del Sol you can enjoy much lower summer temperatures and even low-priced accommodation and food in a mountain range with authentic and calming village life

tion this summer. Better than expected were some toll roads - the car seemed to be having its details scanned but without any charges being levied.

The signs indicated that Lisbon and Porto were not so far away but there was no need to go to the Atlantic coast. The idea was to find peace and harmony, and any coastal areas are, in August, full of people. The road was rising to the sky and stars were greeting me with their twinkling presence - soon I saw a sign welcoming me to Serra da Estrela Natural Park (Star Mountain Natural Park).

A British brand on the top

This park is notable for continental Portugal's highest peak (about 2,000m), Torre. The name comes courtesy of a tower. The observatory and landscape with ski slopes is reminiscent of the top of our Sierra Nevada, although the name Torre at first conjures up images of Torre del Mar and Torremolinos, which are often called just 'Torre'.

However, in comparison to the Costa del Sol resorts, Torre was almost bare - there were only about 40 cars parked with inter-

national plates - mostly from Luxembourg, Belgium, France and Germany.

In summer Torre is popular for those who want to trek, enjoy lakes and valleys and ravine-scarred countryside, or just have a nice lunch or visit a small mall containing a dozen shops selling plenty of leather products and other souvenirs and typical local produce.

Prices for local sheepskin boots are about 20 euros and for a woolly hat you will pay just five euros. A quite airy restaurant welcomes everyone who wants to try their local dishes. There are much more people in winter when its Vodafone Ski Resort opens. Incidentally, the ski resort got such a name in 2005, when the British mobile telecommunications company Vodafone started sponsoring the Portuguese winter resort and making improvements there.

On the road from the top of Torre you come to a small village named Sabugueiro, often considered the highest village as it is actually the nearest to the Torre peak. Sabugueiro is somewhat commercialised thanks to the ski resort. The main road that passes the village, with a population of fewer than 500, is



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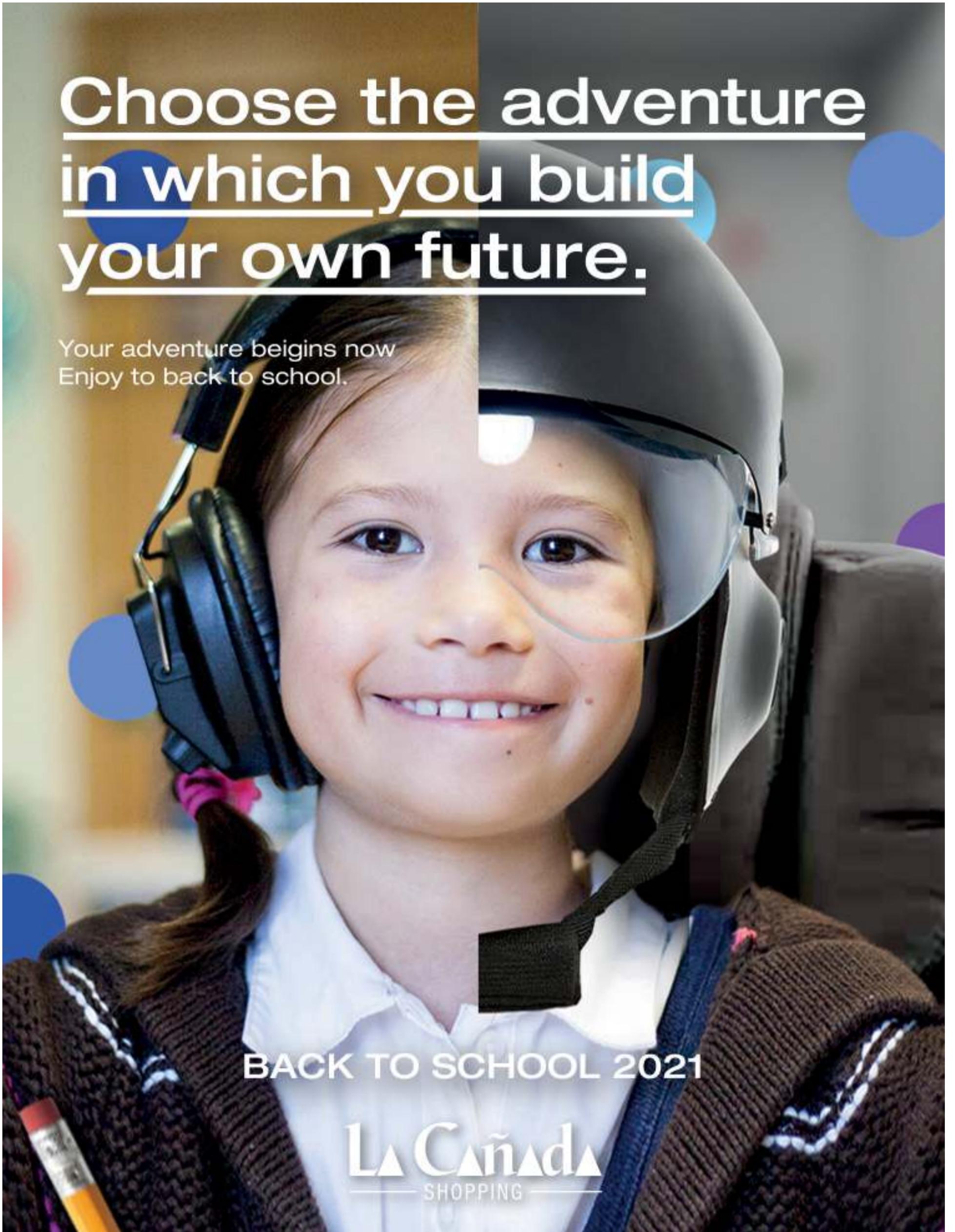


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► **2,000 m.** Torre is the highest peak in mainland Portugal.
A.M. SAANDERS

▼ **Tranquility.** View of a sunset from a rural house. A. M. S.



and a sandwich made with local goat cheese or ham.

Incidentally, local bread is something special in this region. Sabugueiro has even a community oven, a place full of generational history. Over the years, it was used by almost all the families of the parish to bake bread named Pão do Sabugueiro. Even today it is possible to watch many inhabitants who arrive there with the trays on their heads to bake the tasty bread. If you daren't bake your own, then pop out every morning around 9.30am to the street where the baker comes and offers his bread, buns and different sweets filled with typical cream for sale. For example, two croissants with egg cream cost 1.20 euros. There is also a bread museum in a neighbouring village as well.

People are much calmer and they impress you with inner shyness. Humble would be a word to describe the life of locals. To get even closer to the peace and quiet, I decided to experience local beauty and bathing spots. The area is covered with giant rocks and small lakes whose banks are adopted as inland beaches.

The water is quite cool and indeed similar to the water of the Alboran Sea of the Costa del Sol, though without the salt. Incidentally, water wells are everywhere. And local people still go to the wells to fill bottles with tasty water. It is actually bottled in local factories but it is not as famous as Lanjarón.

Rural tourism is also about animals. Here you can meet herds of goats and flocks of sheep everywhere. The most peculiar thing is the local shepherd dog. Sabugueiro is in fact known to be one of the main breeding sites of this famous canine, whose image is portrayed on many of the souvenirs. In the village you can find a dog shelter and even places where you can buy puppies. They are everywhere. Nevertheless it looks like they aren't used much to herd sheep - they guard the streets of the village, walking around or just lying in the middle of the road. Unsurprisingly, the doors of the houses are almost never locked.

Restrictions

Portugal made it mandatory this summer to show a vaccination certificate before hotel check-in, although only in some places were the QR codes actually scanned. It seems that the Portuguese are flexible.

Incidentally, to enter restaurants you are also required to show the certificate, though this is only at weekends. Other days there were no restrictions. At the same time, no fruit shops and even supermarkets told you to use gloves when selecting fruits. In the local, big supermarket the butcher selected meat with bare hands, and even some public wells are equipped with a hanging copper mug on a chain to share with anybody who wants to drink fresh water.

► lined by souvenir shops offering gastronomic specialties as well as clothes and shoes.

Additionally, there are five or six restaurants serving local food prepared as it is meant to be. It is important that all ingredients come from a farm and orchard. Goat stew with cabbage and boiled potatoes is typical. It is easy to work out what each dish is and they are reasonably priced. Local red wine, served at the table, will cost you four euros a bottle.

Rural tourism aims to enable everyone to have a more direct and genuine contact with agriculture and local traditions through home-based accommodation in a rural and family environment. Sabugueiro's guest houses offer well-equipped rooms with impressive kitchens. For example, Casas Da Ribeirinha are privately-owned stately manors that combine tradition and exclusivity with home comforts.

Everything is surrounded by beautifully designed gardens, vineyards, fruit orchards and woodlands. In the morning you will hear cockerels crowing and sometimes the bells of the local church. For bigger families or groups, the larger hostel Abrigo da Montanha is a good choice. The price in summer ranges from 30 to 45 euros with breakfast included.

Food, people and animals

The essence of living in a small village, where everybody knows each other, is to be closer to people by just sitting on the street with coffee and watching the local routine and practise Portuguese greetings. So, my advice is to have breakfast in a local cafeteria where you get very delicious coffee for 90 cents (they drink mostly strong coffee in small cups)



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Boating. Electric yachts: a sustainable revolution for healthier seas **P24**

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PUERTO BANÚS

ELECTRIC YACHTS: A REVOLUTION IN SUSTAINABLE BOATING

The technological evolution of watercraft has brought about yachts, catamarans, motorboats and jet skis in hybrid or zero-emission versions.

MARBELLA

PUERTO BANÚS. Like the automotive industry, the boating sector has for some years now been moving towards the development of alternatives to reduce CO2 emissions. Numerous shipyards around the world, mainly in Canada, the United States, Russia, Sweden and other Nordic countries, have been working on the manufacture of sustainable boats and now offer a wide range of hybrid and electric boats that are already being marketed in the main sailing destinations.

Few marinas in Spain encourage the promotion and distribution of sustainable boats, but demand is growing among both clients and yacht owners, as well as charter companies. One of the marinas that already operates sales and distribution of this type of boat is Puerto Banús, which has created the Volta Banús brand in collaboration with Volta Yachts to exclusively offer and market zero-emission boats for Andalusia, Morocco, Tunisia and adjacent areas.

Their range of zero-emission boats is so extensive that they currently offer yachts, catama-

rans, jet skis and motorboats that incorporate sustainable technology to enjoy sailing in electric mode, the advantages of which go beyond environmentally-friendly mobility.

One of the pioneering shipyards in the development of luxury electric yachts is Greenline Yachts. Their range offers a choice of hybrid, 100% electric or diesel options, with low-maintenance vessels that save time and money while providing maximum comfort and luxury in their interiors. They come with solar panels as standard to generate all the power they need and are available in sizes from 33ft (10.05m) to 48ft (14.63m).

Another type of smaller boat with avant-garde designs are, for example, those offered by

« One of the marinas that already operates sales and distribution of this type of boat is Puerto Banús, which has created the Volta Banús brand »

the Swedish shipyard X Shore, known worldwide as the Tesla of the nautical industry. In addition to creating 100% electric boats, they provide the best technology for navigation, have an exclusive and luxurious design, and are capable of reaching speeds of up to 40 knots (74 km/h).

The X Shore's battery provides a range of up to 100 miles (161 km), and two hours of sailing at a cruising speed of 25 knots (46 km/h).

But one of the great advantages of electric mobility in boats, as in cars, is that they have silent engines. The Silent Yachts are an example of this.

They are so-called because they are entirely silent boats, and they can travel more than 100 miles (161 km) a day without any type of fuel. Thanks to their SILENT system, the sun is their main source of energy for their movement in electric mode, as well as for all the domestic needs inside.



Greenline Yacht, available in dimensions from 33 feet (10.05 m) to 48 feet (14.63 m). PUERTO BANÚS



The Narke jet ski models are 4 meters long and have capacity for 3 passengers and includes a smart screen with navigation and weather functions. PUERTO BANÚS

« Their range offers a choice of hybrid, 100% electric or diesel options, with low-maintenance vessels that save time and money »

A Silent 64 has even crossed the Atlantic Ocean! Yes, these solar-powered catamarans are one of the main sustainable sailing options, as they have managed to cover more than 100,000 miles in full autonomy, proving their re-

liability and responsiveness all over the world and in all kinds of weather conditions.

But this new world of electric yachts and boats also has options for the more adventurous, who enjoy speed on the sea; the Narke jet ski is one such example. These jet skis are one of the greatest innovations made in the nautical world. Ultralight and resistant, these sustainable jet skis are made of carbon fibre and reach speeds of up to 30 knots with zero emissions.

Sustainable sailing is undoubtedly gaining more and more strength among sea lovers, and the features they offer in terms of autonomy, performance, speed and comfort are so interesting that their distribution points are already experiencing significant over-demand.

« Few marinas in Spain encourage the promotion and distribution of sustainable boats »



The Silent Yacht can travel more than 100 miles (161 km) a day without any type of fuel. PUERTO BANÚS



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A person on an electric bicycle in the centre of a city. SUR

Towards cleaner energy

Going green. There are different types of electric vehicles, but the type that is most likely to spring to mind is the battery version, known as a BEV

DEBBIE BARTLETT



Last month, the European Commission announced a plan for all new vehicles to be emission-free by 2035 and urged member states to install charging and fuelling points at regular intervals on main roads to facilitate the use of 'green' vehicles: it recommends charging stations every 60 kilometres for electric-powered vehicles and hydrogen fuelling points every 150 kilometres. The 2035 limit set by this ambitious new proposal is five years earlier than the deadline un-

der Spain's Climate Change Law "The fossil fuel economy has reached its limit. We want to leave the next generation a healthy planet, with good employment and a growth that does not damage our nature. The European Green Pact is our strategy for growth which advances towards a decarbonised economy. Europe was the first continent to declare itself climatically neutral by 2050 and now we are the first to put a road map on the table. Europe is basing its climate policies on innovation, investment

and social compensation," said European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen.

A ban on petrol and diesel cars 14 years from now sounds a rather daunting challenge, but the move towards alternative sources of power, including biodiesel, electricity, ethanol, hydrogen, natural gas and propane, has been progressing for some time. In fact in Bilbao at the moment Repsol, Bilbobus and Alsa are testing the use of HVO, an advanced, 100 per cent renewable biofuel produced from



▲ Motoring sector and others. More and more bicycles, motorcycles, cars and boats use electrical energy.

residues, on a fleet of 12 buses. They expect a reduction of 300 tonnes of CO2 during the four months the pilot scheme is in operation.

The range of alternatives can be somewhat bewildering to those who have filled their vehicles with petrol or diesel all their lives, but most people will be aware of hybrid and electric options by now.

These have also increased in popularity in recent years and they have a major role to play in the shift towards greener energy.

A hybrid car combines a conventional combustion engine, which is usually powered by petrol, and an electric motor. The engine charges the car's batteries, and the electric motor comes into play when extra power is needed, such as during acceleration. Many can run on electric-only power for short distances, and are therefore useful on local drives. There are also plug-in versions, where the battery can be charged from an electric outlet such as a public charge point or even from a socket in your garage.

There are different types of electric vehicles, but the type that is most likely to spring to mind is the battery version, known as a BEV. Instead of having a petrol or diesel engine, these have an electric motor powered by batteries, which, like the hybrids, can be charged at home or at a public charging point. The attraction of these is that they have zero emissions, but the distance they can travel between charges varies and depends on a

number of factors, including the size of the battery, and can range from 100 to 500 kilometres.

On your e-bike

Many people who are already cycling instead of using a car or public transport have welcomed the introduction of electric bicycles, or e-bikes, which have numerous advantages over the traditional type of bike and are also good for the environment because they are zero-emission. They are likely to encourage others to take to two wheels, as well, because they involve less physical effort than an ordinary bike, enable you to travel greater distances and climb steep hills. E-bikes still provide good exercise and unlike a car, e-bikes don't get stuck in traffic jams. E-cyclists can also access areas which would be impossible on a traditional bike.

Not just vehicles

It is important to note that vehicles are not the only culprits when it comes to atmospheric contamination, and there are some very positive moves in other sectors to move towards cleaner power alternatives.

In 2018, the International Maritime Organization committed the sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from ships by at least 50 per cent by 2050 and it encouraged the use of alternative fuels, fully electric and hybrid systems. There have been some major advances recently in the marine leisure industry, especially with the introduction of hybrid systems for jet skis and yachts.

A hybrid yacht can be propelled by two different energy sources, usually a combination of diesel and electric systems. They have the option of running on diesel, battery power or both at the same time. Not only do hybrid systems keep the atmosphere and the sea cleaner through fewer emissions, but they reduce fuel consumption and are quieter - a hybrid motor yacht is as silent as a sailing boat when it runs in zero-emission mode. This enhances the onboard experience and reduces external noise pollution. When in port, the fact that it is not necessary to run off full engine power is another advantage.

Another reason that hybrid systems are becoming popular is that electric propulsion alone has a much lower range than the traditional diesel system. However, there is another benefit to those who use hybrid and electric nautical systems, as they can venture into protected natural areas around the world where diesel-powered vessels are not permitted.

Amid the very justifiable doom and gloom about the climate crisis and future, it is encouraging to see how much progress has been made already and important to note that even more innovative solutions are on the way.

BIKE PHILOSOPHY

WE TALK TO. Javier García, one of Bike Philosophy's three directors

"We are all very positive about the future. Business is booming..."

"E-Bikes are for everyone, from six-year-olds to eighty-year-olds"



MARBELLA

Javier García is the one of the three directors of Bike Philosophy, a company with shops in Marbella, Vélez-Málaga and Málaga, specialised in all things to do with bikes and e-Bikes. Javier has been running the Marbella shop for fifteen years. Bike Philosophy is formed by three independent cycle businesses that joined forces in 2017 to become the largest cycle shop in Andalucía.

What made you combine the three stores into one company?

We decided to form Bike Philosophy because we were three people who had the same business model: expert advice, an extensive range of products and an excellent and dedicated after-sales department.

How have things been since the merger in 2017?

Although we merged in 2017, we didn't start trading as Bike Philosophy until 2018. In our first year, we had a turnover of approximately 2,500,000 Euros. We have had steady annual growth of 20% and we hope to end this year with a 40% increase on the previous year's sales. Lockdown in 2020 was difficult, but once we reopened in May things have just been crazy. People, I think, wanted to get out of the house and cycling has become even more popular. Fresh air and social distancing; what more could you ask for? We took the risk of buying in more stock, whilst other companies were selling off their products, and it has definitely paid off. There is such a demand for bicycles and e-Bikes that manufacturers are taking a lot longer to deliver, so the only way to

be able to offer clients what they want is by having a lot of bicycles in our shops. Our webpage: www.bikephilosophy.es has also made a huge difference. It gives us international visibility and means that clients can see our full product range from the comfort of their sofa; although most people still prefer to visit our stores for personal, expert advice and ideas. **What is the difference between Bike Philosophy and other more traditional bike shops?** I think all our competitors offer a good service and try to offer the best service to their clients. We are the biggest cycle-shop network in Andalucía, so we have a

team of more than ten mechanics and twelve sales people. We have more than 250 bikes in the shop and all the accessories our clients could need. We also rent out bikes for holiday-makers who want to visit the area. **Why have you invested so heavily in e-Bikes? Why are they so popular?** E-Bikes are for everyone, from six-year-olds to eighty-year-olds. They are so many advantages. You can decide on the level of exercise you want and adjust the e-Bike accordingly. An e-Bike has the same maintenance requirements as any other bike. With a 500w battery; you can have 50-60 kilometres of auto-

nomy and can decide how fast you want to go and how much "help" you need. Everyone wants to exercise, but a lot of people don't want to arrive to work, a party or someone's house covered in sweat. A lot of people, who had stopped cycling, have rediscovered the joy of the sport thanks to e-Bikes. **How do you see the next year?** We are all very positive about the future. Business is booming and we are delighted that we have so many happy clients. We live in a privileged area and our clients arrive with a smile on their face, a need to exercise outdoors and the desire to discover the beauty of our region.

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DENISE BUSH

GARDENING

Virginia sweetspire

Itea virginica is commonly called Virginia sweetspire and is a rounded deciduous shrub with graceful, arching branches. From late spring until autumn it produces fragrant racemes of white, star-shaped flowers and, as the temperatures drop, the leaves start to turn shades of red, yellow and maroon, providing all year round interest.

The genus Itea has around ten species of small trees and shrubs native to North America commonly called sweetspires. It usually is found growing in damp areas, alongside rivers and in boggy ground but Itea is moderately drought tolerant once it is established.

A layer of

thick mulch around the base will help to retain moisture during the drier months of the year.

For the best blooms and autumn colour, Itea virginica needs four to six hours of sunlight a day, preferably in a position which receives dappled shade or full shade from mid-day onwards.

It is not fussy about soil type and will even grow in saturated ground around a pond for example.

When mature it will form a large shrub approximately two metres by two metres.

The greenish-white, scented blooms attract bees and butterflies and will last around five weeks before forming light-tan coloured seed heads.

The seed is rarely viable but Itea virginica can be propagated from softwood cuttings dipped in a hormone rooting compound in spring, or by root division.

In damp ground it can become invasive as it sends out suckers which can eventually colonise large areas. This is rarely a problem in drier soils though and any unwanted plants growing from suckers can be simply cut off.

The suckering habit of Itea virginica makes it a popular plant for preventing soil erosion and stabilising slopes.

It is also used for informal hedging and some of the dwarf cultivars such as Shirley's Compact which is approximately 45 cm tall when mature and Merlot (around a metre tall), can be grown in large containers.



Itea virginica in autumn and in flower (inset). WIKIMEDIA / FLICKR

READERS' PHOTOS



SOLEDAD NAVAL ROLDÁN

Angels' trumpets

This photo of a Brugmansia, or angels' trumpets as it is commonly called, was sent in by Soledad Naval Roldán who has it growing on her balcony in Fuengirola.



CAROLINE SELLERS

Kapok tree

The genus Ceiba is native to tropical and subtropical areas of the Americas and West Africa and it seems to like it in Malaga too. It is commonly called the kapok tree as the cotton-like fluff from around the seeds was once used in life jackets and stuffing for soft toys. The photo was sent in by Caroline Sellers.

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

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

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



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WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

27 AUGUST 2001

ETA terrorists disguised as tourists detained in Benalmádena

Eneko Balanzategi and Izate Etxebamia were arrested after other members of the organisation talked

LAURENCE CRUMBIE

They were two of the highest profile arrests of the summer, yet the operation was conducted with such efficiency that hardly a soul at the San Fermín hotel in Benalmádena, Malaga, realised that history was being made right on their doorstep.

Around midday on 27 August 2001, some 20 members of the Guardia Civil detained two suspected ETA terrorists, Eneko Balanzategi and

Izate Etxebamia, as they were attempting to flee the hotel in their car.

Balanzategi, 25, and Etxebamia, 26, had arrived in Benalmádena a week earlier and been masquerading as holidaymakers, blending in with the other mostly Spanish guests enjoying a break on the Costa del Sol.

Although some of the hotel clients reported having seen the young couple around, very few witnessed the arrest.

And in the end, the most reliable testimony for the flocks of journalists who arrived later on the scene came from a young girl, who told them: "They were handcuffed and the police took them away. A policeman told me that they had stolen items in one of the



A bomb went off in Benalmádena port 7 years later, in 2008. REUTERS

hotel rooms and were being taken away for that."

Rumour and confusion followed, spawned by the uncertain circumstances.

Juan Fraile, then-President of the Diputación de Malaga, even said he had information suggesting that Balanzategi and Etxebamia were connected to an attempted car bombing the previous summer at Malaga

airport.

However, police sources later stated that the fingerprints of the detainees did not match, casting doubt over the politician's theory.

Upon arrest, Balanzategi and Etxebamia were accused of collaboration and belonging to an armed gang, namely 'comando Barcelona', one of the most active ETA groups in history. Key

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Terrorista | Terrorist |
| Arresto | Arrest |
| Verano | Summer |
| Operación | Operation |
| Detenido | Detained |
| Mediodía | Midday |
| Sospechoso | Suspected |
| Periodista | Journalist |
| Cliente | Client/Customer |
| Pareja | Couple |
| Esposado | Handcuffed |
| Policía | Police |
| Habitación | Room |
| Rumor | Rumour |
| Coche bomba | Car bomb |
| Aeropuerto | Airport |
| Huella dactilar | Fingerprint |
| Herido | Injured |

members of commando Barcelona had been detained just three days previously, catalysing a series of 12 arrests in a fortnight.

Unfortunately, this did not signal the end of ETA, which went on to carry out one of its most devastating attacks – a car bomb in Madrid, on 6 November 2001, that left 95 injured.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

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EXHIBITIONS**Udo Burkhardt**

RONDA. Until 30 October. *Cafe Blanco y Negro, C/Pozo.*

An exhibition by German artist Udo Berkhardt.

Collective exhibition

GAUCÍN. Until 31 August, *Town Hall, C/Convento.*

Sixteen artists are currently exhibiting their work, which includes painting, sculpture, photography, ceramics and prints.

Studio exhibition

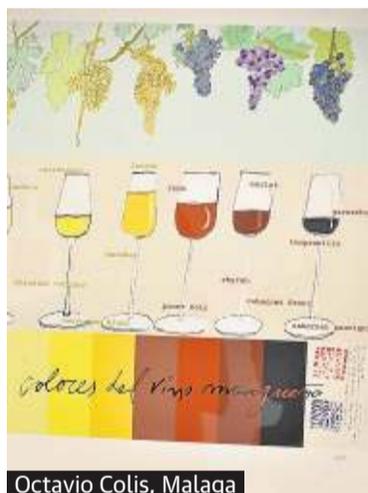
GAUCÍN. Until 31 August, *Saturdays and Sundays. La Huerta, C/Convento.*

Three artists, Silvia Franco, Christine Spencer Green and Jennifer Waterhouse are displaying their works in their studios. Works include painting, sculpture and prints.

Indalecio Pérez

ESTEPONA. Until 28 August. *Casa de Las Tejerinas, Plaza de las Flores.*

Exhibition of sculptures by artist Indalecio Pérez entitled Fragmentos.



Octavio Colis, Malaga

Sholeh Abghari Gallery

MARBELLA. Until 31 August. *Sholeh Abghari Gallery, Avda Ricardo Soriano, 72A.*

The art gallery is exhibiting a Summer Art Show with works by a selection of artists.

Nacho Hercuejo

BENAHAVÍS. Until 30 September. *Centro Social.*

Local man, José Ignacio Hernández, artistically known as Nacho Hercuejo, will be exhibiting a selection of his sculptures in the exhibition entitled Luz Y Ferro. www.nachohercuejo.com

María José Paneque

MIJAS. Until 30 August. *Casa Museo de Mijas.*

An exhibition of paintings by María José Paneque.

Legends of Sport

FUENGIROLA. Until 19 September, *Tues -Sun 6-10pm. Museo de Fuengirola.*

The exhibition includes around 500 items linked to legendary sports personalities including a Ferrari racing car driven by Alonso.

Acumálaga

BENALMÁDENA. Until 31 August. *Castillo El Bil Bil.*

Ten local members of the Association

Festival of Legends brings Dire Straits' music to Benalmádena

The Brothers in Band tribute show has been endorsed by Dire Straits' guitarist Mark Knopfler

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. A tribute concert at the municipal auditorium in Benalmádena will present a night of the music of legendary rock band Dire Straits on Friday 10 September. Part of the Festival of Legends cycle, the concert will be performed by Brothers in Band, a Spanish tribute group that recreates the huge repertoire of songs of Mark Knopfler's band from 1978 until its dissolution at the beginning of the 90s.

Brothers in Band have been performing their tribute to one of the biggest British rock bands of the 80s for more than 12 years, taking their show to Germany, France, Luxembourg and Portugal. The eight-piece band are currently in the middle of a Spanish tour, which will take them to Seville, Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao and Mallorca.

Brothers in Band reproduce the iconic hits of Dire Straits. **SUR**

Considered the best Dire Straits tribute band, (the show has been endorsed by Mark Knopfler), the concert will present some of the band's most celebrated hits, including Sultans of Swing, Romeo and Juliet, Money for Nothing and Telegraph Road.

The band have built a reputation on their ability to reproduce the unique stripped-down sound of Dire Straits, a group that spent more than 1,100

weeks on the UK album charts and sold over one million records worldwide.

The concert in Benalmádena, which starts at 8pm, will also present guest support band Elosphera, a tribute to The Electric Light Orchestra.

Tickets cost 31.65 euros and are available from ticketmaster.com or elcorteingles.es. Tickets can also be obtained from the Ruben money exchange offices or by phoning 633647260.

of watercolourists of Andalucía (Acumálaga) are holding an exhibition of their works.

Centro Antonio Reyna Manescau

COÍN. 3D museum tour.

The Centro Antonio Reyna Manescau, dedicated to the 19th-century Coín-born painter, has opened its doors to the whole world by creating a virtual tour of its exhibition rooms. Find the link halfway down the page on <http://turismocoin.com/>

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'.

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.

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

Colección del Museo Ruso

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

Temporary exhibitions. 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.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

MALAGA. *CAC Málaga. C/Alemania.*

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

Franz West. Until 29 August. The exhibition *Últimas Decadas*, celebrates the work of this Austrian artist who died in 2012. It consists of 35 works that reflect humour and irony. The sculptures are made of a variety of materials including plaster, papier maché, polyester resin and aluminium.

Cindy Sherman. Until 24 October. *Cindy Sherman: an interview (1980-1981)* is a short ten minute film in which the American photographer talks about the different aspects relating to her works, her creative process and inspiration.

Don Bergland. Until 12 September. Canadian artist Don Bergland is exhibiting *The Silence of Eternity*, the first time this artist has exhibited in a European museum. His surreal works are created digitally and enhanced with pigments on canvas.

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

Aixa Portero. Until 19 September. *Pax Natura* is the first solo exhibition by this Malaga artist in a Spanish

museum. The works on display were completed between 2015 and 2021.

Impresionistas

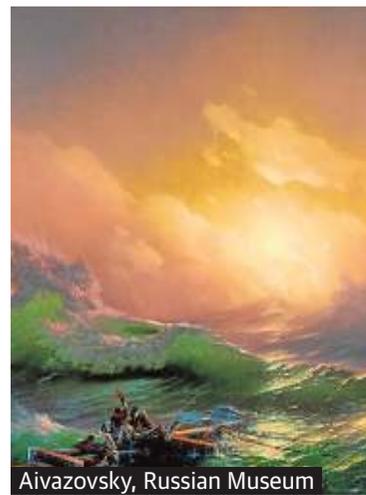
MALAGA. Until 5 September. *Muelle Uno.*

An immersive exhibition organised by Art Apart which displays the most famous works of impressionist artists on gigantic screens. It includes works by Monet, Cézanne, Manet, Gauguin, Renoir, Van Gogh, Morisot, Degas, Monet, Pissarro and Toulouse-Lautrec. The exhibition is in Spanish and English. Tickets: <https://impresionistasexpo.com/>

Javier Garcerá

MALAGA. Until 16 October. *Galería Isabel Hurley.*

Y En Mi Jardín is an exhibition by Valencian artist Javier Garcerá. Each of the works are made from silk using techniques that, depending on where



Aivazovsky, Russian Museum



Coby Bloemsma, El Morche

one stands, invite you to view the works from different perspectives.

Octavio Colis

MALAGA. Until 15 September, *Salas Mingorance, Archivo Municipal, Alameda Principal, 23.*

Forty-seven works including paintings, drawings, sculpture etc make up this exhibition by Octavio Colis. One of the paintings is dedicated to the colours of Malaga wines.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

MALAGA. *C/ Compañía, 10. 10am - 8pm Tuesday to Sunday.*

Collection. Until 15 September. To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Museum there is an exhibition of works by Rusydael, Canaletto, Friedrich, Corot, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Pissarro, Picasso, Matisse, Munch, Nolde, Goncharova and Stepanova among others.

The past collections of the Thyssen museum can be viewed online at www.carmenthyssenmalaga.org

Noelia García Bandera

MALAGA. Until 3 September. *Estudio de Ignacio del Río, C/San Lorenzo.*

Malaga photographer Noelia García Bandera is showing a selection of her work in this exhibition entitled *El Jardín*.

Flamenco en Negro

ARCHIDONA. Until 12 September. *Auditorio Municipal, Plaza Ochavada.*

Exhibition of black and white photographs of flamenco performers by José Ramón Zapata 'Zacha'.

Coby Bloemsma

NERJA. Until 19 September, *Wed to Sat, 5-10.30pm, Sun from 2 to 6pm.*

Hostal Alegre. An exhibition of all new art works by the Dutch artist Coby Bloemsma including colourful abstracts and objects made from recycled materials.

EL MORCHE. From 24 September until 20 October. *Bio Beach Club.*

Botticelli's *Venus in a map dress* with plastic wings or Klimt's *Judith* hovering above a city are just two examples of the exhibition entitled *The Collage Collection* by Torrox based artist Coby Bloemsma.

La Vuelta a Ítaca de María Zambrano

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 2 November. *Palacio del Marqués de Beniel and Centro de Estudios de El Exilio.*

The exhibition consists of over fifty pieces including photos, sculpture,

ceramics, furniture, paintings and personal effects of María Zambrano, essayist and philosopher, who was born in the town.

Arte Sur

ALMUÑÉCAR. Until 31 August. La Galería, Plaza de la Constitución. Thirty artists from the Arte Sur group are displaying unique painted vinyl records and satellite dishes.

LIVE CONCERTS AND MUSIC

Theatre and musicals festival

BENALMÁDENA. Until 29 August. Municipal auditorium. www.audito Peter Pan the musical.

The Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

MALAGA. Various venues. **4 September, 9pm.** Museo Carmen Thyssen Málaga. Music by Grieg and Dvorak played by violinist Andrea Sestakova. **9 September, 8pm.** Teatro Cervantes. Música de Cine, music from films. More information: www.orquestafilarmonicademalaga.com Twitter: @filarmonimalaga or Facebook: www.facebook.com/Filarmonica-Malaga.

La Cochera Cabaret

MALAGA. Avda de los Guindos. **8 September, 8.30pm.** Maribel Moreno Quartet. **16 September, 8.30pm.** SÉS in concert. <https://lacocheraentradadas.com/shows/list>

Iris Nieto Acoustic Covers Duet

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 27 August, 9pm. Chiringuito La Negra, Playa de Benajárf. Iris Nieto, singer and oboe player and Tomás on acoustic guitar play covers from Ray Charles, Nina Simone, Lady Gaga and the Scorpions. <https://www.tallerblues.es/iris-nieto/>

Cazbah Live Lounge

MIJAS COSTA. Doors open 8pm. Avenida de Rota. **27 August.** The Beatles. **28 August.** Black Jam. **29 August.** Amelinde. Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheCazbahLiveLounge Call or Whatsapp 602535710

La Costa de la Música

MARBELLA. 28 August, 10pm. Parque de la Constitución auditorium. Pilar Esteban 'La Pili', singer. Tickets from www.mientrada.net or from the ticket office from 7pm.

Municipal band

ESTEPONA. Sundays until 29 August, 9pm. Plaza del Reloj, Templete Maestro Manuel Navarro Mollor. The concerts are dedicated to the province of Malaga with compositions by Alfonso Guerra as well as classical works, film tracks and zarzuelas.

100% Estepona

ESTEPONA. Until 9 September. Various venues. The festival this year will feature eight concerts by Estepona musicians. A full agenda can be found on



Iris Nieto, Vélez-Málaga

www.estepona.es

Jazz and Blues Nights

TORREMOLINOS. Until 3 September, 9pm. Parque de la Batería. Free. **27 August.** Pana Brothers. **3 September.** Inoidal González. <https://www.torremolinoscultura.es/>

Tango Málaga 2021

MALAGA. 3, 4 September, 8.30pm. Teatro Echegaray. 15€. Reborn in Buenos Aires on the 3rd September is a tribute to Astor Piazzolla. It is followed on 4th September by the Binelli-Ferman Dúo. <https://www.teatroechegaray.com/>

Green Covers

BENALMÁDENA. 18 September, 9.15pm. Municipal auditorium. The four piece band Green Covers play the best of British pop and Indie rock including a tribute to Depeche Mode, The Cure and a spectacular 80s set. Tickets: www.ticket-source.co.uk/bigmpromotions

Siente Málaga

MALAGA. Until November. Various venues. The festival Siente Málaga will offer

seventy shows around the city centre, the majority of which will be free. There will be copla, flamenco and verdiales concerts as well as theatrical processions about the tradition of the Malaga Feria. More information about the acts can be found on the www.malaga.eu website.

Fiesta Techno

ESTEPONA. 4 September from 7pm. Plaza de Toros. The festival entitled 'Illegal Party' includes music by the Lunar Plane Duo, Martin Strauts and other DJs (Niltöx B2B, A. Salazar, Jose Gallano, Kike Aguilar, Chris Matin, Tito Pulpo, Chuwa-K and Mucho Lau.)

Moraga Sound

MALAGA. Until 24 September. Various venues. More than twenty Malaga bands will perform eight concerts of Indie, pop, rock, R&B, hip-hop and DJ music around the city. More information: <https://www.malaga.eu/>

Marenostrum

FUENGIROLA. Until 25 September. The Marenostrum festival continues until the end of September with live music and shows. A full programme of events can be found on: <https://marenostrumfuengirola.com/>

Starlite

MARBELLA. Until 4 September. The Starlite Festival is back this year with a wide variety of live concerts including flamenco, fusion, Latin, rock and pop. International stars such as Tom Jones, Bonnie Tyler, Alan Parsons, David Bisbal, Melendi, La Oreja de Van Gogh, Plácido Domingo, Estopa and many more will be performing on one of the two stages at the event. More information and tickets: <https://starlitemarbella.com/en/>

The Salón Varietés Theatre reopens



The Abba Experience will perform at the theatre in September. **SUR**

The theatre will present a series of tribute shows and music throughout September

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. The Salón Varietés Theatre in Fuengirola reopens its doors on Sunday 5 September with a sell-out show following 18 months uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Tickets for the performance sold out in just a few hours, but several other shows have been lined up for September.

These will include an Abba tribute night performed by Costa favourites The Abba

Experience from Friday 10 until Sunday 12; Rock of the Ages, a tribute to the music of Queen, Bon Jovi, Journey and Foreigner, among others, from Friday 17 until Sunday 19; and Curtain Up, an evening celebrating the best of West End and Broadway musicals performed by Ricky Lavazza from Friday 24 until Sunday 26 September.

Tickets for the shows, which begin at 7.30pm (7pm on Sundays) are available from the theatre's box office (Monday to Friday between 11am and 2.30pm) or from www.salonvarietes.com

Social distancing will be enforced and face masks must be worn in the theatre.

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LIVE CONCERTS AND MUSIC

Brisa Festival

MÁLAGA. Until 29 August. *The Tabacalera*.

27 August. Gordo Master and Little Pepe.

28 August. Living Camboya and Mitad Doble.

29 August. Bromo and Dreyma. www.brisafestival.com.

Classical 2021

ESTEPONA. 3 September, 9pm. *Plaza del Reloj*.

Duo Fajer, viola and cello.

Blues Festival

LA HERRADURA. 28 August, 10pm. *Castillo de La Herradura*.

The Vargas Blues Band, Patricia Kraus and Anne 4 (José Montalvo) will be performing. Tickets: www.bravoentradas.es. or from Librería Coral La Herradura and Pub La Cochera.



Brisa festival, Málaga

FLAMENCO

La Caña Flamenco

ALMUÑÉCAR. Parque El Majuelo
27 August, 10pm. Agustín Barajas.

Flamenco show

LA HERRADURA. 29 August, 10pm. *Castillo de La Herradura*. A performance by María La Canastera.

Museo Peña Juan Breva

MÁLAGA. 28 August, 9.30pm. *C/Ramón Franquelo*.

The flamenco troupe Juan Alarcón 'Kade' with singer Juan Francisco Rivera, guitarist Raúl Millán and dancer Juan Alarcón 'Kade' will be performing.

Flamenco show

ESTEPONA. 31 August, 9.30pm. *Calle Villa*. Free.

A selection of some of Málaga's best flamenco performers will be in the show with singers Chelo Soto and José Manuel Fernández, dancers Ana Fernández and Antonio Trujillo accompanied by guitarist José Fernández flautist and saxophonist Agustín Carrillo.

IV Cabilde Flamenco

ARCHIDONA. 1 September, 10pm, 2 September, 8pm. *Sala Plaza Ochavada*.

A live flamenco performance in the famous Plaza Ochavada.

Miguel Poveda

FUENGIROLA. 4 September 10pm. *Marenostrum Festival*.

The flamenco singer is currently touring Spain with his In Concert show. www.marenostrum.com

THEATRE AND DANCE

The Season of Dance

ESTEPONA. Until 4 September, 9.30pm. *various venues*.

4 September, 9pm. El Taller de Arte with José F. and Inmaculada C. Parque El Calvario.

MORE IDEAS

Drag Queen show

TORREMOLINOS. 28 31 August. *Torremolinos auditorium*.

Gran Hotel de las Reinas is a drag show with humour, dance and live music, it stars Paca la Piraña, (from the series Veneno), as the hotel receptionist and with guests Arantxa Castilla La Mancha, Carmen Farala, Dovima Nurmi, Drag Vulcano, Hugaceo Crujiente, Inti, Killer Queen, Pupi Poisson, Sagittaria and The Macarena.

Chess games

ESTEPONA. Until 27 August, Mon-Fri 7-10pm. *Paseo Marítimo*.

The Escuela Municipal de Ajedrez (EMAE) has organised chess matches to be played on the six giant chess boards on the promenade as well as on tables. The free games are open to everyone. www.ajedrezestepona.com

Night Market with live music

ALCAUCÍN. Every Friday from 7.30pm. *Scirocco, Cruce de Periana, Puente de Don Manuel*.

Live music at Luna Chill ecological and artisanal market. There is a children's area and food and drinks are available. Musicians are invited to join in.

Night visits and theatre in the Botanical Gardens

MÁLAGA. 27 August, 3, 17 September, 9.30pm. *Jardín Botánico la Concepción*. 9€.

A theatrical tour of the gardens and the library of the old Casa Palacio belonging to the Marquis of Casa Loring. Reservations: 951926180

Estepona Fashion Week Finalists

ESTEPONA. 18 September, *Parque Botánico-Orquidario*.

A fashion show by the finalists of the Estepona Fashion Week will take place in the Carmen Thyssen gardens of the Parque Botánico.

Museo Automovilístico y de la Moda

MÁLAGA. 27 August, 7-9pm. 10€

The museum will be offering a tour to see vehicles from the 1950s with their engines running and in some case, being driven. More information: info@museoautomovilmalaga.com

Coral Coraxalia

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Thursdays, September to June, 5.30-8pm. *Casa Hermandad de la Cofradía de los Estudiantes, Plaza del Sastres*.

The choir are welcoming new members call: 68911352 (Spanish) or 657951755 (English). Email: euco-rax@hotmail.es

O. V. FILMS

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

Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

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

Suicide Squad: 19.40 (Tues).

Candyman: 17.00 (everyday except Tues), 19.15 (Tues).

Free Guy: 18.45 (Tues).

Reminiscence: 19.10 (Tues).

Oasis Knebworth 1996: 20.30 (23/09).

André Rieu Together Again: 20.00 (24/09)

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

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

Free Guy: 17.30 (Tues).

Reminiscence: 20.10 (Tues).

Candyman: 22.30 (Tues).

Stillwater: 22.15 (Tues)

André Rieu Together Again: 20.00 (24/09)

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MÁLAGA. *Centro Comercial Vialia*. Tel: 902220922

Free Guy: 17.15 (Tues).

Reminiscence: 19.25 (Tues).

Candyman: 21.40 (Tues).

Oasis Knebworth 1996: 20.30 (23/09)

André Rieu Together Again: 20.00 (24/09)

Cinesur Miramar

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

Candy Man: 21.15 (every day).

Free Guy: 17.00 (every day).

Reminiscence: 17.15 (tues and thur).

Old: 19.30 (Tues).

Cinesur Ingenio

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

Free Guy: 17.35 (everyday).

Cine Albéniz

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

Reminiscence: 16.45, 19.30, 22.15 (every day).

Made in Italy: 17.00 (every day).

Ernst Lubitsch: Merry Widow: 2 September, 8.30pm.

The Black Narcissus: 3 September, 5pm.



Patricia Kraus, La Herradura

Post-Brexit wine

ANDREW J. LINN



Whether we agree or disagree with the UK's departure from the European Union, the truth is that there are as yet no hands down winners or losers. Predictions that London would cease to be Europe's financial centre may have been exaggerated, because it just happens that such considerations are also influenced by

clean air and good international schools.

The doom-sayers have been right however about the potential negative effects on the wine trade. In this context the focus is on London as an international trading centre, since the UK imports around half of its wine from the EU, and its wine and spirit industry as a whole gener-

ates 57bn in revenue. The overwhelming human factor is the large number of jobs that are collaterally supported: 360,000.

What about wine exports? This does not refer to exports of British wine, important as they are and happily growing steadily, rather to London as the international hub of trade in premium European wines, a position it has held for centuries.

There are a handful of companies, with the centuries-old Berry Bros & Rudd being the foremost, that physically import wines from France, Germany, Spain, Italy, etc into the UK and then export them to buyers around the world.

When the UK was plugged into Europe, exporting wines into Europe was staggeringly profitable

When the UK was plugged into Europe via the EU, this was a staggeringly profitable venture, but now, being also separated financially from these countries by Brexit, costs are rising prohibitively and client countries, like the USA and China, need other suppliers. No, Brexit has done no favours for the UK wine trade.

WINE OF THE WEEK

La Hiedra Tinto 2019

There is a body of opinion that holds, perhaps unfairly, that Ronda wines have not improved over the years. What is true is the region exists in a kind of limbo, being classified as Sierras de Málaga, best-known for its dessert wines. However, this Garnacha/Syrah has only to be tasted to appreciate that Ronda can indeed produce some outstanding reds. Around 11.50€.



A taste of authentic Andalusian customs and traditions

TRADITIONAL TAVERNS

The traditional taverns and tapas bars of Benalmádena offer visitors a glimpse into a time gone by

TONY BRYANT

BENALMÁDENA. Benalmádena Pueblo is one of the most attractive towns on the Costa del Sol, famed for whitewashed cobbled streets adorned with displays of colourful flowers spilling out of wall-mounted plant pots. Although the 21st century has made its mark on the town, Benalmádena still offers a side that many tourists fail to discover: namely its traditional taverns and tapas bars that offer a glimpse into a time gone by.

One of the most nostalgic eateries is La Fuente, which is located in a charming old farmhouse in Plaza de España. Renowned for its rustic interior, this delightful tavern boasts an extensive wine list that offers premium wines from regions such as Rioja,

Ribera de Duero and La Mancha. The wine racks line the walls and form part of the decoration, which is complemented with old agricultural tools and paintings highlighting local customs and traditions.

The menu offers an extensive fish and seafood selection, although one of the house specialties is the hearty seafood chowder.

Those looking for an even more traditional Andalusian bodega should head into Arroyo de la Miel, the heart of Benalmádena.

La Alternativa is one of the bars that is popular with selfie-taking visitors as this bar's ambience is created by its dedication to the bullfight. The bar area is designed like a burladero (the wooden shield behind which a matador seeks protection from the bull), while the walls are covered with photographs and memorabilia of local bullfighters.

This bar is particularly popular during the local fair and is a place where aficionados of the art of the corrida (bullfight fans) congregate over a glass of sherry, or Cartojal, a popular sweet white



The ambience in La Alternativa is created by its dedication to the art of bullfighting. TONY BRYANT.

wine made from the muscatel grape variety and produced by the Málaga Virgen Bodega.

Another hidden gem, located just a short stroll away in Calle Poleo, is the Mesón Tío Blas, a bar that is more popular with locals as it is tucked away from the main drag and virtually unknown to many visitors.

The bar's theme is based on the local fishing tradition of Benalmádena and the menu also highlights this, tempting diners with fresh mussels, prawns and grilled octopus, along with the

Benalmádena offers a side that many visitors fail to discover: namely its time-worn taverns and traditional tapas bars

local speciality of the mixed, fried fish platter. The tapas menu presents a mixture of classical Andalusian dishes such as Russian salad, tortilla, gambas pil pil, Serrano ham and Iberian pork

products.

The bar also adheres to the age-old custom of offering a free tapa with each drink purchased, a tradition that has sadly disappeared from almost all of the beach side bars and franchised restaurants.

This family-run establishment offers an excellent selection of local sherry and sweet dessert wines, but one of its most popular is Barbadillo, a crisp white wine from Cadiz that is the perfect accompaniment to fish and seafood.

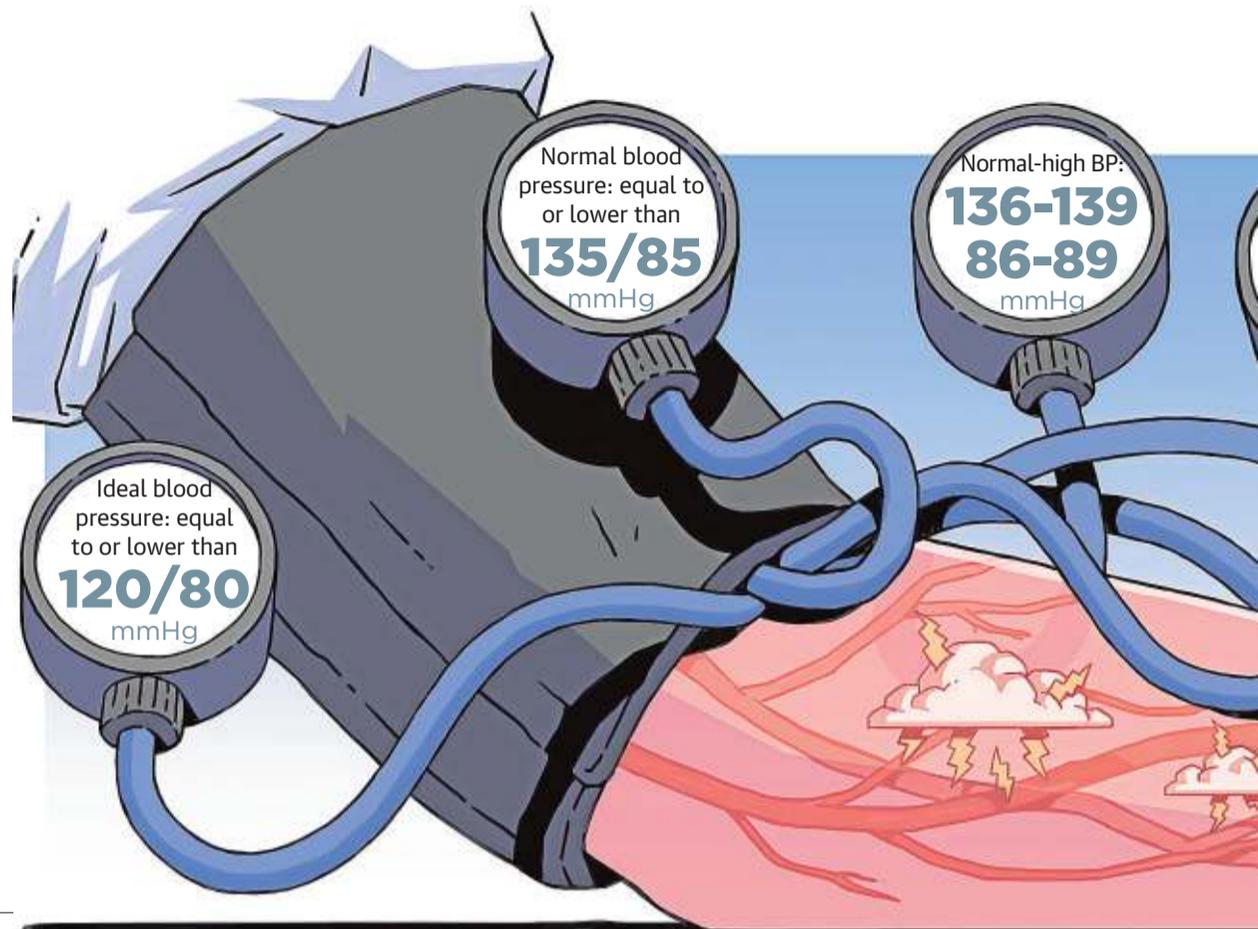
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Have you got hypertension and you don't even know it?

They call high blood pressure the 'silent' disease for a reason. Ten minutes are enough to clear up any doubts

YOLANDA VEIGA



Hypertension, otherwise known as high blood pressure, doesn't hurt, and that makes it even more dangerous. One in four men and one in five women suffer from high blood pressure, but only 20 per

cent of those affected control it. These statistics are from the World Health Organization (WHO), which is warning that this illness is a silent killer.

"When you break your arm it hurts, but high blood pressure

doesn't scare anyone because they feel perfectly normal. How can they be persuaded to get treatment?" asks Judit Soto, a doctor, medical-scientific educator and author of a book in Spanish titled *Salud con razón*.

She works as a resident medic at the Parc Tauli hospital in Sabadell and stresses the importance of taking people's blood pressure on their first visit to a doctor if there is any suspicion that it might be high.

"A man in his thirties came in with redness around the pupil of his eye and we found that his blood pressure was high and had caused some small arteries to break. Another woman complained that she always had a

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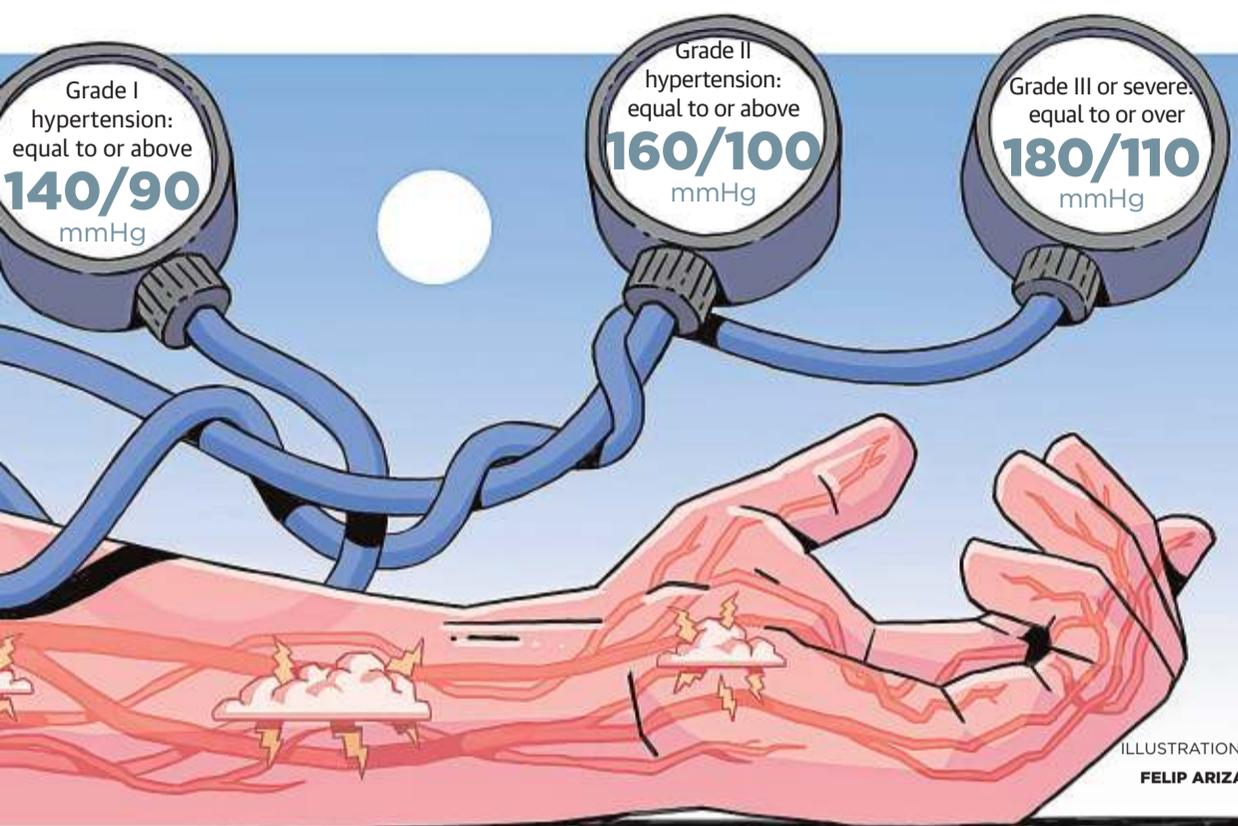


ILLUSTRATION:
FELIP ARIZA

runny nose, but her allergy tests were negative. It turned out that hypertension was causing inflammation of the nasal mucous and causing the secretion of a watery mucus," she says.

For those who think these cases

are isolated, some data: two out of every three people over the age of 60 in Spain have high blood pressure. "That's as many people as there are with brown eyes in the country," says Dr Soto.

The World Health Organization

stresses that most people with hypertension have no idea that they have it.

The problem doesn't lie with diagnosis: you can take your blood pressure at home, repeating the test twice. This is 

WHAT HAPPENS IF BLOOD PRESSURE IS VERY LOW?

1 Is there a minimum figure?

No, low blood pressure (hypotension) is a life assurance. If someone has 80/60, for example, and feels well there is no need to increase it. It's a different matter if they feel dizzy or it measures 40/20 and they are in shock, says Soto.

2 What if there is a sudden drop in blood pressure?

There may be tachycardia, cold sweating, dizziness...

3 What should you do then?

If you have been lying on the beach and get up suddenly, you might be dehydrated from the heat, so just drink some water. If hypotension isn't very serious, drink water and have a salty snack. If a hypertensive patient is admitted to hospital for something else and is given a salt-free diet, that can cause a sudden drop in blood pressure and they will need medication or serum or saline.

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➤ something we should all do at least once a year after the age of 40, because that is the age at which it most frequently starts, and, in the case of women, after the menopause," says José Luis Palma, vice-president of the Spanish Heart Foundation. So, with that in mind, here is a guide to prevention.

1 What is hypertension?

"The heart puts pressure on the arteries so they drive the blood to the different organs of the human body. That action is what is known as blood pressure," explain sources at the Spanish Heart Foundation.

When the pressure is too high, it is considered hypertension. It is measured by two figures: systolic tension, which is obtained by every contraction of the heart, and diastolic tension, which represents the pressure on the blood vessels when the heart relaxes between beats. That is what we normally know as the upper and lower figures.

There is no magic combination of these, but José Luis Palma says that 110-70 mmHg (which in some places would be referred to as 11/7) is ideal for an adult, "although it's difficult to achieve, especially in older people," he warns. And the highest figures, he says, should be no more than 140-90. Any more than that, and it means

there are problems.

2 How does it affect the organs?

These problems that the specialist warns about can be many and very serious. Too much pressure can harden the arteries, and that means the flow of blood and oxygen to the heart is restricted. That can cause angina, myocardial infarction - which happens when the blood flow to the heart is obstructed and the cells of the cardiac muscle die because of a lack of oxygen - and cardiac insufficiency when the heart cannot pump enough blood and oxygen to other vital organs, says the WHO.

Also, "if a cerebral artery becomes blocked, it can cause a stroke," warns Dr Soto. The Spanish Heart Foundation points out



Doctor taking blood pressure. SUR

that the effects of hypertension on the kidneys can lead to renal insufficiency, and that can even mean that dialysis is needed. There are other consequences, too: "if the arteries in the legs are affected, it causes pain when walking; if the arteries in the retina are affected, it can cause alterations to vision; and in men it can be the cause of impotence," they say.

3 Careful, because there is no warning

"Seventy per cent of the adult population has never had their blood pressure taken," says Dr Judit Soto. The illness normally produces no symptoms and when any do occur "it is normally late and the damage is already very serious". According to the WHO website, when symptoms do occur

they can include morning headaches, nasal hemorrhages, irregular heartbeat, visual alterations and tinnitus.

In addition, severe hypertension can cause fatigue, nausea, vomiting, confusion, anxiety, chest pain and also muscular trembling.

4 Prevention in seven steps

REDUCE SALT INTAKE

The amount of salt you eat should be one teaspoon a day (just under five grammes, and even less for people with hypertension: three-quarters of a spoonful for them). That is the quantity recommended by the WHO, but people tend to consume twice as much.

STOP SMOKING

"Smoking increases arterial pres-

What do bananas and beetroot have that other foods don't?

"We need to reduce our salt intake and eat more foods which are high in potassium. It has been proven that this helps to reduce blood pressure, protects us from the damage caused by hypertension and prevents cardiovascular illnesses developing," says Dr Judit Soto.

To give us an idea of how skewed the balance between salt and potassium is, she warns that "in general, a normal diet nowadays makes us eat six times more salt than we should and four times less than the minimum recommended amount of potassium".

Potassium is good for us because it helps to eliminate sodium through the urine, thereby reducing blood pressure.

The top ten foods especially high in potassium are bananas, potatoes and sweet potatoes, pistachio nuts, tomatoes, avocado, soya, chickpeas, cocoa, mushrooms and watercress.

We already know what bananas have that other foods don't, but what about beetroot? In its case, the 'virtue' is that it provides nitric acid, which relaxes and dilates the blood vessels, helping to im-

prove circulation and reduce blood pressure. A study by the British Heart Foundation showed that drinking a glass of beetroot juice every day for two weeks reduced the upper figure by an average of 7.7mmHg and the lower figure by 5.2.

Other foods which are interesting because of their concentration of nitrates are green leafy vegetables, such as rocket, kale, and spinach.

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sure and cardiac frequency, so giving it up is essential," says the Spanish Heart Foundation.

NO ALCOHOL

"Alcohol affects the muscles of the arteries, it tenses them and makes blood pressure rise. Even the famous glass of wine a day is dangerous," says Dr Soto. The Spanish Heart Foundation gives a recommended limit: less than 30g of alcohol a day for men, and 20g for women.

LOSE WEIGHT

"The more we weigh, the more pressure the heart has to put on the blood, because there are a lot of cells it has to get to. For every five kilos of weight lost, the systolic pressure goes down by up to 5 mmHG and the diastolic by 3-4 mmHG. It may not seem much, but losing ten kilos is much more effective than a lot of medication," stresses Judit Soto.

TAKE EXERCISE

The WHO recommends walking seven kilometres a day as a general rule, although the best type of exercise in this case is the isometric type; maintaining muscle tension in a stationary position (planks, wall sits). "Numerous studies show that this can reduce the systolic (upper) figure by 10.9mmHg and the diastolic (lower) by 6.2mmHG if you do three or more sessions a week,"



A blood-pressure machine inside a basket with other medical devices. REUTERS

HOW TO TAKE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME

When?

The Spanish Heart Foundation says that as blood pressure changes during the day and at night, it should always be measured at the same time.

Where?

Find a quiet room where you know there will be no noise and you will not be interrupted, and where the temperature is between 20 and 25 degrees.

'Fasting'

It is a good idea not to drink, eat, smoke or take exercise for at least half an hour before taking your blood pressure.

Posture

Sit comfortably with your back supported by the back of the chair. Don't cross your legs. Remove any clothing that might press on your arm. If your device is the type that goes on the arm, place the sleeve two or three centimetres above the elbow.

The palm of your hand should face

upwards and the arm should be supported on a table at the height of your heart. If it goes on the wrist, put the wristband at the level of the heart. It doesn't matter which arm you use to take your blood pressure.

While measuring...

Stay relaxed and don't talk.

Take it twice.

Wait five minutes before taking it the second time. Note the results and work out the average.

says Dr Soto.

For those who don't feel up to that, walking, running, swimming or cycling for half an hour a day at a moderate-high intensity will reduce blood pressure by up to 3.5 and 2.5mmHg.

AVOID STRESS

Maintained over time, stress releases adrenalin, cortisol and other substances that increase arterial pressure by tensing the muscle of the arteries and increasing the heart rate. Yoga can help.

FOODS THAT CAN HELP

The Spanish Heart Foundation has drawn up a type of shopping basket of food that can help to regulate blood pressure. Red fruits (cranberries, raspberries and strawberries), banana, lemon, whole cereals (oats, rye, whole-meal flour), garlic, beetroot, potatoes, monkfish, spinach, soya and natural yoghurt, artichokes, skimmed milk and black chocolate with a percentage of cocoa of between 50 and 70 per cent (it is high in flavonoids, natural compounds that dilate the blood vessels).

In this shopping basket to maintain healthy blood pressure levels, you should never put the following products: salt, sweets, red meats, butter or margarine, pickles, smoked fish, tinned foods, fried foods, cured meats and whole dairy produce.

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Blue and Whites transform to save a point

After being out of the game for almost an hour, a triple substitution neutralised the home team's lead

SERGIO CORTÉS

MALAGA. Malaga CF finally managed to rescue a point with a 2-2 draw in Ibiza last Sunday, after being out of the game for almost an hour.

The Blue and Whites narrowly avoided defeat thanks to a triple substitution in the second-half by José Alberto when the scoreboard showed a devastating 2-0.

The restructuring, which should have happened earlier, transformed the Malaga team and allowed it to neutralise the lead and even dream of victory towards the end of the game.

Malaga had started the match with their classic 4-4-2 formation but barely had the ball until after half-time when the wingers Paulino and Kevin started to contribute more to the match.

Ibiza had gone ahead after 19 minutes with an easily finished goal from Mateusz Bogusz, thanks to sloppy defending from the Malaga players. The Pole also hit the back of the net for the local team's second goal after the break, on 61 minutes.

Malaga coach José Alberto wasted no time in making three changes to the attacking line up and Luis Muñoz put Malaga back into the game in the 63rd minute.

During the last half hour, Malaga was a more dangerous team, although with more sparks than continuity.

But in the dying minutes of the game Roberto Fernández Jaén levelled the score to

2-2

IBIZA-MALAGA

Ibiza: Germán; Fran Grima, Goldar, Rubén, Morillas; Javi Pérez, Manu Molina; Cifu (Miki Villar, min. 74), Bogusz (Appin, min. 85), Javi Lara (Ekain, min. 53), and Castel (Davo, min. 85).

Malaga: Dani Barrio; Ismael Casas, Peybernes, Juande, Javi Jiménez (Cufre, min. 70); Paulino (Jairo, min. 62), Escassi, Luis Muñoz (Haitam, min. 81), Kevin (Genaro, min. 62); Brandon and Antón (Roberto, min. 62).

Goals: 1-0, min. 19: Comfortable centre from the right of Cifu that Bogusz finishes at the half turn. 2-0, min 61: Bogusz starts from the left and surprises Dani Barrio with a shot that sneaks through the squad. 2-1, min. 63: Luis Muñoz throws the ball over Germán in an action in which Roberto, Brandon and Jairo had participated. 2-2, min. 87: Roberto overtakes Germán after a great start from Haitam on the right wing.

Referee: De la Fuente Ramos.

Incidents: Match played in the Can Misses field in Ibiza. First professional soccer match on the island.

two-a-piece in the Second Division match at the Estadi Can Misses.

Exciting signings

Malaga has closed agreements to add attackers Javi Ontiveros and Sekou Gassama to the squad - two welcome signings that should mean the club can aspire to more than just staying up this coming season.

The two deals are done, with only the signing of the contracts pending at time of press, as SUR was able to verify with all those involved.

Barring any surprises, with their arrival, the Blues and Whites' planning would be practically over before the end of the transfer window, although they still have time to offload players they won't be needing this season.



Javi Jiménez and Kevin fight for the ball during the match against Ibiza. LOF AGENCY

José Alberto: "I liked the contribution of the youngsters"

José Alberto, Malaga coach, ended up satisfied with his team's "characterful" draw against an Ibiza that was "superior" in the first half. "They handled the ball well and had a lot of pace, especially in the first 25 minutes until the goal came along," said the As-

turian coach, happy with the response of his team in the second half: "In the second half we have been very good."

"What stuck with me was the team's reaction," he summed up, highlighting the strengths of a daring and high-quality opponent who had already stood up to Zaragoza on the first day. He said it was highly commendable "to tie a game that you are

losing 2-0 against a team that has very good mechanics and footballers on the ball."

José Alberto highlighted the part played by the changes: "I liked the contribution of the youngsters. The coming out of Roberto and Haitam have been very important. But also Jairo, Cufre and Genaro. All five have been key in the team's comeback."

Malaga aims to get to 20,000 season ticket holders

BORJA GUTIÉRREZ. The Blue and White club is hoping for a more favourable scenario for next week and believes that Covid-19 capacity regulations will be more permissive, which is why it is considering starting to sell season tickets soon after a long wait.

Malaga's judicial administra-

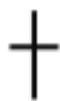
tor, José María Muñoz, has been focussing on addressing fans to explain the club's policy of not selling season tickets yet due to the current restrictions and to ask for more support.

"It makes no sense to make a season ticket sale, reach 18,500 subscribers as in the 19-20 season and have to draw out only

7,500 seats. So the solution has been to sell single tickets.

We are going to try to sell membership cards from next week, but it still depends on the authorities. We hope to be able to put on 50 per cent of the capacity, about 15,000 people," explained Muñoz.

"With the population of the province, there has to be a greater number of subscribers. We have much lower levels than other cities similar to us. Our goal is to reach 20,000," he said.



Robert Jones

1960-2020

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Rest in peace, Rob



A LOOK AT LA LIGA
ROB PALMER
Commentator, Sky Sports

A new Gálactico era?

Signing Mbappe would be a sensation for Real Madrid and the whole of Spanish football



Signing Kylian Mbappé would be better for Real Madrid and Spanish football than retaining Lionel Messi for the autumn years of his illustrious career.

By just writing the words Kylian Mbappé I may have captured your attention and made it easier for the headline writer.

What we are all trying to work out is whether the constant speculation of a move to Real Madrid has any foundation or is it a case of the club's president trying to win over the supporters.

As a commentator I would love to be calling out the fantastic Frenchman's name every week. The Madrid fans would be ecstatic at seeing the most talented young player in world football week in, week out, and the marketing men dream of having such a draw at their fingertips.

Mbappé may already have a World Cup winners medal and won every honour in France but his best years are ahead of him.

He seems destined for a career move to the Bernabéu. If he lets his contract run out at Paris Saint-Germain he can sign up for free in 2022. To recruit him before the transfer window closes Real Madrid need to agree a fee with PSG. The reported figure is 160 mil-



Kylian Mbappe. AFP

lion euros. Apparently, the French club are demanding more for a player who scored 42 goals last season.

Signing him would be a sensation for Real and the whole of Spanish football. It wouldn't be a sprinkle of stardust; it would be a thunderstorm. A new Galáctico era would be launched.

The paparazzi who headed to the French capital to sneak a peek at Lionel Messi would be on the first jet to Spain.

Messi may be regarded as a coup for the French, but his impact may only be short-term.

Just look at Cristiano Ronaldo who headed to Italy at great expense. He's still strut-

ting his stuff, yet Juventus can't wait to offload him. His representatives are working overtime in trying to find him a new footballing home. In a couple of years, it may be the same for Messi.

Mbappé has a good decade in him. His unveiling would undoubtedly make the Bernabéu an even hotter ticket at the grand reopening in September and go a long way to packing it out as fans are allowed back in. It would bring Real Madrid into vogue, heighten the issues at their great rivals Barcelona and give a fairly decent team another dimension.

This could all be delayed for twelve months when the only cost would be agent and signing-on fees. Financially it makes sense to hold fire. Romantically, it would bring the hottest player on the planet to La Liga.

PSG are shrugging their shoulders and playing hard ball. Although the owners are famed for their wealth, there will become a point where they will blink. Let's face it, they already have Messi and Neymar. How many riches do you need?

So, prepare for a bunch of billionaires doing business. Personally, I can't wait to start shouting Mbappé's name as he opens his La Liga goalscoring account.

Malaga's Paula Ruiz gets bronze medal in the Ría Navia descent

The Olympian returned to the water at holiday time to compete in this five-kilometre test in Asturias

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Some of the Malaga Olympians are still on holiday, but that does not mean that they have decided to resume sports activity for mere pleasure. This is the case of swimmer Paula Ruiz, who debuted in the last Tokyo Games with a credible

16th place in the 10 kilometres in open water.

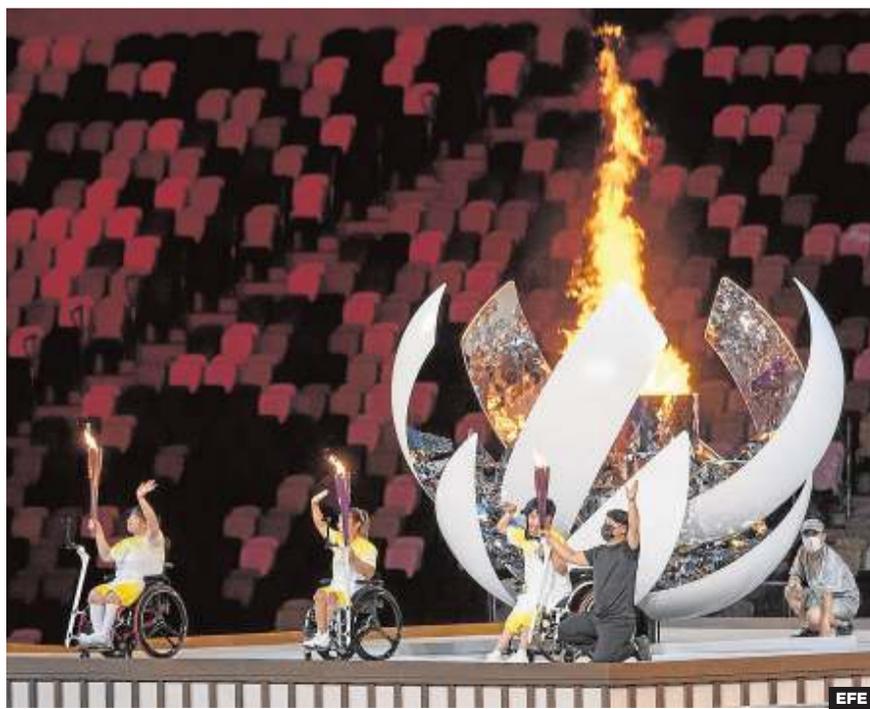
The young woman from Malaga city took part last weekend in one of the most traditional tests in Spain in open water, the Ría Navia de Asturias descent, which also has an international presence every year. And not only did she participate, (without training), Ruiz achieved third place in the five kilometres with a time of 43 minutes and 6 seconds. Just over a minute later (44:45), the Malaga international María de Valdés also reached the finish line, in seventh place.



Swimmer Paula Ruiz. VIRGUI M. IZQUIERDO

Paralympic Games opened

The Emperor of Japan, Naruhito, officially declared the Tokyo Paralympic Games open on Tuesday 24 August at a ceremony at the National Stadium, 16 days after the closing of the Olympic Games and one year after the originally scheduled date. Without spectators, only some leaders and the media were able to attend the show. Until 5 September, 4,400 Paralympic athletes, including 127 from Spain, will aspire to 539 gold medals.



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Covid-19
Regular Updates

The Costa pedals to the rhythm of La Vuelta a España

Thousands of people were at the Rincón de la Victoria end of the tenth stage of the cycling race and created a great atmosphere at the event

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ / COLPISA

MALAGA. It was a historic day on Tuesday in the Costa town of Rincón de la Victoria, east of Malaga. For the first time, its streets were the setting for the end of the La Vuelta round-Spain cycle race, which rolled into the province of Malaga in the tenth stage of this year's event.

From Roquetas de Mar in Almeria, the cyclists travelled 190 kilometres to reach the town, where thousands lined the streets for the arrival of the cyclists.

The Avenida del Mediterráneo was the place to be after the descent from the Benagalbón road, and the finish in the centre of the municipality between Plaza Al-Ándalus and Plaza José Domín-

guez 'Pepe El Boticario', where the final podium was placed. Australian Michael Storer climbed on to it after winning the stage amid applause.

"It is a fantastic day, we are having a great time," said Pedro, while having lunch with his family on a terrace overlooking the route.

From very early on, the more than 2,000 La Vuelta organisers worked tirelessly to fine-tune the route together with safety and security officials. Iván was one of many who were anxious to get a good view of the closing few metres. He had travelled from Utrera with his son to see La Vuelta live. "We didn't want to miss this event, we really like it."

Starting at noon, there was intense activity in the centre of the coastal town, especially in the bars and restaurants which lined the cyclists' route, making them a perfect vantage point to enjoy the sporting occasion.

"Everything is beautiful. There is a lot of atmosphere, I did not



Thousands of fans attended the end of the cycle race stage. NITO SALAS

expect so many people because of the heat," explained María, a local from Rincón who had found a spot in the front row with her friend Irene.

The race winner

The winner of the stage was Australian Michael Storer (DSM) af-

ter escaping from the group, achieving his second stage victory in this year's Vuelta.

The 24-year-old rider attacked on the climb up to Puerto de Almáchar deep in the Axarquía, the only serious mountain climb of the day, to clinch his second-stage victory, after the one

achieved in the seventh stage at Balcón de Alicante.

Eiking, who crossed the line 22 seconds behind Storer, took advantage of the peloton's passivity for most of the race to snatch the red jersey from Roglic, who was almost 12 minutes behind the winner of the day.

ASTORIA WINES



After several years as a sponsor of the Giro d'Italia, the prestigious Italian wine brand Astoria Wines has made the leap to Spain to support and provide one of its wines for the 76th edition of La Vuelta Ciclista a España 2021, which kicked off on 14 August 2021 in Burgos and will end on Sunday, 5 September 2021 in Santiago de Compostela.

Astoria Wines becomes the official supplier of La Vuelta a España 2021

BENALMÁDENA

SUR. As a celebration wouldn't be a celebration without a good wine, Astoria Wines will supply the event with its Jeroboam Prosecco DOC, a white, fruity and exquisitely bottled Prosecco, ideal for celebrating, in style, the end of each stage with the winners on the podium. Prosecco is the most widely consumed wine in the world and Astoria Wines' catalogue includes several multi-award winners which continue to shine year after year.

La Vuelta, in terms of worldwide coverage, is the third most important race behind Le Tour de France and the Giro d'Italia. With this collaboration, Astoria Wines wants to show its commitment to this elite sport, providing its wine, on each of the 21 stages that make up La Vuelta, for the podium celebrations which this year will cover a to-

tal distance of 3,417.7 km. Every day a little piece of Italy will accompany the champions, who will have the pleasure of uncorking and toasting with Astoria sparkling wine.

In this way, the Italian brand further strengthens its ties with Spain, where it arrived in 2015 with the mission of raising awareness of the quality and versatility of Italian wines. They saw in Spain a country with great potential, which also has a notable wine tradition and a growing appreciation for Prosecco. Astoria Wines is the culmination of a lifetime of dedication and hard work tending the vines at their own Tenuta Val de Brun Estate in Refrontolo located in northern Italy, in the heart of an area known as Docg Conegliano - Valdobbiadene. Their wine selection includes a wide range of wines, from the famous Prosecco

to a selection of red, white, rosé, sparkling, raisined and grappa wines.

Their wines are distributed exclusively throughout the Spanish peninsula thanks to Strato Mille, a wine and food group proudly based in Benalmádena. Founded in 2013, Strato Mille was born with the aim of transmitting the gastronomic philosophy of the Spoladore family through the five restaurants they currently run, offering a unique culinary experience that is completed with the flavour of Astoria Wines, achieving the perfect pairing.

Both the bottles that are uncorked in La Vuelta and the entire selection of wines can be purchased in the Strato Mille group's establishments, but they can also be delivered to any home in Spain through the webpage: astoriawines.es/tienda.

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THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
The people you meet may have the effect of opening your mind to new ideas and opportunities. Watch finances though, as mistakes could be expensive.



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
If you can leave important matters until next week you'll have a better chance of getting the outcome you desire and of everyone being happy.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
You may have things to do, but getting down to it might be hard. The end of the week could bring a reality check though.



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
What jobs or tasks get to you the most, and how long do they take? Are you doing things to make others happy and resenting the time given? Be firmer about what you can and can't do.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Need to make key decisions? You may have some big ideas, but some of them might be impractical. A balance between inspiration and prudence can truly help.



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
As Mercury moves into Libra, decluttering and tidying up could make it easier to unwind. Keen to seal a deal or reach an agreement? Comb the details for any hidden mistakes.



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
Finances may need careful handling, as the Mars/Neptune tie could cause things to sparkle even if they're flawed. Don't rush into making purchases.



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
Going with the flow may be a better option than trying to nail people down or get a commitment, as it might all come to nothing. Something you really want may be in a sale next weekend.



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Mercury's move into your sign early on can encourage you to take the lead and start conversations and discussions. Have too much on? There's no need to feel guilty for saying no.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
The end of next week could be a time of reckoning, when you can ask for concessions and be given them, no questions asked.

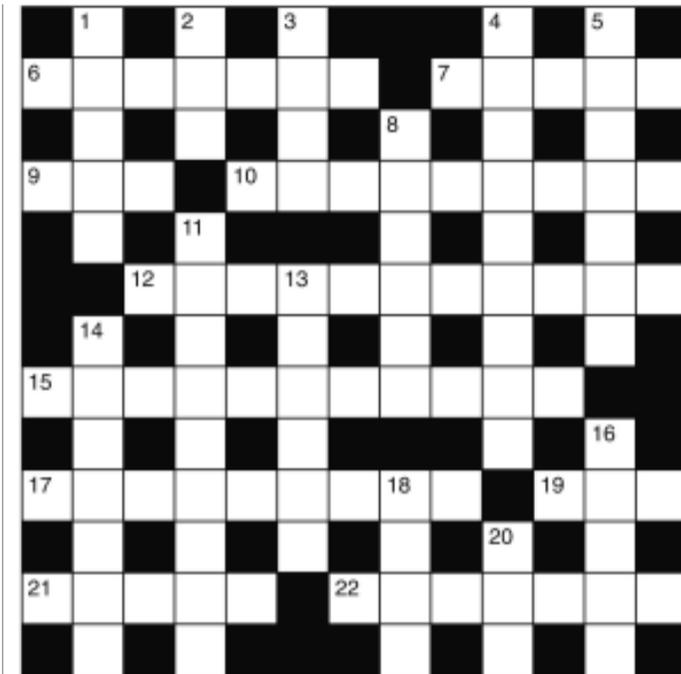


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
Just as you're getting it together, you may feel dismayed at a lack of obvious progress. Keep at it; by the end of next week you'll have done more than you thought possible.



Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
You could get the wrong end of the stick and completely mess up something. This may be down to the confusing Mars/Neptune tie, which might leave you wondering why you bothered at all.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11476



Across

- 6 Schoolboy in charge of the television screen (7)
- 7 Put off when wrongly freed (5)
- 9 Encountered the police in London (3)
- 10 Lead units redesigned and protected (9)
- 12 Pretend it's what missionaries try to do (4-7)
- 15 What people pay for air travel? (6,5)
- 17 Affinity with creature without desire (9)
- 19 Timid throw (3)
- 21 Wedding attendants in the book? (5)
- 22 Get a quantity of paper on account (7)

Down

- 1 They are played on a drum, say (5)
- 2 Hurry some of the chiefs (3)
- 3 A person without love has to complain (4)
- 4 Terribly versatile family (9)
- 5 Coolness of manner of one not in the team (7)
- 8 Exclamation of triumph at the stockade (6)
- 11 Find a shoe that's unusually shaped (9)
- 13 Anger a green revolutionary (6)
- 14 Ore the railmen redistributed (7)
- 16 Small instrument that is not flat (5)
- 18 Pleasant French resort (4)
- 20 Manage to sprint (3)

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

THE WORDPUZZLER

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | I | T | A | I | R | T | A | C | C |
| T | A | F | F | A | I | R | T | R | I |
| I | F | A | I | C | F | A | C | A | T |
| C | A | R | T | I | T | I | F | F | A |
| C | R | I | T | A | I | T | A | T | I |
| A | I | F | I | F | A | I | C | I | F |
| I | F | F | A | T | T | I | C | A | T |
| F | A | A | F | I | I | A | I | C | A |
| R | I | C | I | C | F | C | T | A | C |
| A | F | I | A | A | T | F | A | F | T |

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

- 1. Reasonable
- 2. Skill
- 3. Horse-drawn vehicle
- 4. Chasm
- 5. Obese
- 6. Argument
- 7. Spasm
- 8. Perform
- 9. Suitable
- 10. Repeated melody

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



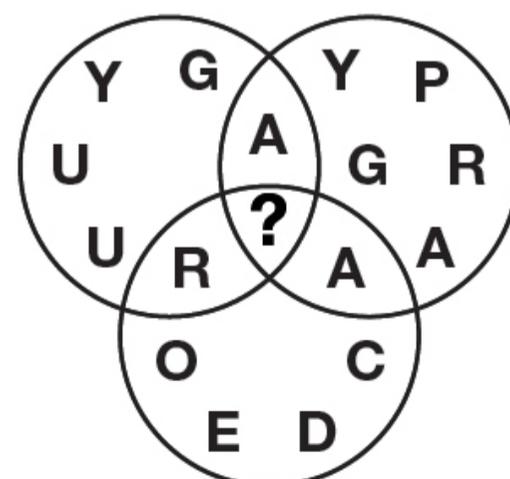
BATTLESHIPS

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

- Battleship
- Cruiser
- Destroyers
- Submarines

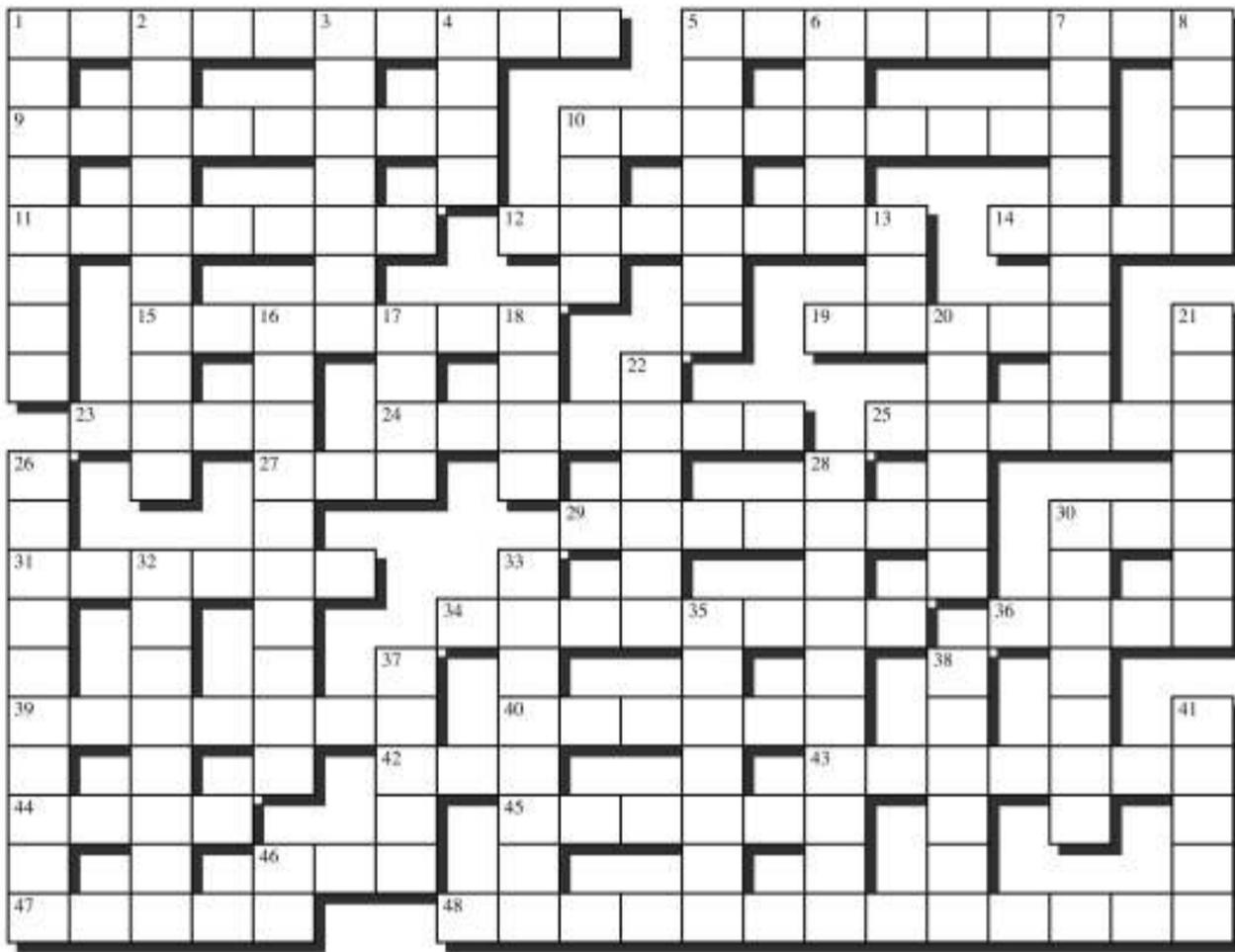
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
| A | | | | | | | ● | | | | 1 |
| B | | ● | | | | | | | ■ | | 4 |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| D | | | ● | | | | | | | | 2 |
| E | | | | | ■ | | | | | | 2 |
| F | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| G | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| H | | ■ | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| I | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| J | | | | ● | | | | | | | 1 |
| | 0 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 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. Terrorism (10)
5. Hairdresser (9)
9. Space (8)
10. Jailer (9)
11. I will arrive (7)
12. Neighbours (7)
14. They laugh (4)
15. Announcement (7)
19. They shave (heads) (5)
23. I lived (4)
24. Flag (7)
25. Slip-up (6)
27. I read (3)
29. Dialogue (7)
30. Day (3)
31. Gazette (6)
34. To negotiate (8)
36. Other (4)
39. Witness (7)
40. Run! (pl) (6)
42. I fell (3)
43. Sharp (7)
44. Donkey (4)
45. Large van (6)
46. I will go (3)
47. To hate (5)
48. Appearance (13)

Down

1. Transfer (8)
2. Reprisal (10)
3. They withdraw (7)
4. Silk (4)
5. Party (7)
6. Then (5)
7. Emotional (9)
8. Order (5)
10. A hundred (4)
13. Is (subj) (3)
16. Small car (10)
17. Corporal (4)
18. UFO (4)
20. Prisoners (6)
21. Court (7)
22. Injured (6)
26. Magistrate (10)
28. Commander (10)
30. To detonate (7)
32. I allowed (8)
33. I decipher (8)
35. Surgery (7)
37. Car (5)
38. Sad (6)
41. Bomb (5)
46. To go (2)

QUIZ

In which year was the terracotta army of Xian discovered?

1. 2007
2. 1990
3. 1987
4. 1974



Who is normally the concert master?

1. conductor
2. lead violinist
3. pianist
4. lead percussionist

Which golf course hosts the US Masters?

1. Moon
2. Venus
3. Mars
4. Augusta

THE SUR IN ENGLISH COLUMN

Autumn is on its way

After the unbearable heat of the recent heatwave it is a relief to return to the normal summer temperatures and cool breezes on the Costa del Sol. We are now over halfway through the summer and it won't be long before the autumn and more changeable weather arrives. Unfortunately there was no Malaga Fair again this year but SUR in English we hope we can brighten up this final stretch of the summer with the usual combination of news and features. Meanwhile it's already time to start talking about going "back to school".

Last weekend saw the start of the football season and we'll bring the Malaga CF match reports to you online and in Friday's edition of the newspaper. Let's hope we'll be reporting lots of wins for the Blues and Whites. Don't forget you can contact us with your news and views by emailing surinenglish.su@diariosur.es or via Facebook @surenglish or Twitter @SUR_English.

ANSWERS

Quiz answers

Answer: 1974
Of interest: The Terracotta Army, a collection of terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China, was discovered in a field by farmers. **Answer:** Lead violinist **Of interest:** The concertmaster is the leader of the first violin section and tunes the orchestra, plays solo passages and specifies how the violin parts should be played (called first chair in US). **Answer:** Augusta **Of interest:** Scheduled for the first full week of April, the Masters is the first major of the year and is always held at the Augusta National Golf Club, a private course in the city of Augusta, Georgia, US.

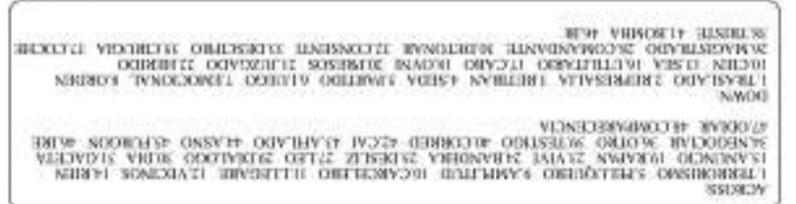
Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is U. Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador, all South American countries.

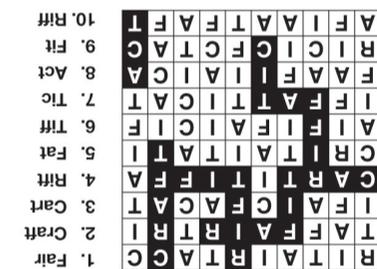
Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 5 Monitor; 7 Defer; 9 Met; 10 Insulated; 12 Make-believe; 15 Higher fares; 17 Belonging; 18 Shy; 21 Pages; 22 Acquire; Down: 1 Roles; 2 He; 3 Moon; 4 Relatives; 5 Reserve; 8 Eureka; 11 Fashioned; 13 Enrage; 14 Mineral; 15 Sharp; 16 Nice; 20 Run.

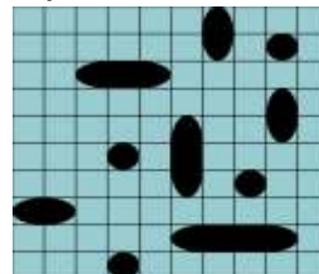
Language Crossword



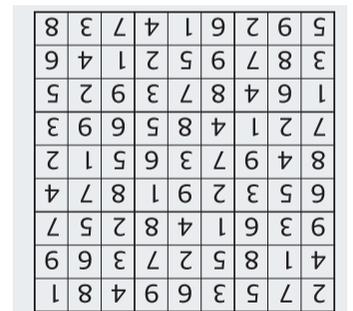
Wordpuzler solution



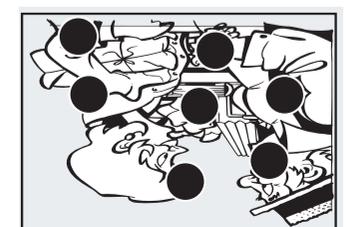
Battleships



Sudoku solution



The seven differences



The British music scene of the 1980s was one of the most magical times in the history of pop music and numerous bands that cut their teeth during this period went on to become some of the biggest artists in the world. Many of these are still at the forefront of today's music scene, while the music of those that have disappeared is constantly reproduced by tribute acts that refuse to let this era fade.

Alan Dreezer, a British singer and composer who now lives in Mijas, is one person who grew up during the '80s. He became so engrossed in the new wave music scene that he soon realised that this was what he wanted to do. However, he decided that he would not become just another tribute singer: instead, he used his influences of the '80s and his incredible vocal talents to create his own unique style of synth-pop music.

Born in Chelmsford, Essex, in 1964, Alan's journey into the world of music began in 1982 when he formed a duo with a childhood friend, and they soon began to get noticed. The band were signed to a management company and were invited to go on tour with one of the first boy bands. However, the road to success soon came to a halt.

"It all started at school when me and a friend formed a duo. After a few years we signed a management deal and were invited to do a tour with Brother Beyond. For one reason or another, that was as close to real success that we ever got, because our band dissolved a year later," Alan told SUR in English.

After the band split, Alan put his music on hold and went to work for a major electronics re-



British singer Alan Dreezer is getting ready for the release of his second solo CD in September. SUR

Embracing electropop culture

Synth-pop music. Mijas-based singer and composer Alan Dreezer began his career on the 1980s UK pop scene and today his music continues to promote this nostalgic era

TONY BRYANT



tailer. He also got married and had a family, so there was little time to pursue his passion for music.

Personal tragedy

In 2006, Alan decided to reignite his musical career. He began working on new songs with Russell Aylett, his former song writing partner, but the project was derailed following his partner's tragic death.

"I decided to give music another go at the beginning of 2006. I started working on some solo material with Russell but scrapped the project following his shocking murder. My best friend's passing hit me hard and making music seemed insignificant for years," he said.

In late 2010, after much persuasion, Alan reluctantly joined a covers band, but the project was short lived. It was at this time that he decided to concentrate on a solo career. After several years working on his own compositions, he went into the studio in 2017

to record London E12, his first solo CD.

"I was a kind of frustrated musician. I began travelling the UK gigging with a covers band. This was more rock based and this was not really my scene, so I decided to go into a studio and work on a solo project. I was working harder at my writing than ever before and was also learning more and more about marketing and promotion. This was everything that I always wanted to do and the result was my first solo album," the mild-mannered singer explained.

Change of scenery

The following year, Alan decided to visit Spain with the idea of living here for part of the year in order to concentrate on his musical career. He eventually settled in Mijas in April 2019. He soon fell in love with the area and even used the province to shoot some promotional videos.

However, the pandemic derailed many of Alan's plans to honour live performance commitments in the UK, but it did give him the opportunity to finish working on the songs for his second CD, Healed, which will be released on the 21 September.

Alan's music has a very '80s feel and this is something that he has strived to achieve as he believes that the magical music of this era still has a place on today's music scene.

"My music is difficult to describe, because I don't like to stick to one genre. I am a massive George Michael and Tony Hadley fan, so they have been a big influence in the writing side. When you grow up with this it almost becomes part of your DNA," the singer concluded.

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