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November 26th to December 2nd
2021

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ESTEPONA THE GARDEN OF THE COSTA DEL SOL

This month it's Estepona's
turn to be put In The
Spotlight, as we visit the
town's gardens, port and
festivals **INSIDE**



NO MORE VIOLENCE

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was
marked on Thursday with a march in Malaga city centre, among other
locations; inside, one victim tells her story **P10&11**

SHAY CONAGHAN

Why did last week's storm cause so much beach damage?

A combination of wind, tide,
the season and climate
change made the waves
more destructive **P2**

Rise in case rates forces experts to debate Covid passport

The Andalusian
government's committee of
experts meets again to
discuss possible measures **P4**

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5 COURSE SET MENU

A damaged beach bar in Malaga after last Friday's storm. **ÑITO SALAS**Waves lashed against the A-7 coast road. **ÑITO SALAS**The chiringuito restaurant that bore the brunt of the storm last Friday in Fuengirola. **ÑITO SALAS**An employee tries to rescue sunshades in Fuengirola. **ÑITO SALAS**

The perfect storm: wind, waves and climate change behind beach damage

The wind and waves that hit the Costa last Friday caused more damage than usual due to a combination of negative factors

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. It was the perfect storm that hit the Costa del Sol at the end of last week. The wind and waves caused more serious damage than in previous episodes of rough weather, especially in Marbella, Fuengirola and Malaga, due to a series of negative circumstances.

The waves that ate up the beaches at the end of last week measured up to five metres: still high, but in previous storms heights of eight metres have been recorded, without causing so much damage.

So what happened? José Carlos Báez, a researcher at the Spanish Institute of Oceanography was at the centre in Fuengirola port last Friday.

"The waves weren't that high, but it felt like it was raining onto the building's windows; my car was parked on the seafront and I had to wash it as it was covered in salt residue," he said.

One of the factors that combined to increase the destructive capacity of the waves was the wind. "The strong wind pushed the sea inland: it was water pushed by the wind; not the force of the wave itself," explained the expert.

The tide was also especially high due to the full moon, according local meteorologist José Luis Escudero.

José Carlos Báez added that the fact that the summer had only just ended was also a factor. "The beach

is dynamic: more sand is naturally deposited in summer, but when the season changes the waves eat away at the beach, and so we are in the middle of the period when the beaches aren't so wide and the storm gets closer," he said.

Climate change

And all these factors are enveloped in a global problem; the sea level is rising because of climate change, something that is "demonstrated and clear", said the researcher.

"So put together a rising sea level, high waves, a strong wind and the season when the beaches are smaller; the water gets further than it has ever been," he concluded.

The worst part is that this is likely to happen again.

"People aren't aware of climate change; it's not just that the weather is warmer, it affects the sea, which is also warmer. Changes are going to be more and more intense," he said.

Malaga and Marbella suffered

the worst damage last Friday. In the city, the waves left the foundations of some beach bars exposed as sand was lost.

In Marbella, the water reached levels never seen before on the Golden Mile, said residents. As in Fuengirola, beach bars were the main victims along the Marbella coastline, while more than 300 metres of wastewater pipes were washed away in San Pedro Alcántara.

On Wednesday this week, Marbella's mayor, Ángeles Muñoz, announced that the town hall would spend more than one million euros to repair the damage caused by last week's storm. She made the announcement during a visit to the affected area with the provincial delegate from the Junta de Andalucía, Patricia Navarro.

Season's first snowfall

The Dana (isolated high level depression) that started to cross Spain on Tuesday afternoon brought with it the first snowfall of the season in Malaga province. Peaks in the Sierra de las Nieves had a dusting of white on Wednesday as shown in this image taken from Coín. Snow fell in various other locations around Spain this week, including Granada's Sierra Nevada, whose ski slopes open this weekend.

**SALVADOR LÓPEZ MILLÁN**

Hundreds gather to call for action to stop beach erosion in Marbella

MARBELLA

Just days after another storm left a trail of damage on the coastline, residents and businesses have united to call for the speeding up of beach stabilisation plans

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

Marbella and San Pedro business representatives and residents took to the sands and the streets on Sunday to demand the speeding up of the stabilisation plans for the beaches on the Costa del Sol.

The protest started at La Bajadilla beach, where the shoreline was severely battered by the storm two days earlier.

Almost 500 people joined the march to La Fontanilla, seeing for themselves how the fury of the sea had washed away much of the sand during the latest episode of bad weather.

Twelve organisations, including hoteliers, beach bar owners,



Some of the participants in the Marbella protest on the beach on Sunday. JOSELE

local businesses, neighbourhood groups and travel agencies united for the protest.

José Luque, president of Costa del Sol hoteliers association, Aehcos, said he was very satisfied with turnout. "This protest demands that the central government speed

up the regeneration of the beaches. We cannot wait until 2025 to have good beaches," said the hotelier.

Breakwaters

"We can't wait any longer for the project to be drawn up, we need it to be done urgently. We've already

seen what's happened with the latest storm that has destroyed all the beaches and the promenade," said Miguel Lima, from the association Espigones Emergidos, which is calling for breakwaters to be built. "In 1985 there was a storm very similar to this one and we had the

breakwaters that served to protect the beach," he explained.

José Guerrero, who was the owner of the Los Tres Pepes beach bar, until he retired, spoke in the same vein. He has lived in the town since before the construction of breakwaters, and without them again after their removal.

"When the breakwaters were here, in this area there was room for about 1,000 people. Now, without the protection, there is little space for more than 500 people," he pointed out.

Pilar Pedrazuela, a representative of the Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Marbella, is of the same opinion. "We support the march out of necessity because the beaches are our livelihoods. Directly or indirectly, we all rely on them," she said.

Another who added his voice to the protest was renowned local chef Dani García who sent a video message from Qatar, where he is currently working, calling for the return of the breakwaters and remembering what La Fontanilla beach was like when he was a child. "I want to send my support and a big hug to all those who want to go back to having the beaches of my childhood," he said.

José Ravira, from the Provincial Association of Chiringuitos described the creation of breakwaters as "essential for the town" and predicted the loss of the beaches in a few years if it is not done.

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The Covid passport would mean being vaccinated becoming even more important for everyday things. **SUR**

Rise in regional case rates forces experts to moot Covid passport

MALAGA

The Andalusian committee advising on coronavirus meets today (26 November) to discuss the scope of restrictions

SUR

Regional politicians and experts in Andalucía are meeting today (Friday, 26 November) to see if, in their view, any tougher restrictions are needed to curb Covid-19 cases. The meeting comes as the incidence of Covid-19 in Andalucía continues to rise, just as it does across all of Spain.

The committee is expected to discuss possibly introducing measures to cut off transmission, such as the presentation of the so-called Covid passports to access certain events, hospitals and

residential homes.

This week, Andalucía started giving those aged 65 a booster jab, ahead of other regions, although these have since agreed to follow suit, now central government has formerly recommended the policy.

Meanwhile, central government is resting its strategy on "keeping on vaccinating without stopping" with a move to shortly reporting daily data showing the difference between the vaccinated and non-vaccinated in terms of Covid-19 infection rates

Spain, with over 79 per cent

The rolling 14-day case rate was 96 per 100,000 in Malaga province on Thursday this week

having had a full dose, has one of the highest Covid-19 vaccination rates in Europe still.

Although the Andalucía region remains at a low risk rate - according to a new banding of case rate levels this week that sees everything under 100 classed as low - the average case rate in the region was 83 positive cases per 100,000 people in the last 14 days on Thursday (25 November), up from 56 a week earlier.

On a local level, Malaga province - including the Costa del Sol - saw its most new cases in a day on Thursday this week since mid-September, with 234 infections reported in the previous 24 hours.

The rolling 14-day case rate was 96 per 100,000 in Malaga province. Of the five Health Districts in the province, the worst case rate on Thursday was in the Ronda area with 129.1 per 100,000 in the previous 14 days.

Europe authorises Pfizer vaccine for children aged between 5 and 11 years

MADRID

SUR. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has given the go-ahead for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years old to be vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine against Covid-19.

The announcement was made by the EMA on Thursday this week.

Europe now joins the United States, which approved the use of the Pfizer vaccine for this age group a month ago.



The defendant in court. **M. F.**

Twenty-year sentence for Brit who stabbed his wife to death in Estepona

MALAGA

IRENE QUIRANTE. British national Geoffrey Elton has been handed a prison sentence of 20 years and one day for brutally killing his Spanish wife at her home on the Costa del Sol. Gloria Tornay, originally from Montejaque, in the Serranía de Ronda, was violently murdered in her home in Estepona on the night of 9 March, 2019. Tornay was stabbed numerous times with a long kitchen knife.

According to the sentence, which SUR has had access to, the jury concluded that the defendant, who acknowledged responsibility for the crime during the hearing at Malaga's Provincial Court, was fully responsible for his actions when he killed Gloria. The jury dismissed the defence's argument that Elton suffered from a delusional disorder that prevented him from being aware of what he was doing. Elton had told the court that remembered nothing of what happened.

Protesters call for solution to delayed Costa Alzheimer's centre

The cornerstone for the new centre for Torremolinos and Benalmádena was laid in March 2011, but the project never got off the ground

T. BRYANT / I. GELIBTER

BENALMÁDENA. Hundreds of residents from Benalmádena and Torremolinos participated in a protest on Saturday to call for a solution to the delay in the construction of a local centre for people with Alzheimer's and dementia, a project that was announced more than ten years ago. The demonstration, in Arroyo de la Miel, was organised by the Benalmádena Association of Relatives of Alzheimer's Patients (AFAB).

Protesters highlighted the unsustainable situation at the current AFAB headquarters, which does not have sufficient facilities to cope with the growing demands of patients from both areas who need professional attention.

During the rally, which was held outside the Casa de Cultura, one supporter said that the objective was to "end a long decade of waiting".

"In the last ten years, all of the doors we have approached have been shut in our faces. Benalmádena and Torremolinos urgently need a centre where therapists and assistants can offer the sick the care that will give them the quality of life that they need to be able to cope with dementia until the end of their days."

AFAB celebrated with enthusiasm the act of laying the first stone of what would be its new headquarters in March 2011. Due to financial technicalities, the construction has never begun.



Protesters in Arroyo de la Miel on Saturday. **SUR**

The president of AFAB, Mari Cruz Azuaga, said last week that the organisation had requested the land for the construction of headquarters from the town hall in 2009. The initial budget for the

work was estimated at 1.8 million euros, although the project was modified and the cost was reduced to 1.2 million, a figure which the AFAB president believes is achievable.



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Burning Brexit questions answered at meeting for British residents

Mijas Council Foreigners' Department organised four speakers to present on life after Brexit at an event in La Cala de Mijas on Tuesday

NEVE MATTHEWS

MALAGA. Around 120 people got together at La Cala de Mijas town hall branch on Tuesday for a series of informative talks focused on the topic of life after Brexit.

Four speakers, organised by Mijas Foreigners' Department, covered a range of issues and provided answers to the questions posed by the audience.

Foreign Residents councillor, Arancha López Lillo, introduced the presenters and said how happy she was "to see the auditorium full".

First on the agenda was Blevins Franks, a firm that provides specialist financial advice to foreign residents. Partner Paul Montague spoke about how the financial situation had changed for British people in Spain following the UK's exit from the EU.

Handling taxes for those resident in Spain, the loss of UK advisors and the latest on pensions were among the issues discussed.

Montague said, "The benefits of becoming a resident include no 90-day restrictions and you could pay less tax."

Reflecting on participating in



The speakers and organisers at La Cala de Mijas town hall branch. N. M.

the event, he said, "I enjoy helping people and getting the message out to expats who need guidance."

Next, the project manager of Support in Spain, Neil Hesketh, explained this not-for-profit, community information project.

The bilingual website makes it easy to find information and support for when things do not go to plan while in Spain, including a directory to help people find answers about topics such as healthcare access, available benefits, disability and bureaucracy.

Hesketh urged the audience to "have a plan for when things go wrong and be evangelists of good

Councillor Arancha López Lillo introduced the presenters and said how happy she was "to see the auditorium full"

information in the community."

British Consul Charmaine Arbouin provided updates from the Consulate. She encouraged people to register as residents in Spain, and those who are already residents to gradually exchange their green documents for a TIE. She said that healthcare would largely

continue as before Brexit.

Anne Hernández of Brexipats in Spain answered questions about the issue of UK driving licences, which cease to be valid in Spain on 31 December for those resident over six months. She explained that unless a last minute deal is done, UK drivers have to swap their licence to a Spanish one by taking a test. Some pre-Brexit residents who registered their intention to swap last year still have a few weeks to change and skip a test, however.

Two Britons who had travelled from Alcalá la Real in Jaén province, Katherine and Christopher Rogers, explained that they moved to Spain 16 months ago, earlier than expected, because of Brexit. Though they started their residency process as soon as they could, "Brexit still throws up problems, and it is very clear that we are low on the [Spanish] government's priority list."

Many of the attendees said that the presentations had been helpful. Rob from Vélez-Málaga said, "The talks cleared up a few issues and gave me an action plan on the taxation side of things. It is also good to know that there is a support network out here."

Mirroring these sentiments was Lorell, who moved to Mijas in October. She said, "The talks helped amazingly, I am so glad I came. They made me feel much calmer and it is excellent to get immediate answers to my questions."

Petition launched for visa that caters for non-EU and non-resident property owners

NEVE MATTHEWS

MALAGA. A local law company has launched a petition for a new Spanish property owners visa on change.org.

The petition hopes to combat the issue for non-EU passport holders of only being able to spend 90 out of any 180 days in Spain without a residence permit. By Thursday afternoon this week more than 300 people had already signed.

María Luisa Castro of Costaluz Lawyers explained the motivation for this new visa, "We have received dozens of emails from unhappy British people who have seen their rights to use and enjoy private property cut off by Brexit."

There are currently only two options for those who plan to retire to Spain; the Golden Visa, for which you need to invest at least 500,000 euros in Spanish property, and the Non-Lucrative Visa, whereby there are no property requirements, but you need to show proof of funds to qualify. In 2021, the requirement is 2,259 euros a month.

The requirements proposed for the Spanish property owners visa are to have owned a property in Spain for at least three years and proof of income of at least 1,130 euro a month.

Costa del Sol prepares for big Christmas light switch-on

SUR

COSTA DEL SOL. Christmas lights are going on in towns and villages across the Costa del Sol and Malaga province this week and next.

Marbella and San Pedro were two of the first areas off the blocks on Thursday with a special show in Marbella's Orange Square among other events.

The big switch-on for tonight (Friday, 26 November) is in Malaga city, recently voted one of the best places in Europe for festive illuminations. Besides the traditional focal point on swanky Calle Larios with a music and light show, 500 other central and outlying streets will be decorated. Fuengirola also switches on today as does Estepona and many other locations in the area. Some places, such as Ronda, will wait for next week to turn theirs on.

Generally, town halls are in-



The lights at Malaga's La Concepción were previewed this week. S. SALAS

creasing their spending compared to much reduced levels last year, during the worst point of the Covid pandemic, and returning to levels last seen in 2019.

One eagerly awaited new holiday lights attraction on the Costa is the illumination of the famous

tropical gardens at the La Concepción estate on the edge of Malaga. The city council hopes to diversify its lights away from the city centre this way. Paid tickets for La Concepción are available online from 27 November to 9 January.

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More than 4,000 foreigners have registered in Marbella since the start of the pandemic

MARBELLA

The biggest increase has been from Europeans, and for the first time the United Kingdom tops the list of new entries ahead of Morocco

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

Between March 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic began in Spain, and November 2021, the number of foreigners who have registered at Marbella town hall has increased by 4,101, from 40,745 to 44,846. This is an important figure and there are two reasons for it. One is the campaign about the Covid vaccine and the other is that more people are now working from home, says the head of the Foreigners Department, Remedios Bocanegra, when asked about how people in Marbella had responded during the health crisis.

She says the vaccine campaign was very positive. "There are a lot of foreigners here who don't have a residence permit or they have one but aren't covered by the public health service. They might have private health insurance that doesn't cover them for the vaccine," she explains. The council's information campaign, which was carried out in the media, social media, direct messages and online meetings with the presidents of associations for the

different nationalities, was aimed at these foreigners, to let them know that "if they want to have the vaccine, they have to be on the 'padrón', the population register. Those who are registered but do not have social security can go to the health centre closest to their place of residence and fill in a form which will be entered onto the database only to give them access to the vaccine," she says.

For the first time, people from the UK head the list of new registrations, ahead of Morocco

which is normally at the top. "There are 1,416 more British people on the register now," says Bocanegra. That is an interesting figure in the context of Brexit, and the councillor says she thinks it is because "being on the padrón means they can prove that they are living in the town when they apply to be officially resident".

Some people have also registered because they are working from home. Bocanegra says that after the lockdown and change of lifestyle all over the world, a lot of people are considering do-

ing things differently. "That includes working remotely," she explains.

Property sales

"Foreign estate agencies have told me that property sales have gone up considerably in the middle to high price range, and that tells us that people who can afford it are choosing Marbella because it has facilities such as schools and medical centres that suit their lifestyles, and it is only 40 minutes from the airport," she says.

The rise in the numbers of Europeans on the padrón also indicates an increase in remote working, especially among Scandinavians, as there are 80 new residents from Norway and 205 from Sweden. There are also another 254 from Italy, 188 from Germany, 152 from France, 93 from the Netherlands and 48 from Belgium, 224 Irish and 454 Russians, among others.

Half of staff of the La Zambra hotel, formerly Byblos, will be Mijas locals

MIJAS

A. JIMÉNEZ. The La Zambra hotel (formerly Byblos), which is slated to open in 2022, has pledged that half of their contracts will go to Mijas locals.

Those in charge of the hotel have signed an agreement of collaboration with Mijas town hall, which means that the company in charge of hiring staff- Este Castillo Operations SLU- will prioritise locals, according to mayor José González, who greenlit the deal.

The hotel's reopening in June 2022 will include 196 rooms, a 2,000 square metres spa, five restaurants, three swimming pools, two courts for tennis and another two for padel, among other services.

The positions on offer from January are head of reception, housekeepers, public relations, maintenance, waiters and directors of food and drink.

Those interested in any of the positions can send their CVs to: lazambra@mijas.es.

Talk Radio Europe gears up for the One in a Million crowdfunding campaign

MARBELLA

T. BRYANT. Talk Radio Europe (TRE) is hosting the Joan Hunt One in a Million crowdfunding campaign this weekend in a bid to raise one million euros to help create and operate the first ever palliative care in-patient unit in Andalucía for children and teenagers. In addition to the in-patient unit, the money raised will support the organisation and training of a team of professionals to provide home care, day-care and in-patient care for children suffering from a variety of life-limiting conditions.

TRE presenters will be using their shows over the weekend to encourage donors to help them hit the target, and every donation made between Friday (today) and midnight on Sunday will be matched by the initiative's sponsors.

TRE President Martin Nathan said, "Please spread the word and support our campaign by giving generously. Let's get the job done."

Storms unearth two ovens from Roman times in San Pedro Alcántara

MARBELLA

Specialists are working on the site to determine what needs to be done for the correct treatment and conservation of the remains

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

Strong storms that hit the coast recently have uncovered a pleasant surprise in Marbella. The wrath of the waves unearthed two ovens, presumably from Roman times, in the dunes of El Ingenio, in San Pedro. Work will be done to put measures in place for the conservation of the remains.

The regional government's Culture department said it received



An archaeologist working on the recovery shows one of the ovens. **JOSELE**

several calls as the remains began to surface near the paleochristian basilica of Vega del Mar. Upon initial inspection of the remains, two ovens were identified,

one in very good condition.

Work continued on Monday morning with the Culture delegate from the Junta de Andalucía, who is giving instructions on how

to properly manage the findings.

Also in the vaults

The vaults at the Vega del Mar Roman site were also inspected after the surroundings were affected by the bad weather.

The main structure has not suffered damage, but one of the walls in the perimeter and an adjacent building that protects the thermal baths were knocked down.

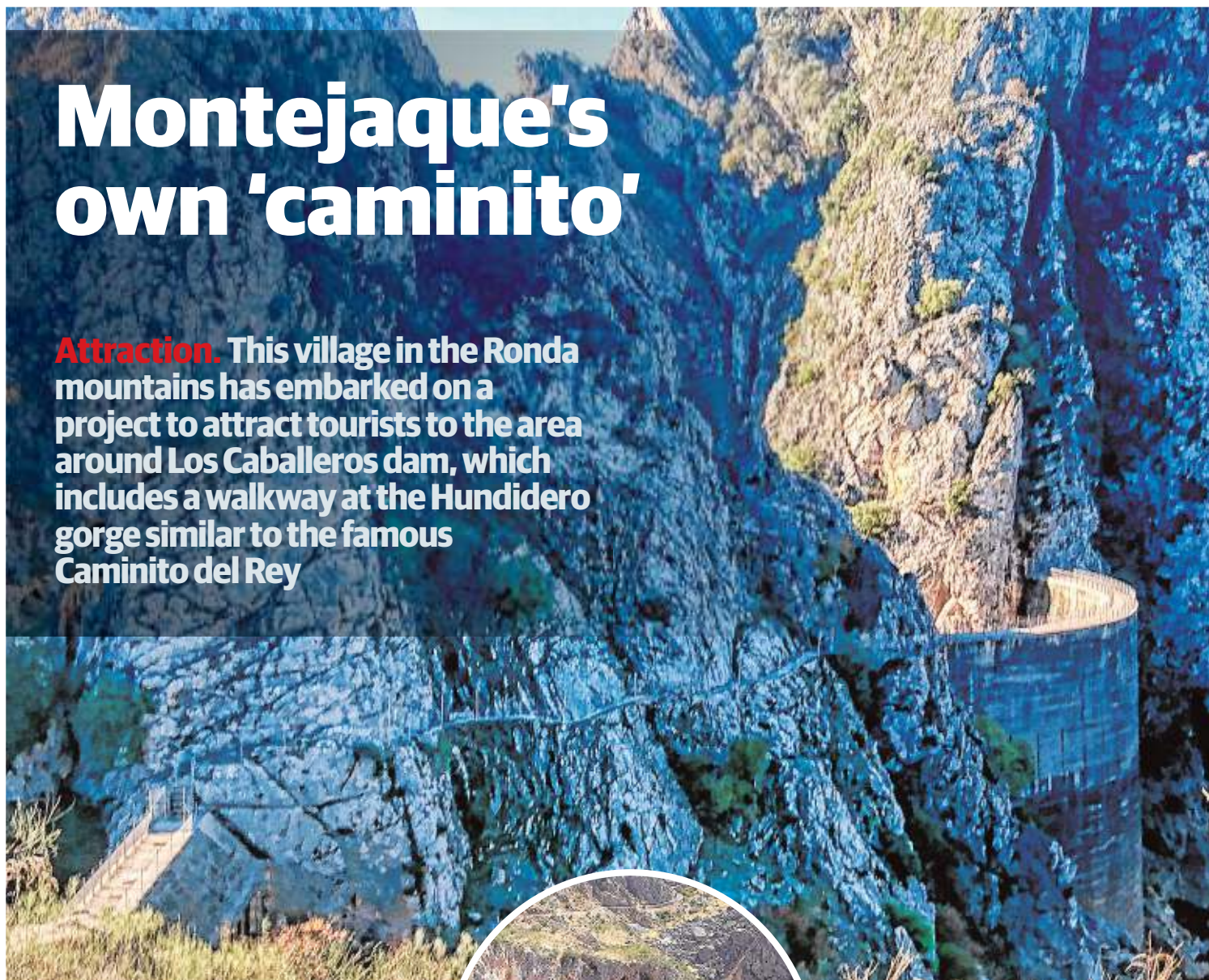
In 1991, various Roman structures that belonged to a fish salting factory from 2BC. and a necropolis with 40 bodies were found. After the discovery, the remains were covered up and have stayed that way for 30 years.

The area is used by fishermen in San Pedro as a dry dock, something that local organisations Cilniana and San Pedro Alcántara 1860 have denounced.

A 2018 study commissioned by the Costa's water company initially confirmed the existence of archaeological remains south of the paleochristian basilica, where the two ovens were unearthed.

Montejaque's own 'caminito'

Attraction. This village in the Ronda mountains has embarked on a project to attract tourists to the area around Los Caballeros dam, which includes a walkway at the Hundidero gorge similar to the famous Caminito del Rey



◀▶ Hundidero.

Left, a view of the Caminito walkway which will run between the Taviznilla and Tavizna hills, taken from one of the observatories in the area; above, part of the walkway and a view of Los Caballeros dam. In the circular image, the impressive entrance to the Cueva de Hundidero. **JUAN DE CASTRO**

JOSÉ MIGUEL AGUILAR



Montejaque council is embarking on this Ronda village's most ambitious project ever. Its aim is to boost the local economy, fighting depopulation and recovering its cultural and ethnographic heritage. The town hall is now drawing up plans, which they began studying ten years ago, for the area around the Montejaque reservoir, and carrying out improvements in order to have it protected as a fluvial reserve.

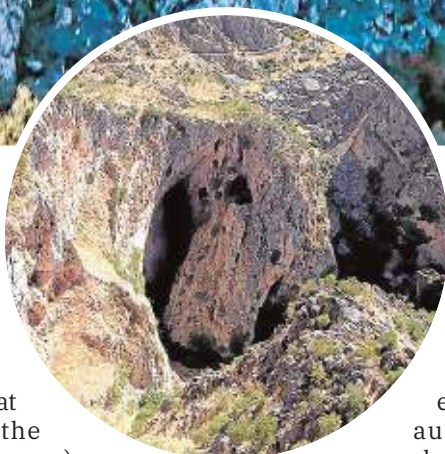
The most striking part of this project is the restoration of a walkway leading to Los Caballeros dam, which will be called the Caminito de Montejaque or Caminito de los Caballeros, and will be similar to the famous Caminito del Rey.

Many parts of this project are aimed at attracting scientific and nature tourism, by regenerating the area and making it possible to visit Los Caballeros dam, which has been inaccessible for nearly a century. With this in mind, the Taviznilla path and the walkway over the dam have been restored, and two via ferratas are in the process of being created on the inside of the wall. The idea of a suspended

walkway or Tibetan bridge (made of transparent methacrylate and, at 75 metres, the longest in Europe) is currently in the study phase.

Further ahead, there are plans for: a Tree Museum in the area called Los Cucaderos; four birdwatching observatories (the area is home to species such as griffon vultures, peregrine falcons, eagle owls, kestrels and Egyptian vultures, all of which nest there) in addition to the existing bee-eater observatory; a cycle-tourism route; signs with sensors to indicate the adapted paths, for people with visual and intellectual disabilities, which were created in 2013 and cover 5.5 and 3.2 kms and have explanatory panels in Braille; and finally, the reconstruction of the Isla en la Puente, (famous in history for the battle against the French troops in 1810 after the Napoleonic invasion) which would sustain a 10-hectare stretch of water.

Recreational activities such as walking, jogging, climbing, potholing and kayaking will be possible on and around the reservoir. There are also plans to convert 18 kilometres of path-way into a usable track along the



old cattle trails.

In the first half of next year the council expects to inaugurate the works carried out in the area of the Cueva del

Hundidero, a cave which was classified as a Natural Monument of Andalucía on 29 April 2019, which cost 97,000 euros. (It had already been classified as a Site of Cultural Interest, or BIC, in 1985).

Definitive boost

For the mayor of Montejaque, Diego Sánchez, this is "a definitive boost for the recovery of the local economy because of the jobs it will create and the number of visitors who will put us on the map. It is a major project which has taken a long time, but will soon be a reality. We are very excited about it," he says.

Ecological restoration and environmental improvement works will be carried out in the area and in and around the Cueva del Hundidero, an impressive karst tunnel through which the Gáduares river, which is also known as the Campobuche, flows. This has created an intricate system of underground galleries which reappear at the Cueva del Gato in Benaolán, which was classified as a natural monument in

2011. The cave, whose entrance is in Montejaque, is home to one of the largest settled colonies of cave bats. The works in the nearby area will include a path-way to the cave, another along the Hundidero gorge and two via ferratas totalling 150 metres between this gorge and the Taviznilla path. The 1,450 square metre car park is almost finished, and so are a 450 metre path to the cave, another of 200 metres leading to the Hundidero gorge and a final one of 75 metres at Taviznilla, to the top of Los Caballeros dam.

New technologies

For Juan de Castro, the founder of the Sierra de Libar foundation, who drew up the plans, this will be an exciting way to enjoy one of the most important geological areas of Andalucía, as the project will incorporate new technologies by using augmented reality simulators and virtual reality in 3D-360°-RV format, in an information area situated inside the cave. This will enable visitors

The project, whose first phase will be inaugurated in 2022, is very ambitious and covers an area nearly 400 hectares in size

to learn in detail about the history of the cave, from the prehistoric site which was discovered by Henri Breuil, to the contemporary history of the Montejaque reservoir, and also see all the mammals, birds, insects and invertebrates of the area through an application which can be downloaded to any mobile phone.

Since January this year, the minister for the Presidency of the Junta de Andalucía, Elías Bendodo, and the Tourism delegate Nuria Rodríguez have already paid visits to the site.

In the next few weeks the original riverbed will be cleared to make a brand new path from the Cueva de Hundidero to the internal side of Los Caballeros dam, where the two via ferratas will go.

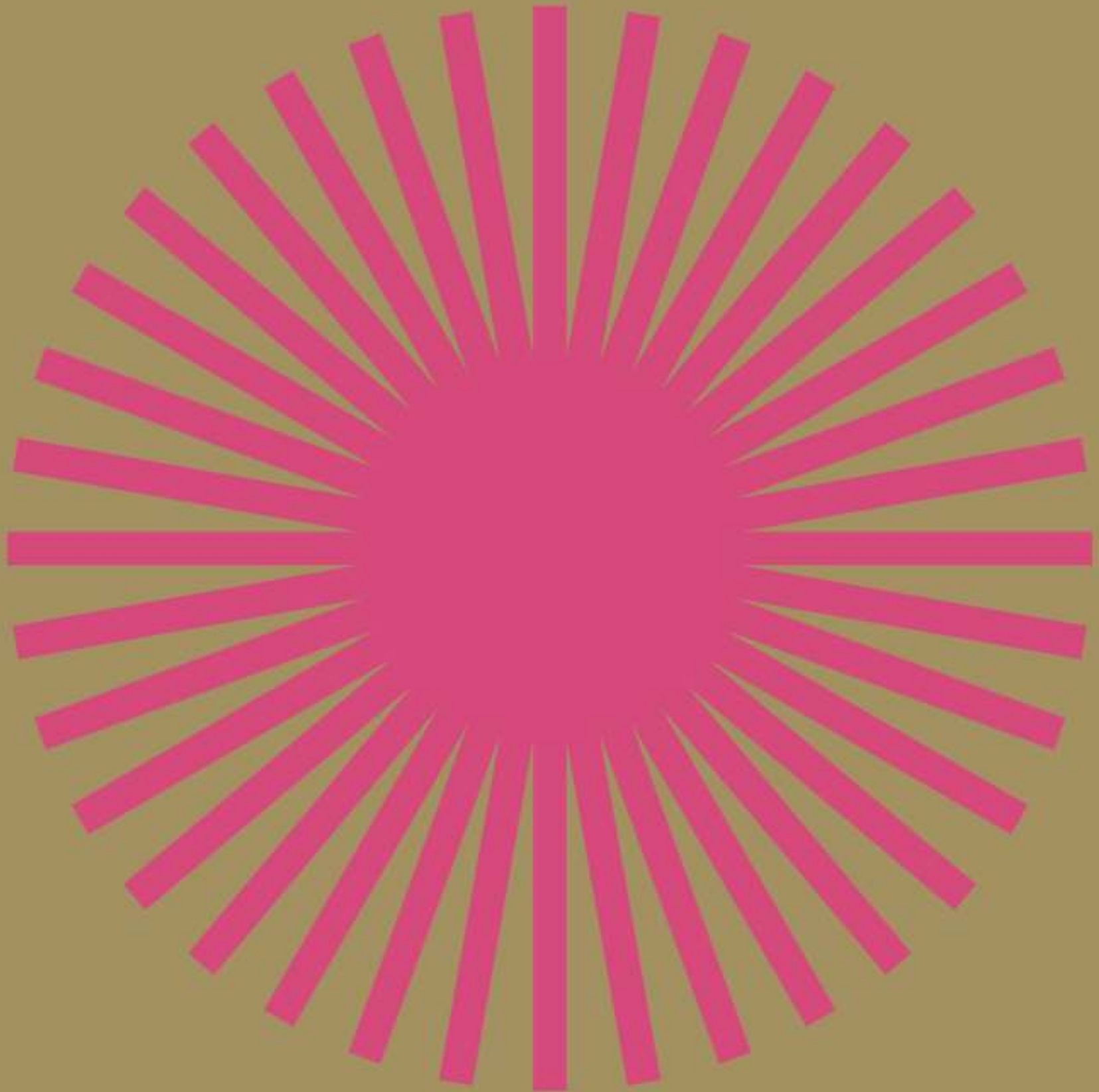
These will be another major attraction and the plans for them have attracted a great deal of interest among people living in the Serranía de Ronda.

This project for the Montejaque reservoir complex, which will cover nearly 400 hectares of land from the Puente de la Dehesa bridge to the cave, and will include 18 kilometres of paths recovered from old cattle trails, will be completed in 2025, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the reservoir complex.

The cost will be around two million euros.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



María, 18 years old and 27 scars that tell of a miracle



► **Self-defence.**
María has eight scars on her hands.

Gender violence. The young woman, who survived an attempted murder attack at the hands of her ex-boyfriend, describes the relationship with her imprisoned aggressor

JUAN CANO

María's heart stopped three times that night. She was, she says, "practically dead". She had two stab wounds to her neck, and six on her back.

A cut ran from her eye - she was a millimetre away from losing it - to her left ear, which was split in two.

María had another six stab wounds in her back. One of them pierced her right kidney, which she lost.

María had a sunken skull where it had been kicked, and three metal fragments embedded in her head. They were pieces of the knife with which her ex-boyfriend allegedly stabbed her.

The 18-year-old had lost a lot of blood when she was admitted to the Clinical Hospital in Malaga on 5 May. She was placed in an induced coma and operated on.

The beginning

María was 15 when she met her boyfriend in Fuengirola, where she

lives. Two days later she celebrated her 16th birthday, and they became official. He was 22 years old, lived with his parents and didn't study or work.

"At first everything was great. He was jealous, but that was it... I thought I had found someone who understood me," she tells SUR in an interview to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

The first time he hit her was two months into the relationship. "We argued and he hit me. I asked him to leave and he did. He called me and wrote to me all the time, but I didn't answer," says María.

"He asked me to meet because he said he was in a bad way, that he was going to die... When I went, he showed me a jar of pills [...] I forgave him. And there started almost two years of him hitting me and me forgiving him."

"He would throw me to the ground and drag me by the hair. His way of hitting was very aggres-

sive," she says.

"If I went out with my friends, he got angry. If I talked to a boy, he asked how I knew him, if I had got off with him... I said he was a childhood friend, but he didn't care. The next day, or that same night, if he could, he would hit me. He said that it was all my fault."

In public, he was a typical nice, friendly boy, who was liked by everyone.

The manipulation occurred "little by little", explains the young woman. "He started to control me by saying 'don't wear this', 'don't go out with them', 'don't say hello'. He separated me from my friends, from my family... He broke my computer because I had photos with my friends on it and he didn't like that life. I stopped partying because I thought, 'When I get home he's going to hit me'."

Early in the relationship demanded that she block all the male followers from her social media. He isolated her more and more un-

til she felt invisible.

-What would you say to a girl who is feeling that way right now?

-That she is not alone. I thought I was, but no. There are so many people willing to help you. And I would also tell her that after all the bad something good always comes.

The breakup

During the pandemic, he moved into his girlfriend's house. She even helped him find a job that he gave up on the first day.

One day, he elbowed her in the ribs. That blow was not the worst, nor the most painful, but it was the one that made her realise that she could not tolerate any more.

She told her mum that he had

"I stopped partying because I thought, 'When I get home he's going to hit me.'"

◀ Mother and daughter.

Ana had María when she was 18 and the pair are very close. **ÑITO SALAS**

pushed her.

"I went to him and told him that he had five minutes to pick up his things and leave my house, otherwise I would immediately call the police," says Ana, María's mum.

After the breakup, the harassment began. "There were days where I had 80 missed calls on my mobile from seven different numbers."

She eventually agreed to talk to him. "I asked him to return the money he owed me from the TV and the computer he broke. We agreed on about 600 euros. I let him pay me little by little... he would leave it in my mailbox while I stayed in the house."

The day of the attack he told her that he was going to give her 150 euros, through the usual method.

However, in the evening he contacted her and told her that his flat-mate had left him without a key.

This is how he got María to go from Fuengirola to Benalmádena. "He insisted that I go to his house and that I had to see him that night."

He opened the door and came out with some notes in his hand. "He told me: 'Take your money.' He put it in my hand and then added: 'And now you're going to pay'."

From then on, "I remember practically nothing. I am not aware of what happened... From the ground, I heard him say something like this: 'I killed my ex-girlfriend. I'm handing myself in'."

Her attacker called 112 and the police came in a matter of minutes.

Their report records their conversation: "As soon as she came inside, I punched her in the face and threw her to the ground. Then I kicked her several times in the head, went to the kitchen, took a knife and started stabbing her. I wanted to kill her, my intention was to kill her."

The judge sent him to prison, where he continues to wait for trial.

The hospital

The first operation was on her head. The neurosurgeon told her mother that it would take an hour, but it lasted more than three.

After surgery, the doctor informed Ana that three fragments of the knife had been removed from her skull and that they had needed to restore the bone with a kind of putty.

The second operation was on her abdomen.

Surgeons had to open her stomach to remove a kidney and drain the blood clots that were constantly forming due to internal bleeding caused by the stab wounds.

"It's the biggest [scar] I have. I told my mother that I already have the line, so now I only need the

People join together to call for an end to violence against women

squares to make a chocolate bar," jokes María.

On the fifth day in the ICU, María came out of the induced coma.

"It was amazing. I woke up to hear a voice telling me that I couldn't leave, that I had to stay and fulfil a mission," she recalls.

"I thought, 'Dear God, was it you who spoke to me?' When I told my mother, she replied: 'Of course it was, this is a miracle.'"

At first she was scared that her ex-boyfriend could go in the ICU at any time.

Little by little she became aware of the seriousness of her wounds, which meant her head had to be shaved.

"When I woke up bald, I started calling to the doctors. 'Who shaved me? I will kill him!' I said jokingly."

Her friends bought her wig with donations from people who know her and the Avates women's association.

María still wears her wig while she waits for her hair to grow and gradually cover her head wounds.

Furthermore, María's tutor went to see her at the hospital and helped her finish her ESO (secondary education) from the hospital bed, instead of a desk.

Life afterwards

Mary has rebuilt her life. "It is impossible for me not to be well, with everything that the police, nurses, doctors, my tutor have done for me... I'm not alone. There is always someone who wants to help you... I wish someone who had gone through the same thing had told me at the time."

In the six months since the incident she has had two anxiety attacks, one when she saw her ex's friends in the street.

María gets cramps in her neck and hands, and has lost her sense of touch in two fingers. She also has one less kidney. But she doesn't feel any resentment.

- What would you say to him?

- "Even though he did what he did, I wish him nothing bad. Let justice take its course, and that's all. I'm not afraid of him. Not anymore."

María wants to show a true story of violence against women, but also of survival: "I have already been dead, but I have returned. Now, everything I do I'm going to do with a smile; I go outside and thank God for being here, for being able to see people again, my mother, hug her..."

When she left the hospital, Ana told María that her story had been published in SUR. Now she wanted to give this interview, thinking of that voice she heard in hospital.

"I can help people see reality. That after the first blow many more can come. And tell other women who are going through the same thing that they are not alone."

That, María concludes, is her mission.

SUR

MALAGA. International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women was marked on Thursday evening with a march in Malaga city centre, among other

locations across Spain. People came together, wearing and displaying purple as usual for 25 November, to call for a more equal society where all women can feel safe and supported. Those gathering in Malaga were

particularly vocal about zero tolerance for violence from men.

From January to September this year there were 3,434 reported cases of violence against women in Malaga province and 1,713 women in the province had police protection. According to data from the central government representative in Malaga province, there were 2,405 calls to the special confidential 016 helpline in that period - the operators can take calls in several languages including Spanish and English.



The head of the protest. s. c.

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The house at 14 Calle Carabeo is owned by the family of the poet Federico García Lorca. **F. CABEZAS**

Lorca's summer house still for sale after a year on the market

The property located in Nerja's Calle Carabeo is valued at four million euros and boasts 2,190 square metres including the garden and orchard

EUGENIO CABEZAS

NERJA. More than 15 months after SUR reported that the house at 14 Calle Carabeo, belonging to the family of the poet Federico García Lorca, was up for sale, the property is still on the market.

However, the conditions of the sale have changed. In 2020 it was on the market for three million euros, but the amount has risen to four, as the current owners, three of Lorca's nieces - Isabel, Gloria and Laura - now intend to sell the entire property of 2,190 square metres. Previously it was 1,395, according to the estate agent Jacobo Armero, who has spoken to SUR.

For just over a year, Armero has been in charge of showing

the house to interested buyers. "It is a very unique property, there is a number of people interested, but it is not a property that is within everyone's reach," said the architect and estate agent, who acknowledged "the great media expectation" generated by the news in the summer of 2020.

"In reality it has little to do with Lorca, because although it seems that he did spend some time on holiday there, the house belonged to his sister-in-law and was inherited by her daughters," added Armero.

There are a couple of photos on the internet that show Lorca in Nerja during that period, although none confirm that he ever stayed at the house. However,

"In reality the house has little to do with Lorca because it belonged to his sister-in-law"

there is a rumour that the poet could be buried in the orchard, but this is something that the family has always denied.

The house is one of the largest and best-preserved properties in the area. It is more than a hundred years old, 427 square metres in size spread over two floors and has an enormous garden of 2,190 square metres, with a swimming pool and views overlooking the Nerja cliffs.

On the ground floor there are two bedrooms, two bathrooms, two living rooms, a kitchen and pantry, covered porch, patio and carport. The upstairs boasts six bedrooms, two bathrooms, two living rooms and two terraces.

The Volera association, which aims to protect the heritage of Nerja, wants the town hall to buy the property and use it as a cultural centre focusing on the Generation of '27 (an influential group of poets that arose in Spanish literary in the 1920s, of which Lorca was one) and the beginnings of tourism in the town.

Town hall approves initial draft of new PGOU which includes airfield extension

E. CABEZAS

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Vélez-Málaga town hall has approved the initial draft of its new urban development plan (PGOU) to replace the existing one which dates back to 1996.

In an extraordinary council meeting which took place on Tuesday, councillors initially approved the new document, which provides for the implementation of 10,100 new homes, of which 7,077 are included in the existing document.

Another of the key projects included in the plan is to promote the Trapiche Airport Strategic Plan, which plans for the extension of the runways of the Leoni Benabú airfield, so that planes of up to 50 passengers and cargo aircraft can use it for the transport of subtropical fruit in the area.

Once the new PGOU draft has been initially signed off by the council, it will be available to the public for suggestions and allegations, before final approval by the Junta de Andalucía.

HERE AND THERE

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

Pine trees treated ahead of caterpillar season

J. R. Vélez-Málaga town hall announced on Tuesday that it has started to treat pine trees against processionary caterpillars before they start to build their nests as winter approaches. The places where action will be taken include public schools, the Virgen del Amor garden, the Calle Afrodita park in Benajarafe, the Stone Museum in Valle Niza, the Romeral park Vélez-Málaga and other pine forest areas. A total of 250 pine trees will be treated over the coming weeks.

ALFARNATE

Village investigating gastroenteritis cases

E. C. Alfarnate town hall is recommending that its residents drink bottled water after detecting at least three cases of gastroenteritis in the village so far this week. The council has commissioned new analyses of the wells that supply the water, although it has not ruled out the possibility of a viral infection. Councillors have called for any residents with symptoms, which include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, to contact the local health centre on 697 956 687.



Cómputa's new health centre will be built next to the car park. **E. C.**

CÓMPETA

Cómputa set to get long-awaited new health centre which will see an end to patients having to wait outside

E. CABEZAS. Cómputa is set to get a new health centre to replace the current one, where during the pandemic patients have had to wait outside in the street for their turn.

After more than a decade of paperwork and delays, the Junta de Andalucía has awarded the contract for the refurbishment of a 500-square-metre municipal building (five times the size of the current centre) next to the pub-

lic car park in Plaza de España. The works are expected to take four months to complete and the new space should be ready next spring. They are expected to cost 400,000 euros.

Mayor of Cómputa Obdulio Pérez said that the population, "has not stopped growing in recent months as a result of the pandemic, since the number of people registering, both nationals and foreigners, has increased."

ALMÁCHAR

Contract awarded for Axarquía raisin museum

E. C. Malaga's provincial authority, Diputación, awarded on Monday a contract for the construction for the future Almáchar raisin museum, to the company Ecsa Obra. This is the latest step to promote the Axarquía Muscatel raisin, which was added to the UN's food and agriculture organisation's list of Important World Agricultural Heritage Systems (SIPAM) in April 2018. The budget for the project is 765,147 euros and is expected to take 12 months to complete.

NERJA

British residents invited to Nerja post-Brexit talk

J. R. Nerja Foreigners Department in collaboration with Blacktower Financial Management and My Lawyer in Spain will offer an informative talk on life in Spain after Brexit on Tuesday 30 November at Nerja Cultural Centre in Calle Granada. It will start at 11am and there will be an opportunity for questions and answers after the talk. To reserve a place email: ilse.liebrechts@blacktowerfm.com, or call: 952 816 443, Monday to Friday 9am - 2pm.



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A Black Friday with fewer bargains

The shops are not slashing prices as they have in other years even though many consumers are keen to start their Christmas shopping early

JUAN SOTO

MALAGA. Black Friday will be more decaffeinated than ever this year locally. The difficult financial situation of many shops since the pandemic began, combined with supply problems worldwide, means there will be fewer bargains than in other years.

Although most of the big chains and shopping centres are making a big deal about Black Friday, small local shops and even some high street names have decided not to offer any additional discounts. They say the economic situation is not good enough and they prefer to focus on Christmas, although there is still some uncertainty about that.

The president of the shopkeepers association of Malaga's historic city centre, Juanibel Vera, recognises this fact. She explains that this year no campaign has been organised by the association and only a few businesses are offering discounts on their own account. "The margins are already at their limit; we can't offer more discounts," say some of these business owners.

This Black Friday will also be marked by global supply problems. As many business owners are not going to receive the merchandise they were expecting, they have decided not to lower the prices of the items they have in stock. "We have to sell what we have and not at silly prices," they say.

According to a report from con-



Many shops offer discounts at this time of year as a way of attracting customers. SALVADOR SALAS

sulting firm EY, 65 per cent of Spanish consumers will be looking for Black Friday bargains even though the shops have not engaged in a massive publicity campaign as they have in previous years. The percentage has gone up by 21 per cent compared with last year.

Fashion and electronics

By sectors, the businesses say they are seeing a return to the levels of activity of 2019 in the subsector of fashion and the scarcity of components in the world market is going to mark sales of electronics and computers. With regard to toys, they expect people to buy as early as possible because of the crisis in transport costs.

Another change which will affect this Black Friday is the increase in online shopping. Although it was already a reality before the crisis, Covid has boosted Internet sales

and will continue to do so because a lot of people are afraid of being in crowds. "The shops can't compete with the prices on the internet," says Fernando, who owns a shop in the city centre.

With regard to consumption, people in Spain will spend an average of 260 euros on Black Friday, which is 25 per cent more than last year, when the event was affected by restrictions, according to the Black Friday Consumer Sentiment survey carried out by the Boston Consulting Group.

People in Spain will spend an average of 260 euros on Black Friday which is 25 per cent more than last year

The survey shows that Black Friday has become consolidated as a benchmark for shopping worldwide, and in Spain 83 per cent of those questioned said they plan to buy something this year, compared with 68 per cent of those who took part in the study last year.

Elena Miranda, a young woman who visited several clothes shops in Malaga city centre earlier this week said, "I normally buy practically everything in the Black Friday sales, but this year it looks as if I'm not going to find much," she told us.

Like Elena, María Gómez had also gone shopping but in her case she was carrying a couple of heavy bags when we saw her in Calle Larios. "They keep saying there are supply problems this year and I didn't want to find myself without presents to give," she said.

Andalusian budget is rejected by regional MPs, heralding potential political instability

H. BARBOTTA / SUR

SEVILLE. The 2022 budget plan for Andalucía, which had been approved by regional ministers, was thrown out by the Andalusian parliament this week.

Budgets should be approved by the end of the year and this year's spending and revenue plan will simply be copied over into 2022 now as the ruling centre-right PP-Ciudadanos coalition doesn't think it will get its plan through even if revised.

Regional government spending has one of the biggest impacts on people's lives and includes, among other areas, schools and universities, healthcare and much social care. No opposition party supported the budget plan after six and a half hours of debate.

Loss of support

Although the failure to get budget approval should not speed up the next regional elections, due in November 2022, it spells a period of uncertainty in regional politics as the Junta will be forced to go back to the Andalusian parliament more often for spending approval. Hard-right Vox, up to now a partner with the government, looks to have split away completely.

Business leaders are worried about any forthcoming instability. Malaga Chamber of Commerce head, Sergio Cubero, said, "the 'no' to the budget is very bad news for business owners."

THE BIGGER PICTURE JEREMY BLATCH

✉ jbl@ehh.gi

'Things are seldom what they seem...

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When investing in tradable securities, we sit across the table from the financial alchemists of Wall Street and the City of London. Unlike shares in companies, bonds are mostly bought and sold over the counter (OTC) and are not subject to the same scrutiny as the common or preferred stock of a company that's listed and trading on a registered stock exchange.

This reduced scrutiny is par-

ticularly true of the high yield and municipal bond market in the US and the local government tax exempt bond market in the UK. For all but the sophisticated investor, a veritable witch's brew of non-aligned interests puts the odds of success firmly in favour of the issuer of a debt obligation (debtor) at the expense of the purchaser of the bond (creditor).

Municipal bonds are sold to investors as a low-risk investment, paying interest while

promising a tax exemption on interest payments and protection of capital. Asymmetric access to information in favour of Wall Street and the City of London is one of the most significant problems in the tax exempt bond arena.

In 1975, an act of Congress led to the regulation of insurance and trading of municipal bonds in the US, but examination of who sits on the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board shows that they are predominantly employees of banks and brokerage firms: the foxes guarding the chicken coop!

When issuers of municipal bonds default, as happened in Detroit in July 2013, investors lose all of their capital. Investors who do not possess a sophisticated knowledge of the market should approach municipal bonds with caution.

The credit market is now more highly leveraged (investing borrowed money) than at any time during the financial crisis of 2008-9. Some 45% of investment grade bonds now stand one notch above junk, meaning bonds with a high probability of default.

Municipal bonds and other tax exempt securities offer a powerful attraction by avoiding interest income from federal and in some cases state taxes. However, this comes at the price of political risk (will tax rates change?), credit risk (will the issuer default?), call optionality (the issuer wins when interest rates fall at the expense of the bondholder) and trading costs (an opaque regime benefiting Wall Street and the City at the expense of retail investors).

Call optionality and opaque trading mechanisms diminish

expected returns. Investors receive some tax benefits, but at the expense of protection within their portfolio. Compare this to the benefits of non-callable default-free US Treasury securities. Holders of municipal or local government bonds need to examine carefully whether they are being compensated sufficiently for the risk in a fiscally uncertain, highly leveraged, low interest rate, negative real yield environment.

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

THE SPECTRUM IFA GROUP

The Miraflores Open Bowling Competition

The two disciplines, Mixed Triples and Mixed Pairs, attracted a large entry which was 20% higher than in 2020

MARBELLA

SUR. The Spectrum IFA Group was proud to sponsor The Miraflores Open, the largest bowls competition of its kind on the coast, last week showing our continued support and help in the expatriate community here on the Costa del Sol.

It was great to attend an event for the first time since Covid restrictions have been lifted, providing a golden opportunity for bowlers across the province to play competitively again. The event took place in glorious weather with a large crowd of spectators in attendance throughout the week.

The two disciplines, Mixed Triples and Mixed Pairs, attracted a large entry which was 20% higher than in 2020, resulting in a multitude of



The Mixed Triples. SUR



The Mixed Pairs. SUR

matches being needed.

The Mixed Triples final was contested between Nick Cummings, Simone Morgan and Pat Fisher against John & Sheila Wilson with Juan Abeal. John's team got off to a flying start leading 11-2 after 6 ends, Nick's team won the next 6 ends to get to 11-10. The match swung backwards and forwards resulting in the scores tied at 15 each after the last end. An extra end play-off was needed which was won by Nick's team. A fascinating and closely fought contest enjoyed by all watching.

The Mixed Pairs competition, which is played in sets, led to a large majority of matches requiring play-offs. The final was between John & Sheila Wilson and John & Eleanor Morgan. This match saw some fantastic bowling, with the first set won comfortably by the Morgans winning 6 ends and the second won by the Wilsons after picking up 5 shots on the second end. Extra ends were needed again; John & Sheila won the first and

were holding shot for the match when John Morgan hit the jack with his last bowl to force a final end which the Morgans managed to win along with the title for a second time.

Trophies and prizes were presented to the finalists by Elaine on behalf of Ibex Insurance and myself representing The Spectrum IFA Group, together with prize draws which were won by Carol Frost and John Cooke.

With so many people now taking up full time residency on the Costa del Sol after Brexit, I am sure events like this will continue to flourish in the future, and if you need any advice with regards your finances and tax after having made the move to Spain, please feel free to contact me.

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Two months on, nobody dares predict end of La Palma eruption

Little of the promised 214m euros of aid has yet reached islanders and not one of those left without a roof has yet taken possession of a new home

ANTONIO PANIAGUA

LA PALMA. Some two months after the start of the eruption of the Cumbre Vieja volcano on the Canary Island of La Palma, no one dares to predict its end, because as soon as it loses strength it regains it.

The molten lava spewing from the volcano has already claimed the life of one man - who was clearing ash from a roof when the property collapsed under the weight - and devastated homes, roads, farms and crops. Meanwhile, due to bureaucratic issues, little of the promised 214 million euros aid has yet reached island residents, and not one of those who have been left without a roof has yet taken possession of the homes acquired by the Canarian Government.

Earthquakes

One day the volcano appears lethargic, the next day earthquakes shake the island. What will happen next? Sadly, there are no fortune-tellers in geology but, if trends are analysed, the volcano is showing perceptible signs of losing energy.

Last week, the sulphur emissions ranged from 16,000 to 32,000



An onlooker photographs the steam rising from the lava as it continued to enter the water on the west coast of La Palma this week. EFE

tonnes per day, a range much lower than the maximum 50,000 recorded on 23 September. But nothing can be guaranteed and activity increased once again this week.

One unforeseen positive consequence of the eruptions is that La Palma's income will be increased as some 43 hectares of land has been reclaimed from the sea. "The island has grown in size, which requires a new map of the island to be drawn. And many budgetary issues are linked to the

surface area of the island, which will have to be readjusted by the Canarian Government," said José Luis Barrera, of the Official College of Geologists.

"It is proving to be a long eruption," concedes Inés Galindo, of the Geographical and Mining Institute (IGN). It is worrying to think that the Timanfaya eruption on Lanzarote lasted six years, from 1730 to 1736, a precedent both locals and the experts prefer not to think about.



King and Queen travel to Sweden for a state visit

King Carl Gustaf and Queen Silvia welcomed King Felipe and Queen Letizia to Sweden this week and hosted a banquet in their honour on Wednesday evening. During the visit the Spanish king and queen met members of the Spanish community in Stockholm, took part in a business seminar and visited the Nobel museum.

THE EURO ZONE
MARK NAYLER

The 'B' word



Turns out I was wrong. I wrote here a few weeks ago that there was little chance of the 2022 budget for central government being passed before the end of this year; but this week, the profligate spending plan secured parliamentary approval and, on the day of writing (Thursday), is due to be passed in congress. Naturally, the government of Pedro Sánchez claims this is a noteworthy victory, but the reality is more complicated.

In my defence, there were sound reasons to say what I said at the time, such as inter-governmental disagreement and Sánchez's reliance on opposing parties to pass legislation. Indeed, I'm consistently amazed that a coalition that occupies so few seats in congress (155 of 350, 21 short of a majority), that technically possesses such heavily diluted power, manages to get anything done, let alone pass record-breaking spending plans. But, being the consummate ideological chameleon that he is, Sánchez has rammed the budget through, by making promises to his adversaries on everything from the content of Netflix to victims of asbestos. Should we be thrilled?

Proponents of minority government argue that it can be beneficial for a country, because it encourages cross-party collaboration, resulting in a flourishing of good ideas and less polarisation. In this idealised vision, politicians of radically differing ideologies put their disagreements aside in order to govern in the best interests of the people who voted

for them. Sometimes, reality conforms to this romantic dream - in Spain, for example, a fusion of left and right secured the transition from dictatorship to democracy in the 1970s. More recently, the unprecedented general election of 2015, which broke the traditional two-party system wide open, seemed to usher in a new era of progressive, corruption-free politics.

But what we're seeing right now isn't collaboration for the greater good. What we're seeing is smaller parties exploiting the coalition's weakness in order to pursue their own agendas, and the government bending over because it can't govern by itself. As well as tying Sánchez up in all kinds of messy knots, this deal-based setup ultimately weakens his opposition, too: there's a limit to how rigorously you can question or oppose legislation if you know you're going to vote for it anyway - provided, that is, you get what you want.

In any case, perhaps the demands of regional separatist groups aren't really about Netflix streaming in Catalan, Basque and Galician. Perhaps they're actually about money. Just like he did for last year's budget at the end of 2020, Sánchez courted Catalonia's most prominent secessionist force, the ERC, by allocating even more funds to the wealthy northeastern region - 11.5% more during 2022, to be precise. At a personal level, a similarly effective tactic has landed many of Spain's leading politicians and business figures in prison.

One dead and three injured in Catalan nuclear power station accident

SUR

TARRAGONA. One person died and three others were injured, one seriously, on Wednesday afternoon as the result of a carbon dioxide leak at the Ascó nuclear power station in Tarragona, in the Catalonia region.

All four are workers at the facility and the deceased was a member of its internal firefighting team.

According to sources from the Catalan fire department, the ac-

cident happened when workers were recharging a carbon dioxide firefighting system. For unknown reasons there was a leak and several people were affected by the escaping gas.

Sources stressed that the incident was "not linked to radiological activity" at Ascó. In fact, the power station continued to operate at all times.

The company that operates the power plant - which has two nuclear reactors - has not made any statement, according to the Mossos regional police force.

Just over a fifth of Spain's power came from nuclear energy last year, the biggest source just ahead of windpower. Ascó is one of four nuclear plant locations in Spain.



Fabian Picardo, chief minister of Gibraltar. **sur**

Chief Minister appears before HOC European Scrutiny Committee

During the session, Fabian Picardo answered questions on a variety of issues relating to the hoped-for agreement with the European Union

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. The chief minister of Gibraltar, Fabian Picardo, appeared before the House of Commons EU Scrutiny Committee in London on Wednesday for a question and answer session which lasted almost an hour and a half. The chief minister was accompanied by the attorney general, Michael Llamas, and explained that normally they would have been joined by deputy chief minister Dr Joseph Garcia, but on this occasion he had remained in Gibraltar as acting chief minister during their 48-hour absence.

The committee wanted to know more about the ongoing negotiations regarding Gibraltar's future relationship with the EU and what the Gibraltar government hoped the results of the talks would be. They were also interested to know when a treaty between UK and the EU in this respect would be finalised, and they asked for further

clarification of some of the proposals in the New Year's Eve agreement in principle of last year, which forms the framework for the negotiations, including plans for the EU agency Frontex to police the Schengen border.

The chief minister explained the problems which could occur at the border between Gibraltar and Spain now that Britain has left the European Union, and the temporary arrangements which are currently in force thanks to the agreement of the Spanish authorities to try to keep the border as free-flowing as possible while the negotiations with the EU take place. He also explained how the proposed Schengen border at Gibraltar airport and port would work, and that if agreement could be reached then Gibraltar would not be joining Schengen but would have a common travel area with Schengen.

He told the committee he believes it is possible to reach an agreement which is satisfactory to all parties by the end of the year, but that it would take longer to finalise the treaty. He declined, however, to disclose further details of the discussions, but stressed very strongly that Gibraltar's sovereignty, jurisdiction and control will never be compromised.

Suspect arrested and bailed in Gibraltar murder investigation

D.B.

GIBRALTAR. A 33-year-old local man was arrested by the Royal Gibraltar Police earlier this week on suspicion of the murder of Michael Montegriffo (58), who was found lying on the ground

by Gavino's Dwellings in Prince Edward Road in the morning of 7 July 2018. He was taken to St Bernard's Hospital, and died a few hours later.

The police say the suspect has now been released on bail, pending further enquiries, and they are urging people to come forward and provide any information, however insignificant it may seem, in relation to the day in question. This can be done online via www.police.gi/report/seen-heard or by phoning 20072500.

IN BRIEF

CULTURE

City Hall Christmas Fair tickets available

D.B.. The City Hall Christmas Fair will take place on 18 December, from 10am to 5pm. Entry is by ticket only, and the cost is £3 for over-12s. Tickets to meet Santa are £5 and include a small gift. They can be bought at www.buytickets.gi

NEWS

Traffic delays after oil spill in town

D.B. An oil spill from a lorry occurred on Wednesday and affected Devils Tower Road, Line Walls Road, Prince Edward Road, Hospital Hill and Town Range. The police warned drivers to be cautious in that area, and there were some delays during the clean-up operation.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Gibraltar's Minister for Equality says she hopes the day will come when "we no longer have to mark this day"

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. November 25th is International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the government has set up a strategic plan to eradicate domestic violence and abuse in Gibraltar in all its forms, as well as the stigma attached to it, and to support and empower people who are experiencing abuse and their families.

The plan also aims to prevent abuse through education at an early age and, impor-

tantly, to work with perpetrators to break the cycle.

In addition, the Gibraltar Police now have dedicated police officers who have been trained in relation to DASH (the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour-based violence risk identification, assessment and management model). This is a risk model which aims to support and improve police response to cases of domestic abuse.

The Minister for Equality, Samantha Sacramento, said on Thursday that, "it is always important, indeed imperative, that we mark the 25th November. However, our aim is to eradicate domestic abuse and I hope that the day will come when we will no longer have to mark this day".

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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Losing the plot

Nowadays many people are losing the plot due to various reasons known to all and sundry.

It was therefore a big boost to my dwindling self-esteem to read the following text that one of the bigger banks in Spain recently published as well in Spanish as in English:

Because you believe in yourself.
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For those who persevere. For the hard-working. For entrepreneurs.
[...] We want to be the first to support people who follow their dreams.
You come first.
Because it's all about YOU...

For obvious reasons I cannot mention the name of this bank but a stroll through any mainstreet along the Costa will certainly enable you to read this much needed piece of prose.

BERRY J. PRINSEN

Confusion

I have to express my confusion at the complete contradictions in the news nowadays.

Firstly we are put into panic mode, being told that there is mass hysteria concerning a fabled 'blackout' which has cleared all hardware stores of stoves and battery-operated

torches.

Then, a few days later, we hear that the city council has spent well over a million euros on installing lighting in over 500 streets. This will cost an estimated 11,500 euros in electricity. The council is clearly not worried about a lack of light, so why should we be?

ANNE JONES

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THE MUSIC MAKER
PETER EDGERTON
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No other should know

One of the many brilliant things about getting older is that, as time goes by, you care less and less about what others think. My intention this week, was to contemplate the realm of what are generally known as guilty pleasures, until I realized that I don't feel guilty about them at all really, rather proud in fact. Still, the general idea remains the same - to cast a glance over the things we enjoy doing that may cause others to judge us in a rather sniffy, superior way.

My first confession is to liking Julio Iglesias. The fact that most of his records sound as if they've been dipped in an enormous vat of saccharine just before release, shouldn't distract us from the glaring truth - his voice is quite exquisite. Such is its beauty, we can even forgiven him all that chest-tapping nonsense which makes him look like a paranoid tourist constantly checking he's not forgotten his

passport. Plus he was an excellent goalkeeper in his youth, by all accounts.

Next up, mind-numbing computer games such as Candy Crush. In this case 'mind-numbing' is a positive thing, as sliding little coloured blocks hither and yon ad infinitum uses such a small part of your brain, it allows the rest of the old grey matter to relax and, with any luck, go on to work more creatively as a consequence. It's a kind of meditation for people allergic to yoga and its weird posturing. After a long day calculating how many halves of lager would have to be sold to pay the electric bill and such like, there's nothing better than trying to line up a few squares of the same colour on a screen so that they end up exploding in a very satisfactory manner indeed.

Something else sentient adults aren't supposed to like, are crispy snacks designed for under-eights. These can be

shaped like footballs or monsters or ghosts or anything similar but whatever form they take, they invariably taste delicious. When your blood pressure shoots up as a consequence of eating them, it's never clear whether the exact cause is the outrageous amount of salt involved, or the stress of trying to hide the packet from adult onlookers as you munch away like, well, an under-eight, actually.

In the world of sport, I've always been drawn to the offbeat - things like curling or crown green bowling. As a young man, I found latter particularly mesmerising and many an hour that should have been spent on university essays was, in fact, devoted to staring at middle-aged men in beige crimplene slacks rolling heavy black balls over pristine lawns.

Julio Iglesias was, almost certainly, warbling away in the background.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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THE BOTTOM LINE
ALEKK M. SAANDERS

An active volcano from an inactive newspaper

The Cumbre Vieja volcano on La Palma is still erupting. It evokes awe with its frightening beauty, though the sadness appears with the realisation of the continued suffering of the local people. The Canary Islands are rich in active volcanoes, though it was surprising to learn that there is not much data on how many volcanoes there are: it is estimated that the number is around 30.

Nevertheless, it is known that anything that is not so clear leads to myths, legends

and anecdotes. Although Andalucía has several inactive volcanoes in the very east, there is a legend about an active volcano situated in Granada province.

This year, that myth is 65 years old. Its origin is accurately known because the deliberately misleading story was spread by an American newspaper in 1956. In April of that year, catastrophic earthquakes occurred in Granada province between the villages of Atarfe and Albolote. About 3,000 buildings were damaged, 74 people were injured, and thirteen died.

In its coverage of the Granada catastrophic earthquakes, American newspaper The New York Herald Tribune published a report mentioning a mysterious cave in the Sierra Elvira mountains from which currents of air, fire and stones emanated. The article referred to the Raja Santa chasm, located between the cliffs of the Sierra Elvira, and the idea of a hidden active volcano was expressed.

Specialists immediately assumed it as a canard - a false or unfounded report. Different groups of speleologists stated again and again that the tragic earthquakes had nothing to do with the Raja Santa chasm.

They also confirmed that Raja Santa is a simple chasm of thermal waters similar to those that can be found in other parts of the province, such as Alhama de Granada which is located on the border with Malaga province.

However, the hypothesis in the American newspaper caused concern among the

people of Granada. Many of them took the report so seriously that they started believing that a hidden volcano was awakening from its slumber and had caused the tragic earthquakes in Atarfe and Albolote. In 1966, The New York Herald Tribune closed its doors, but its legendary canard was remembered for decades. Tremors in Granada and its metropolitan area are quite frequent, and the idea of the hidden volcano used to come up from time to time.

Legends are always at their best when they include a scary event. By definition, they don't need logical explanation nor proof. It appears Malaga also has its anecdote about volcanoes. Some local people say the iconic Malaga hills - the Turtle (Monte de la Tortuga) and the Hair (Cerro Cabello) are volcanoes though very ancient and already very, very, inactive.

The legend goes round: whether it is true or false... it's everyone's right to decide for themselves.

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IN THE FRAME

Volunteering, a way of life for those who start young

Rubí Castro. She started working for charities as a child in South Africa and says her family has clear values about helping those less fortunate

JENNIE RHODES



Rubí Castro has been acting president of the Rincón de la Victoria branch of the Cruz Roja (the Spanish Red Cross) since September, when the previous president stepped down.

At 28, she believes she may be the youngest person with a senior role in the organisation in Spain (not including the youth section).

Originally from South Africa, Rubí explains that her official title is Delegada Especial, but that she has “all the functions of a president despite not being officially elected”.

The branch was looking to find a new president before the pandemic, she says, but “everything was put on hold” when Covid hit.

“People were left without work, there are a lot of older people in Rincón, so we had to focus on the urgency of the situation.”

Priorities became shopping for elderly people so they didn’t have to leave their homes and making sure that those living alone were supported. “Loneliness is one of the leading causes of early death. People living alone deteriorate far

more quickly than someone who is accompanied,” she points out. The charity is now back to day-to-day activities, hence Rubí’s recent appointment.

She says she was happy to take on the role as she “wanted to give something back to the community”.

A lifelong volunteer

Rubí has been a volunteer with the charity since summer 2016, just eight months after she moved to Spain from South Africa with her mum and brother, but she is no stranger to charity work. As a child, Rubí became involved with the local branch of the Rotary Club and helped out by collecting donations, blankets and food through her primary school.

At secondary school, she started doing first aid with St John’s Ambulance and became a corporal, which she says is basically “a fancy name to say if something goes wrong, ‘speak to her’.” With her team she attended public events like school fairs, sporting events and so on, so she is quite used to being in a position of responsibility and delegating.



Rubí teaches Spanish to migrants at the Red Cross. **SUR**

At university, Rubí admits that she took a break to focus on studies; a Bachelor’s in Music. But a paper she wrote in her final year - on music therapy and how it helps people with intellectual impairments live a better life - took her back.

Rubí explains how she became involved in volunteering in homes where many of the residents had conditions such as severe foetal alcohol syndrome and were unable to use their hands to feed themselves, among other restrictions. “It was a really great experience,” she smiles.

Therefore, it was only natural that when the family moved to Rincón de la Victoria, where her Spanish grandparents had a house, Rubí would want to get involved in a charity there. And she soon found her local Red Cross office.

Rubí says that her drive to help others comes from her family and the values that were

“I have really improved my Spanish through volunteering with the Red Cross and I get a lot back in return”

instilled in her and her brother at a young age. Growing up in South Africa, she was exposed to vast inequalities from “the filthy rich to those who maybe only ate a meal every two days”.

The family would donate food, clothes and other items to nearby orphanages that were home to children whose parents had died from HIV/Aids. She goes on to say how her mum made sure the siblings were aware of how privileged they were. “I have never had to worry about where my next meal was coming from, whether I had a roof over my

head, if I would be warm enough or whether I would be able to study.”

Rubí says that there are a lot of other young volunteers involved in the Rincón Red Cross and of the over 100 volunteers they have, a handful are under 18. She wants to encourage more young people to volunteer and says even if people can’t donate money, they can donate time.

International volunteers

She also says that there’s an international mix of volunteers and anyone can get involved, they don’t have to speak perfect Spanish. The Red Cross helps people regardless of their nationality and there are English-speaking volunteers. In fact, she explains that her own Spanish “wasn’t great” when she started, but it improved a lot through talking to other volunteers and the people she was supporting. “I improved my Spanish and I have received a lot in return,” she says.

Among other priorities, the Red Cross Rincón needs to buy a new adapted van so that they can continue to transport people to hospital appointments etc. “Many families cannot afford to have an adapted car so we use the van for that. The current one is very old and not working,” she adds.

When she isn’t doing her Red Cross work, Rubí is a piano teacher in a local school and also teaches both music and English as a foreign language.

The Red Cross is selling Christmas lottery tickets until the end of November, which can be bought from volunteers and also from the office on Calle Limonero 6, in Rincón. All Red Cross branches along the Costa del Sol are also selling lottery tickets.

Further information:

Email: rinconvictoria@cruzroja.es
Tel: 952972399/952220188

Poppy ball concludes series of RBL fundraising events

J. RHODES

NERJA. One hundred and twenty people attended a poppy ball in aid of the Nerja branch of the Royal British Legion on Friday 12 November.

The event took place at the Restaurante Cueva de Nerja, located near to the cave in Maro.

The ball was the last in a series of fundraising events the RBL has held throughout autumn for this year’s poppy appeal.

Almost 8,000 euros have been raised in total from the ball, a poppy walk which took place in October, a raffle and a collection taken during a service on Remembrance Sunday.



Guests at the RBL Nerja poppy ball at the Restaurante Cueva de Nerja on 12 November. **DAVID ALLEN**



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Views.
San Sebastián at night
is stunning.
ASH MAER



Cycling across the north coast of Spain

It was last September when my girlfriend and I set off to cycle from San Sebastián to Santiago de Compostela over two weeks.

Our plan was to follow the Camino del Norte along the coast and not to get lost — and we failed at both!

It's important to explain that this is a much hillier route than the more popular and flatter Camino Frances. Some notable differences are that there are fewer yellow arrows marking the way, accommodation was scarce (due partly to Covid-19) and people in the Basque Country are a little grumpier than down south.

But moaning aside, the Camino took us through some stunning coastal areas that we wouldn't have visited otherwise.

I won't bore you with the cycling itself, as this will be my third travel feature on cycling the Camino now! Instead, I'll focus more on our favourite stops.

What I will say is that we finished several kilos lighter than we started and that I am banned from organising the next holiday.

We started in San Sebastián, where we collected our hire bikes and spent a day getting lost around the old town. This was one of our favourite stops for two reasons; the food and the view of the bay, which is touted as the most pic-

From San Sebastián to Santiago de Compostela. Ash Maer explains why the quaint coastal towns of northern Spain are well worth a visit - especially for foodies

**ASH
MAER**



turesque in Europe. In the evening we bar-hopped and ate pintxos that were so beautiful we took their pictures. A word of warning though, it's a bit pricey here!

Next was Guernica, infamous for the large oil painting by Pablo Picasso, following the bombing of the town by German aircraft in 1937. If I'm brutally honest, I was disappointed with Guernica; dare I say I found it dull, so we peddled on to Bilbao.

This Basque city was a surprising hit for us both. I'd been here several times before but was always on the way to somewhere else. But on closer inspection, it had a bustling old town bursting with charming taverns and colourful architecture. So we hope to return for a long weekend.

The following day we stopped in a cosy village called Santoña, where we had some of the best food of our trip at restaurant Don Vino.

Next up was Santander, where after stopping to take a photo, we accidentally stumbled upon a ferry that knocked more than two hours off our cycle — result!

After celebrating our early arrival with a glass of wine, it quickly became apparent that there was no old town (I'm a huge

fan of old towns!). It turns out much of the medieval city was lost in the Great Fire of 1941.

So, the centre looks quite modern with grand looking buildings everywhere, but there was too much to explore in one evening. We had a lip-smacking meal in a family-run restaurant called Bodega Funete De, before retiring to our hostel for a well-earned sleep.

Our next stop took our breath away — Santillana del Mar (which is neither flat nor by the sea I must add). This historic Cantabrian town is said to be one of the most beautiful towns in Spain, and I completely agree.

Walking through the centre was like going back in time, the place was overflowing with stunning medieval architecture. Unfortunately, we had booked accommodation in the following town — so we took photos and continued on.

However, our next stop Comillas was one of our favourites. This small town is peppered with striking architecture such as the Pontifical University, El Capricho (by the Catalan architect Gaudi) and the Sobrellano Palace.

Comillas has a reputation for being upmarket due to summer visits by the Spanish Royal family and well-heeled types.

So, in true regal style, we



jumped on the packed tourist train and enjoyed a tour around the town, where a number of grand houses that featured in Spanish movies were pointed out to us.

Very early the next morning we cycled to Llanes, a cute, traditional fishing village that surrounds a busy port.

Town walls dating back to 1206 are dotted around the centre and there are plenty of historic buildings to stumble upon.

The rugged beaches are unspoilt and after a walk along the coast, we headed back to the old town, where we were told there was no beer, so they brought us cider instead.

We spent our evening being entertained by the waiters who poured cider from a great height into tiny glasses, while looking nonchalantly in the other direction.

It's worth a special mention that we had our best meal in Casa Pachón in the village of Salas. We had four courses, a bottle of wine and the best meRluzá I've ever had in my life - for 12 euros each.

Salas was also our first stop on the Camino Primitivo. We decided to abandon the Camino Norte because the accommodation was all booked up and what was left was over priced and in the middle of nowhere.

► **Llanes.** A waiter pours cider in the traditional way seen in the north of Spain.
A. M.



▼ **Bilbao.** The city is a foodie paradise.
A. M.



This was due to many public albergues closing due to Covid and private run facilities running at 50 per cent capacity.

Anyways, our stop in Lugo was my favourite of the whole Camino. The city has a magnificent Roman past, including baths, a bridge and an ancient city wall that was declared a World Heritage Site in 2000.

Walking along the 2km-long wall that surrounds the historic quarter at sunset was one of my fondest memories of the trip.

Afterwards, we headed to a tavern for a well-earned vino and some free tapas. After all, No Vino, No Camino.

Our final stop was Santiago de Compostela of course, where we had our first lie-in for two weeks in Pension Via-Stella, before exploring this historical city. My top tip, don't bother with this tourist train, it was terrible!

In total, we cycled 829km, but with hindsight, we should have taken a few more days holiday to spread the distance out more.

However, if you want to eat some of the best food in Spain while exploring spectacular coastal towns, this is a thoroughly enjoyable way to do it.

We hired out bikes from www.tournride.com who deliver them to where you want along the Camino, before you drop them off later at their headquarters in the centre of Santiago.

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GARDENING READERS' PHOTOS



CHRISTY SEARS

A stunning relative of deadly nightshade

Cascading over a white-painted wall with the blue sky behind, *Solanum rantonnetii* is a sight to behold. The genus *Solanum* includes tomatoes, potatoes, aubergines and deadly nightshade and, like the latter, this is not a species you would want to eat. It is a large scrambling shrub that needs lots of sun to flower. Photo by Christy Sears.



MARY NOYONS DOMMERING

Rainforest beauty

From just two leaves, gifted to her by a man who took cuttings in the Surinamese rainforest, Mary has grown this magnificent *Epiphyllum* or queen of the night.



CAROLINE SELLERS

No mistaking this bird of paradise

Looking like an exotic, crested bird, this photo of a *Strelitzia reginae* bloom was sent in by SUR in English reader, Caroline Sellers. *Strelitzias* are also commonly called crane flowers and are native to South Africa. They can be a bit fussy to cultivate as they need certain growing conditions. Free-draining, rich soil, lots of sunshine but not direct sun, and above all, they need a temperate climate. They are not cold hardy and need warm nights as well as hot days. However if you live inland, *Strelitzia* can be grown in a large container and moved indoors in the winter. There are several species in the genus, some of which can grow huge, so check you have sufficient space before purchasing.



ROSALIND CAPLAN

Autumnal colours

Mixed plantings like this one can allow you to show off an artistic streak. Roz has combined the pinks and purples of petunias and pansies with bright nasturtiums.



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WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

26 NOVEMBER 1504

The death of Isabel, Spain's warrior queen

Isabel de Castilla was an unconventional queen and was ruthless in her quest to rid Spain of the Moors who had ruled for nearly 800 years

On 26 November 1504 one of the most famous women in history died: Isabel la Católica, the Queen of Castile, who with her husband King Fernando of Aragón routed the Moors who had ruled supreme for nearly 800 years. She was 53 when she died. Isabel was never intended to be queen, but acceded to the throne upon the death of her brother Enrique in 1474; Fernando inherited the throne of Aragón in 1479. Together, Fernando and Isabel - or Ferdinand and Isabella as they are usually known in

English - were a force to be reckoned with. They restarted the Reconquest, which had been inactive for two centuries, and in 1492 they finally took Granada, thereby conquering the last Muslim kingdom in Spain. They also set up the Inquisition and expelled the Jewish communities from the country. Those were violent times and it was unusual enough for a queen to reign, but Isabel not only reigned but was a warrior queen, actively engaged in waging war and plotting strategy and tactics. "Monarchs who wish to govern must also work," she used to say, and she certainly lived up to her words. Fernando and Isabel had four children: Isabel, Juan, Juana and Catherine. The two eldest died as young adults. The youngest, Catherine of Aragón, went on to marry Henry VIII and was the mother of Queen Mary I, and Juana, who



Portrait of Isabel la Católica, the warrior queen. **SUR**

inherited the throne of Castile upon the death of her mother, became known as Juana la Loca (Juana the Mad) after showing signs of mental illness when her mother became ill. She also inherited the throne of Aragón in 1517, when her

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Reina	Queen
Reinado	Kingdom
Monarca	Monarch
Rey	King
Trono	Throne
Reconquista	Reconquest
Musulmán	Muslim
Judío	Jewish
Guerra	War
Batalla	Battle
Guerrero	Warrior
Enfermedad	Illness
Heredar	To inherit
Reinar	To reign
Loca	Mad
Desterrar	To banish
Morir	To die
Muerte	Death

father died. Juana was an intelligent woman, but her behaviour during her marriage and after her husband's death was increasingly erratic and she was declared unfit to rule. Finally her son, Carlos I, banished her to a convent in Tordesillas and refused to allow her any visitors. She died there on 11 April, 1555.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

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The Sierra Bermeja is currently facing what is probably its greatest challenge in history, trying to recover from the forest fire in September which burned over 10,000 hectares and forced people to evacuate their homes in the nearby area and in the Genal valley.

That was an absolute monster of a fire, one which not only took the life of an Infoca firefighter but was also classified as sixth generation due to its virulence and its characteristics.

The process of regenerating the species which were affected by the flames is going to be a slow one, but nature itself will be the main driving force. The native flora and fauna of this beautiful green lung on the western side of Malaga province will also play a part, especially the bees, thanks to pollination.

This is something they are all well aware of at Miel Sierra Bermeja, a local company that produces and sells honey and its derivatives thanks to its facilities on different parts of the Estepona mountain. They have recently been granted a concession by the council which has enabled them to install an extra 80 beehives.

"Altogether, and depending on the time of year, we have around 1,500 hives, with an average of 60,000 bees in each," says Francisco Javier Quirós, who owns the business with his brothers, after inheriting it from their father, José, who started producing honey by traditional methods back in the 1970s.

This new generation has made the business more professional in keeping with the times. Despite modernising the production processes, when it comes to the way in which they sell their products, which range from the delicious thousand flower honey to the coveted royal jelly, they still follow traditional guidelines. For example, they distribute to small local businesses who then deliver this precious liquid gold to the homes of their neighbours. They distrib-



Some of the beehives next to one of the areas burned by the fire in the Sierra Bermeja. **SUR**

Bees to the rescue in Sierra Bermeja

Helping nature's recovery.
After the fire in the mountains behind the Costa del Sol, a honey firm's insects are contributing by pollinating the trees and plants

JOSÉ MARÍA MARTÍN

ute in the nearest parts of eastern Malaga, the Campo de Gibraltar and also the Serranía de Ronda. Some of the honey is also exported to other countries in Europe and a small amount goes to Morocco.

"It is mainly distributed locally.

We don't sell it directly. One of the reasons for that is because we believe in supporting small, traditional businesses," says Francisco Javier.

This means that by focusing on tradition, local products and nature, the Quirós López family has



▲ The company is able to make its products thanks to the 1,500 hives it has installed in different parts of the Sierra Bermeja. **SUR**

successfully established a symbiosis which is as beneficial for their businesses as the relationship is between their bees and the flora of the area.

This relationship has become even more important since the fire which caused such devasta-

tion in September.

"The bees benefit from the variety of natural species that grow here and, at the same time, they collaborate by expanding the plants through pollination. After the fire, the new plants will be able to count on the help from the bees to enable them to grow better," says Francisco Javier.

Mutual relationship

Pollination is the exchange of pollen between some plants and others so they can be fertilised to produce fruits and seeds. The reproduction takes place thanks to the pollen being transported by the bees who feed on the nectar. There is no doubt that the mission of the pollinating army is vital for the preservation of the ecosystems, the diversity of plants and for our own food supply. However, a recent report from the NGO Greenpeace shows that 37 per cent of the bee populations in Europe are declining.

This is why it is so important that companies like Miel Sierra Bermeja exist, because they promote one of the most sustainable human activities, that of bee-keeping.

Thanks to the work they have been carrying out for decades, they have managed to perfect a wide variety of products which are all of high quality, thanks to the species of flowers that are used in the process of producing the honey and other products deriving from it.

"Honey ends up being a reflection of nature itself. The more varieties that are used in the production of it, the more properties that product will have. The one we produce here benefits from our location, being close to the coast and the Straits of Gibraltar. We move the beehives around during the year and that gives us extra contributions from species such as madroño, pinsapo and heather, depending on the season of the year," explains Francisco Javier.

Arctic Monkeys to headline the new Cala Mijas international music festival in 2022

REGINA SOTORRÍO

MALAGA. The Arctic Monkeys and Kraftwerk are among the headline acts announced for the new three-day Cala Mijas international music festival which will debut on the Costa del Sol between 1 and 3 September next year.

Dozens of national and international groups will take to the

stage, split between the beach and the charm of the picturesque town of Mijas.

The Cala Mijas music event has unveiled its first preview of fourteen artists that aims to place it in the forefront of the international festival scene.

After more than four years without setting foot on Spanish soil, the Arctic Monkeys will play

their only gig in Spain next year at the Cala Mijas.

"They will become the masters of ceremony of this inaugural edition of the festival to reclaim their throne as the kings of British rock," say the organisers. Joining them will be the pioneers of electronic music, Kraftwerk.

Also joining the line-up is the Australian Chet Faker, the Brit-



Arctic Monkeys. **ZACK MICHAEL**

ish Blossoms, Hot Chip, Nathy Peluso, Love of Lesbian, The Lathums, El Columpio Asesino and the catchy melodies of Sen Senra. Completing the line up of this first selection ends with Rusowsky, Hnos Munoz, Uniforms and Venturi.

Tickets will be on sale from 9am next Wednesday, 1 December, with the option of including camping, through www.calamijas.com and www.seetickets.com/es. Meanwhile, a waiting list has been opened at www.calamijas.com to pre-register for the sale of tickets.

A journey through Europe, based on shared values

Magdalena Williams and Mike Phillips met via a Bremain in Spain Zoom meeting and decided to travel across Europe together gathering stories

JENNIE RHODES

MALAGA. At the recent Bremain in Spain AGM in Malaga, I was introduced to Magdalena Williams, an ardent pro-European who is originally from Hungary but living in the UK for most of her adult life. She has been travelling around Europe with Bremain in Spain committee member and equally pro-European, Mike Phillips, who lives in Alicante.

The pair met on a Bremain in Spain Zoom meeting and Mike, hearing of Magdalena's plan to travel to Hungary, and from there visit Austria, where her family fled to during the Hungarian revolution in 1956, decided to join her.

However, the trip wasn't just a jolly. They both write for the Kent Bylines, which forms part of the Bylines Network, a series of regional online newspapers in the UK which relies on articles from supporters and members.

Magdalena, 73, and Mike, 77, wanted to meet Brits who have been affected by Brexit in the different countries they planned to visit. They hoped to hear about experiences and find out how Brexit, and indeed the people in their adopted countries, have treated them since the referendum. Mike admits that he also wanted to exercise his "right to freedom of move-

ment", albeit all 90 days of it thanks to Brexit.

"I want to share the stories of how natives feel towards the Brits living in their country and Britain post Brexit and how it has affected Brits living in EU countries," Magdalena explains.

Mike has lived in Alicante for almost 17 years, is a retired Royal Navy commander and is on the Bremain committee, while Magdalena lives in south east London and had a long career working for the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office before retiring in 2016, coincidentally the year of the Brexit referendum.

Magdalena, who has lived in the UK for over 50 years, left the UK on 3 September and travelled through France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Austria before meeting Mike at Budapest airport. They met up with members of Magdalena's family and Brits who are resident there. "It was wonderful to be there with a local as I got to see bits of Hungary I wouldn't have otherwise seen," says Mike.

Invitations to stay with Brits

The pair left the city on 14 September and went on to travel together through Slovenia, Austria, northern Italy and France before coming back to Spain. They say they were often invited to stay with the people they got in contact with, who were either Brits or other EU nationals, and became quite an internet sensation among pro-Europeans who followed them on their social media pages.

Magdalena and Mike shared updates about their travels as well as



Mike Phillips and Magdalena Williams near Budapest SUR

"I want to share the stories of how natives feel towards Brits living in their country and Brits who live in EU countries post Brexit"

interviews with people they met along the way. "We share a common purpose," says Mike, who added that their birthdays are one day apart, although they were born in different years.

One of the consequences of Brexit for Magdalena was bringing her dog with her. She explains that she had to obtain a special health certificate for the animal as the EU passport she had was no longer valid post Brexit.

Magdalena and Mike returned to Spain in time for the Bremain AGM at the end of October and are now contemplating their next steps, having caught the travel bug on their European adventure.

Magdalena was considering leaving Britain after the referendum, but when Covid struck plans were

organisations in his local town in Alicante. However, the trip with Magdalena was a success and the pair don't rule out travelling together again in the future.

About Magdalena

Magdalena moved to the UK in 1970 from Vienna to attend her mother's wedding to a British man. She then chose to make the UK her home.

Her family had fled to the Austrian capital during the Hungarian revolution in 1956, on a perilous journey which left them in the middle of nowhere when the train that she, her mother and two younger siblings had caught from the Hungarian capital abruptly stopped and the passengers were told to disembark as it was returning to Budapest.

Once in the UK, Magdalena had a number of career changes until her retirement in 2016 from the then Foreign and Commonwealth Office. She started as a teacher of Hungarian and German to diplomats and finished in the Nigeria Team.

To read more about Magdalena's experience as a child refugee escaping Hungary and more of both Magdalena and Mike's articles about their experiences visit: www.kentbylines.co.uk.

They are also keen to hear from Brits living in Spain who have a Brexit story to tell. They can be contacted via Kent Bylines.

Support comes in for respite scheme for Alzheimer's carers

The Blevins Franks Charitable Foundation has recently made a donation to support the local Alzheimer & Dementia Support Group's 'Buddy Scheme'. This scheme was launched at the end of 2020 and pays for two hours of respite care a fortnight to relieve the main carer (usually the spouse). The respite care is a qualified carer trained to deal with dementia patients. The group was founded in July 2019 thanks to Age Care Mijas Costa who help support the group via local donations and volunteers. The group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month in Calahonda at the Baptist church.



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EXHIBITIONS

ANA Winter

ALPUJARRA. Opens 27 November, 7pm. Saturday 1-8pm and Sunday 12-4pm.

The ANA Winter group exhibition will take up the whole space at La Fábrica with a wide range of work on display. There will also be a Spanish guitar performance by Richard Waterborn.

Fernando Calvillo

LA CALA. Until 7 January, 2022. Mon - Friday, 10am-2pm and 5-8pm. Centro Cultural de La Cala, Mijas Costa. Metamorfosis, an exhibit of a selection of work by self-taught painter, Fernando Calvillo. The painting present different formats, such as treated paper, metal sheets or acrylic, and different styles like abstraction or realism.

Brigitte Bardot

TORREMOLINOS. Until 7 January, 2022. First floor of the Town Hall. The exhibition entitled, Mito y Clíché en Málaga, includes a series of photographs that record Brigitte Bardot's first visit to Torremolinos during filming in 1957.

Jean-Marie Périer

MÁLAGA. Until 17 April, 2022. Tues - Sunday, 11am-2pm and 5.30-8.30pm. Centro Cultural La Malagueta. The photographer Jean-Marie Périer took thousands of photos during his 40-year career. Around 200 of his photos are in an exhibition called El Fotógrafo de las Estrellas (the photographer of the Stars) at the centre.



Jean-Marie Périer, Malaga

Introverso

MÁLAGA. Inauguration 26 November, 8.00pm. Until 17 January 2022. Mon-Friday 10am-8.30pm. Sat-Sun 11am-3pm and 4pm-8pm. C/Cister 1,

Pta. 2.

The exhibit Introverso will display ceramic art by Mónica Rivas Lee. www.alfajar.es

Malaga Picasso Museum

MÁLAGA. 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. **El París de Brassai.** The museum will be exhibiting a collection that not only concentrates on the photographer Brassai but also reflects the topography of Paris in the 30's and 40's. Until April 2022. www.museopicassomalaga.org.

Picasso Casa Natal

MÁLAGA. Until 20 March, 2022. Museo Casa Natal Picasso, Plaza de la Merced. Vilató, 100 obras para un Centenario is the title of the new exhibition in the house where Picasso was born. Javier Vilató was Picasso's nephew, the son of his sister, Lola, who went on to make a name for himself in the world of art both nationally and internationally, although overshadowed by his famous uncle. The exhibition, which commemorates a hundred years since his birth, includes 70 pieces of his work: 68 paintings and two sculptures.

Mamones vs Human

MÁLAGA. Until 25 February. El Centro de Fotografía y Artes Visuales, C/Victoria. An exhibition by Jorge Rueda of surreal and sometimes amusing photographs which question societies hipocritical values, sex, religion and politics.

2020 Imagenes de un Año

MÁLAGA. Until 30 November. Centro Cultural de la Fundación Unicaja. Around fifty photographs from seventeen photo-journalists that the EFE Agency that record the evolution of the Covid pandemic in Andalucía.

Museo de Málaga

MÁLAGA. Palacio de la Aduana. The new exhibition space in the Museo de Málaga is named after the



Sophie Calle, at the Pompidou Centre.

artist Eugenio Chicano and contains an exhibition of 52 of his works. The museum is holding free tours of its archaeological collection every weekend entitled Leyendo-al Andalus. La Epigrafía Árabe del Museo de Málaga. The tour starts at 12.30pm.

Presencias 51

MÁLAGA. Espacio Expositivo Pacífico 54, C/Pacífico. The Asociación de Artistas Plásticas de Málaga (APLAMA) celebrate 25 years this year with a collective exhibition. Open daily 9am - 2pm.

Centre Pompidou

MÁLAGA. Muelle Uno. <https://centrepompidou-malaga.eu/> **Sophie Calle.** Until 17 April 2022. Temporary exhibition of French artist Sophie Calle and her body of work which spans the last 40 years. Her work leans heavily on themes of love, intimacy and absence.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

MÁLAGA. C/ Compañía, 10. 10am - 8pm Tuesday to Sunday. **Paul Strand.** Until 6 March 2022. The exhibition includes over one hundred photos taken by the legendary New York photographer. It is the first time that the Thyssen Museum Malaga has had an exhibition solely dedicated to photography. The past collections of the Thyssen museum can be viewed online at www.carmenthyssenmalaga.org.

MUSIC AND DANCE

Iris Nieto

MÁLAGA. 26 November 8pm. Hotel Vincci La Posada del Patio, Pasillo de Sta. Isabel, 7. Cover artist Iris Nieto, one of the most recognised soul voices in Andalucía, will perform a concert in the 'Food and Living' space at the Vincci

Hotel. Entry is free until full capacity. More information: <https://www.tal-larblues.es/iris-nieto/>

Dúo Blous

MÁLAGA. 26 November, 8pm. Calle las Palomas, 1, La Herradura. Classical music returns with a performance by Dúo Blous, consisting of Jesús and Pablo Segura. 643 180 584

¡¡¡Y la Danza Pudo...!!!

MÁLAGA. 27 November, 6.30pm. Camino del Albero 16, Las Lagunas, Mijas Costa. A spectacle performed by Academia Ana Mª Tineo. Money will go towards Asociación Bosque Chaparral Mijas. Tickets can be bought at: <https://entradium.com>

Iglesia Sagrado Corazón

MÁLAGA. 27 November, 9.00pm. Plaza San Ignacio, s/n. A concert dedicated to healthcare workers will be played by the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Felipe Neri Choir. Tickets must be booked at <https://conciertosanitariosco-vid19.eventbrite.es/>



Brassai, Picasso Museum Malaga

Jazz Concerts

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 10 December, from 7pm. Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. **10 December.** The Ana Sánchez Quartet.

Danza Málaga 2021

MÁLAGA. Until 30 December. Teatro Echegaray / Cervantes. The new edition of Danza Málaga consists of eighteen shows of contemporary dance including flamenco and classic dance styles, from companies such as Nieves Rosales, Fernando Hurtado and David Segura among many others. <https://www.teatroechegaray.com> <https://www.teatrocervantes.es>

Popular Brazilian music

ALMUÑÉCAR. 28 November, 7pm. Casa de la Cultura. Judith Facio, Carlos Martín, Camilo Edwards and guest drummer Carlos Cortés, will be playing popular Brazilian music.

FLAMENCO

Peña Flamenca

ESTEPONA. 26 November, 9.00pm. Plaza de Fuerzas Armadas, s/n. Flamenco concert, with performances by Jaime Villar, Paco Fontao, Eugenia Jiménez and José Montes. p.flamencaestepona@hotmail.com 952 803 183 or 683 141 136

Winter musical agenda

TORREMOLINOS. Until 23 December, 8pm. Picasso Cultural Centre. **11 December.** Isaac de los Reyes, flamenco, ballet and contemporary dancer. **23 December.** Classical pianist Manuel López. Tickets: www.latiendadelasentradas.com

The Concerts of Picasso

TORREMOLINOS. 8pm. Centro Cultural Pablo Ruiz Picasso. **11 December.** Isaac de los Reyes. **23 December.** Manuel López.

Borracho de Arte

ALMUÑÉCAR. 4 December, 7pm. Casa de la Cultura. Flamenco singer Antonio Gómez, "El Turry" presents his new recording Borracho de Arte.

THEATRE AND OPERA

Sor Angélica

ESTEPONA. 26 November, 9pm. Centro Cultural Padre Manuel.



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FRI 26TH FLORIDA REMEMBER BLACK SOUND TRIBUTE
TINA TURNER, ARETHA FRANKLIN, BEYONCE, RHIANNA, DONNA SUMMER
BOOMBASTICK DJ DISCO NITE

SAT 27TH ÁGATA ELECTRONIC MUSIC
MIGUEL PAYDA & SPECIAL GUEST

SUN 28TH BRISA & COMPÁS PAELLAS & FLAMENCO
MIGUEL ESTEVEZ, JUANITO HEREDIA & AITOR GÓMEZ LIVE

SUN 02ND CLASSIC NIGHTS JAZZ, SOUL & BLUES LIVE
ALICIA TAMARIZ TRIO LIVE

ORIGEN **LIBERTY** **R**

Rosina Montes, Clarice Williams, Helenka Leksinska and Ana Pardá will be accompanied by David Geary, pianist and baritone in this performance of Puccini's *Sor Angélica*. Payment after the show.

Teatro Soho Caixa Bank

MÁLAGA. Until 27 March.

The new theatrical production from the theatre is the Broadway musical Company starring Antonio Banderas. Tickets from El Corte Inglés

CHARITY

ARCH

ALHAURÍN EL GRANDE. 10am-4pm. Viña Borrego.

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

CHRISTMAS MARKETS/EVENTS

Marbella Christmas Concert

MARBELLA. 10 December, 6pm. Centro Cultural Cortijo Miraflores, Marbella.

The Group of adult piano learners orchestra will play classic and modern Christmas songs, as well as play individual pieces. Entry is free.

Christmas Fair

ALMOGUERA. 27, 28 November, from 11am until 8pm. Hacienda Almoquera, Crtra Vieja de Los Barrios. Asiatic and vegetarian foods, sushi, cheese, honey, jewellery, clothing, ceramics and gifts etc. The organisers will also be collecting non-perishable

foodstuffs and good second-hand clothing for the Food Bank and Red Cross. feriachristmas@gmail.com

St George's Christmas Fayre

MÁLAGA. 28 November, 12.30 - 4.30pm. St George's Church, Avda de Pries.

Gifts, baked goods, books, clothing and accessories, tombola and lots more.

Jingle Belles concerts

CANILLAS DE ACEITUNO. 3 December, 6.30pm. Nebula Bar. Carols and Christmas songs.

PUENTE DON MANUEL. 19 December, 6pm. Scirocco Restaurant. Carols and Christmas songs.

TAPAS Carols and dinner party

COÍN. 6 December, 7pm. Los Cabaes, Coín to Cártama road.

Entertainment with Mama Cath, Orla Tierny and the Tapas Choir. Two-course dinner. Members 14€, non members 16€.

Christmas Concert for Special Needs

ALHAURÍN EL GRANDE. 10 December, 7pm. Casa de la Cultura. 5€.

To raise funds for the Fahala Centre for Adults with Special Needs, the TAPAS choir will be performing Christmas songs in English and in Spanish.

Christmas Fair

PERIANA. 10 December, 12 December, 10am-2pm. Salón María Zambrano.

Lucky dip and raffle, mulled wine, coffee and cakes, lots of stalls selling various items. In support of the Red Cross and Esperanza charities.

Choir concerts for Christmas

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 11 December, 8pm. CoraxialInternational Choir in the

Night of 70s nostalgia in Teatro Las Lagunas



The Cops will perform at the tribute concert in Mijas tonight. SUR

A special tribute show will recreate the music of the Bee Gees and The Police

TONY BRYANT

MIJAS. The Teatro Las Lagunas in Mijas will host a special tribute night dedicated to the music of the Bee Gees and The Police tonight (Friday). The show, which begins at 9pm, will feature The Spanish Bee Gees Tribute Band Show, a trio who have gained a large following for their ability to reproduce the

greatest hits of the Gibb brothers.

They will be supported by The Cops, a well-established four-piece band that have toured Europe with their show dedicated to the music of Sting and The Police. The band perform some of the internationally acclaimed rock outfits most celebrated songs, including Message in a Bottle and Don't Stand too Close to Me; as well as some of Stings solo compositions.

Tickets cost 15 euros in advance or 20 euros on the door.

Convento de San Francisco. For more information: eucorax@hotmail.es or call: 689111352

International Concert

MIJAS COSTA. 15 December. Las Lagunas Theatre. The TAPAS choir are taking part in this concert organised by Mijas town hall. More information: chair.tapassociety@gmail.com

Nine Lessons and Carols

MÁLAGA. 15 December, 7pm. St George's church, Avda de Pries. The service will be accompanied by the Orfeón Pre Universitario de Málaga.

International Christmas Festival

ARROYO DE LA MIEL. 17, 18, 19 December, from 1pm. Plaza de la Mezquita. Free. International gastronomy, dance and music performances, typical products.

Christmas songs Concert

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 18 December from 1pm. El Pianista del Carmen Bar. Christmas carols and songs from the Jingle Belles, stalls selling Christmas gifts, crafts, food etc

Christmas Gala Dinner for Cudeca

MARBELLA. 16 December, 7.30pm. Villa Tiberio. Gala dinner in aid of Cudeca with aperitifs, three-course dinner, wine and coffee included, live music, dancing, tombola. Price per person

75€, 25€ of which goes to Cudeca. Further information call: 952771799.

MORE IDEAS

Mijas Photo Tour

MIJAS PUEBLO. 26 November, 4.30pm. Plaza Virgen de la Peña, 2, Mijas. See Mijas Pueblo through the eyes of a photographer. Walk along the most picturesque sites in the town and learn how to capture them with your own camera. 15€. Reservations and more information: mijasecrets@gmail.com

Sweet Christmas Walk

MIJAS PUEBLO. 12, 19 December, 4.30pm. Plaza Virgen de la Peña, 2, Mijas. Walk through the streets of Mijas, lit by festive lights and decorated with Christmas trees, and taste homemade and traditional sweets. Reservations and more information: mijasecrets@gmail.com

Beach clean up

MARBELLA. 27 November, 10am. La Plage de Casanis, Urb. Golden Beach, Exit 190C, Marbella. Pop up plastic hunt on a Marbella beach, presented by Plastic Free Seas Worldwide. All you need to do is turn up, grab a bag, hunt for plastic and weigh what is found at the site. Info: 622 927 048 / 672 328 786 hello@pfsww.com

Night Market with live music

ALCAUCÍN. Every Friday and Wednesday 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.

TIMS choir

LOS BOLICHES. Wednesdays 7-9.30pm. St Andrew's Church. The choir has recently resumed rehearsals and would love to welcome new members. The International Music Society has an extensive repertoire singing excerpts from musical theatre, ballads, popular songs of yesteryear up to present times and also Christmas songs including some in German and Spanish as well as English. There are no auditions and the ability to read music is less important than enthusiasm and commitment. Visit their Facebook page or their website :- www.timschoir.org call: 654891790.

Las Luces del Botánico, Christmas Garden

MÁLAGA. From 27 November until 9 January 2022, 6.30 - 9.30pm. Gates close at 11pm. Malaga Jardín Botánico La Concepción.

A two kilometre route around the gardens will be lit by over two million lights and accompanied by music. Some of the lights will be in the form of some of the fauna present in the garden such as owls and squirrels and some flora such as a huge 'biznaga' lighting up one of the lakes.

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. **Encanto:** 13:00 (Sun), 18:20 (Tues). **Eternals:** 12:00 (Sun); 18:55 (Tues). **Last Night in Soho:** 22.40 (Tues). **Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone:** 18.00 (Tues). **My Hero Academia 3:** 13:25 (Sun), 18:40 (Mon, Tues). **Spencer:** 19:05 (Tues). **House of Gucci:** 20:00 (Fri-Wed). **Way Down:** 20:00 (Tues). **3, 9 December, 8pm:** Christmas with André Rieu, King of the waltz.



Iris Nieto, Malaga

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. C/



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Covid-19
Regular Updates

Gypsy contribution to Spanish culture highlighted in new exhibition

BENALMÁDENA

The exhibition focuses on the origins of the Gypsy race and their arrival in Spain in the fifteenth century

TONY BRYANT

The Castillo El Bil Bil in Benalmádena is hosting a new exhibition called Historia y Cultura Del Pueblo Gitano, an initiative aimed at promoting the history and traditions of the Gypsies. The exhibition focuses on the origins of the Gypsy race, the diaspora from India more than 1,000 years ago, and their arrival in Spain in the fifteenth century.

As well, it details the contributions the Gypsy community has made to the Andalusian and Spanish culture, from their music and dance and regional costume, to the many Caló words which have enriched the Spanish language. Special attention is given to flamenco, a style of music and dance - declared a World Heritage Treasure in 2010 - that's roots are undoubtedly rooted within the Gypsy culture. A series of information boards

explains the many legislations that were enforced by the Spanish Crown in an attempt to wipe out their lifestyle and customs.

The Catholic Monarchs enforced the first of a series of laws in the late 15th century, and the persecution and prejudices against them would continue for almost 300 years.

It also features current Gypsy politicians and campaigners who now work tirelessly to eradicate hatred, discrimination and injustices suffered by Gypsies in the work place.

Celebrities

The exhibition, which continues until the 3 December, also focuses on Spanish Gypsy sports personalities and celebrities, along with a special section dedicated to some of the world's top personalities who have Romany roots. These include actors Charles Chaplin, Michael Caine and Helen Mirren; and musicians such as Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood, and Elvis Presley, who, it is claimed, descended from German Gypsies who emigrated to the USA in the early 18th century.

The initiative is organised by



The Gypsy history and customs exhibition in Bil Bil Castle. T. BRYANT

the Asociación de Enseñantes con Gitanos, an association that strives to alleviate the many prejudices that the Gypsies have been subjected to.

The exposition, which was inaugurated by representatives of the Federación Andaluza Hermandad Gitana (Andalusian Gypsy Brotherhood Federation), was organised to coincide with the Day of the Andalusian Gypsy (22 November), an event that is celebrated every year by the more than 500,000 Gypsies that reside in the region, a community that represents 50 per cent of the Roma population of Spain.

The day was recognised by the Andalusian government in 1996, because it was on this day in 1462 that the first Gypsies arrived in Andalucía. Since then, the Gypsies of Andalucía have integrated into society more so than in any other area in Europe, and their contribution to the culture and customs of the region is undeniable.

Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922.
www.yelmocines.es

Eternals: 22:10 (Tues)

Spencer: 20:40 (Tues).

Way Down: 20:00 (Tues).

Last Night in Soho: 21.20 (Tues)

3, 9 December, 8pm: Christmas with André Rieu, King of the waltz.

Performances from the Royal Opera House and the Bolshoi Ballet:

9, 21 December, 8.15pm: The Nutcracker from the ROH and the Bolshoi respectively.

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MÁLAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia.
Tel: 902220922

House of Gucci: 21:15 (Fri-Sun), 18:45 Tues), 20:10 (Wed).

Spencer: 13:00 (Sun), 18:40 (Tues)

Encanto: 19.40 (Tues);

Last Night in Soho: 20:10 (Tues)



André Rieu concert, Yelmo Cines

My Hero Academia 3: 17:55 (Tues)

Eternals: 18.55 (Tues)

The Last Duel: 21:05 (Tues)

Way Down: 21:00 (Tues)

Performances from the Royal Opera House and the Bolshoi Ballet:

3, 9 December, 8pm: Christmas with André Rieu, King of the waltz.

9, 21 December, 8.15pm: The Nutcracker from the ROH and the Bolshoi respectively.

Cinesur Miramar

FUENGIROLA. Avda de la Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.

House of Gucci: 17:15 (Fri, Mon-Thur), 20:30 (Sat-Sun), 23:30 (Sat).

Spencer: 13:00 (Sun), 17:00 (Mon, Tues, Thur)

Last Night in Soho: 19:00 (Mon, Tues, Thur)

My Hero Academia 3: 19:45 (Fri, Mon-Thur), 20:10 (Sat, Sun)

Eternals: 22:00 (Fri, Mon-Thur), 22:25 (Sat, Sun)

Antlers: 23:45 (Sat), 21:50 (Mon, Tues, Thur)

Encanto: 17:00 (Fri-Thur), 12:15 (Sat, Sun)

Cinesur Ingenio

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

House of Gucci: 19.05 (Tues).

Eternals: 19.10 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

Encanto: 17.10, 19.30, 21.45 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

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Labelmania

ANDREW J. LINN



There are two classes of wine purchaser: the one who knows what is required and concludes the deal in minutes - and the others. A survey by Aldi and Oxford University demonstrated that consumers make their choice

based on the price of the wines on display and the attractiveness of the label. So, a wine worth five euros can be made to appear to be worth 20 euros with a classy presentation. A bottle with a picture of a

French chateau or a German schloss, for example, is rated high in the buyer's mind and will achieve more sales than the same value wine with an unimaginative presentation. The amount of information on the label is decisive, and the more there is, the better the consumer's impression of the wine. Heavy bottles, which can weigh up to a kilo empty, are another decisive selling factor (though environmentally disastrous) and of course long corks. The average customer wandering around the wine shelves is putty in the hands of clever mar-

keting technicians. Australian wine authorities are so concerned about labelling that new regulations will oblige producers to have them approved in advance for wines to be exported. Not a bad idea considering the lacklustre attempts of many wineries left to their own devices. But wouldn't it be nice if none of this mattered and there was some sort of device that would give the buyer all the information without limit? Well, there is, and it's known as a QR code, and eventually all bottles will carry this as a back label.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Cristina 2018

The Conrad bodega was among the first to be established in Ronda, and this wine is classified in the Sieras de Málaga category. Traditionally the Malbec grape is more at home in Argentina, but this blend with Petit Verdot is an unqualified success. Around 21 euros.



Pedro, the travelling churros man

Genal Valley. A lorry driver by profession and resident in Cartajima, Pedro Ruiz makes and sells his fried dough in four villages in the area

VANESSA MELGAR

Pedro Ruiz is an international lorry driver hailing from La Línea de la Concepción and currently living in Cartajima, in the Valle del Genal, just south of Ronda. He's used to moving around, travelling Europe for over 30 years, but now he's racking up kilometres in the Serranía de Ronda, in the Valle del Genal. He makes and sells 'churros' - a traditional type of fried dough, usually accompanied by hot chocolate - in four villages: in Júzcar on Fridays, Parauta on Saturdays, in Cartajima on Sundays and in Faraján on Mondays. Pujaera is also within his line of sight, at the request of its inhabitants, but he has yet to make it there.

You could say he's a travelling 'churrero', a job that complements his main income, to help support his five children. Pedro learned to make churros when he owned a café in Torremolinos and was interested in including them on his menu. "I've known how to make churros since 1995. I had a café and I was interested in them. I bought the machines, the utensils and that was my first experience as a churro maker. Now I alternate between my driving job and churro-making; I need to provide for my family," he said. In La Línea de la Concepción, where he's from, he also made churros, in a kiosk that one of the town halls owned. "I did that for



Pedro Ruiz making churros in Júzcar. v.m.

about two years, but because it didn't pay enough I decided to try lorry driving," he explained. This churro-making lorry driver has also passed down his knowledge of this second job onto two of his

sons, who now make their own in Gibraltar. "I showed them and there they are," he said. In Cartajima, where he settled down in search of tranquility, he proposed making churros and

"I suggested making them just to celebrate the end of summer and people asked me to make them again"

hot chocolate to celebrate the end of summer. "It was a success, we all had fun, I'm at peace in this area, I feel very comfortable. I proposed making them without really having an interest. Afterwards, people started asking me to make churros - they were very good, people liked them," he said.

Word of mouth

Word travels fast around small villages - Cartajima barely has 250 inhabitants - and when Pedro began making and selling churros there on Sundays, his fame jumped to the next village, Parauta. "The owner of a bar suggested that I go and make churros, he asked for permission at the town hall and that way I was able to go there too," he explained. The same happened in Júzcar and Faraján. "I don't make a lot, but it's something extra, I also have a good time. There are no churros establishments in these villages; no one sells them. I'm becoming the area's churro man," he said, admitting to thinking about leaving the lorry-driving business.



The ham-carving competition with a female touch

The Costa del Sol contributes to improving the visibility of 'cortadoras': a third of the participants at the Benalmádena national competition were women

ALEKK M. SAANDERS

BENALMÁDENA. Ham (jamón) cutters (in Spanish 'cortadores') from all over Spain demonstrated the fine art of carving cured ham at an event in Arroyo de la Miel last Sunday. The contest was organised to raise funds for the local religious brotherhood Hermandad de Redención - however it was also sisterhood that took the limelight at the event.

They say cutting 'jamón' is a prestigious job that pays well. In Spain it has traditionally been reserved for men, however, recently women have started to engage in the ham sector.

Twenty years ago Loli Domínguez made history by entering this man's world of ham-cutting. She became the first 'cortadora'



Sandra Fernández. SUR

(the feminine version of the Spanish word). Loli used to compete with male colleagues, and in 2007 even beat them at a contest in Sant Boi de Llobregat, Catalonia.

The year of 2019 was revolutionary because Puri Garabaya was the first woman to take part in the final of the Spanish championships. The same year, Cristina Hernández from Malaga was runner-up in the first ham-cutting competition in Benalmádena, held under the auspices of the

'Liga Nacional' and organised by David Romero.

"It is hard and physically demanding work, but women were forced to work harder to enter this male world of jamón because they had to overcome prejudices and pass through stereotypes. I think to become a master or a champion means to have ability to transform a cutting process into sensations and emotions. Women can cut ham with more impressive delicacy than their male counterparts," David Romero told SUR in English.

The Concurso Nacional de Cortadores de Jamón de Benalmádena, the competition's official name, was marked by the successful participation of women at this national level. Among six specialist cutters, two were women - María del Rosario Roldán (Ronda) and Sandra Fernández from Calafell (Tarragona). Sandra came second overall and proved again that a woman is able to carve ham just as well as a man. Antonio Sánchez from Badajoz won, and in third place was the Andalusian ham cutter from El Ejido, Francisco Serrano.

Colmenar's Mosto and Chacina festival returns to start the Christmas season

There will be stalls selling cold meats, cheeses, wines, extra virgin olive oil, bread and sweets on Plaza de Los Carros

EUGENIO CABEZAS

MALAGA. Colmenar's Mosto (early wine) and Chacina (cold meat products) festival, which in its 20-year history has come to mark the start of the Christmas season in the Axarquía, returns this Sunday, 28 November.

Visitors will be able to buy all kinds of local products to stock up for Christmas, including cold meats, cheeses, wines, extra virgin olive oil, breads and sweets.

"It is one of the most eagerly awaited festivals in Malaga and is a key feature of the Axarquía's calendar," said José Juan Jiménez, the president of the group of Axarquía town halls.

The Fiesta del Mosto y la Chacina has been declared a festival of provincial importance by the Malaga's provincial authority, Diputación. Stalls will

be open from 11.30 am in the Plaza de Los Carros.


"People who come here will be able to buy our exquisite sausages, honey, cheese or the cakes for which we are known," said Colmenar's mayor, José Marín. "Tourism in inland villages must be linked to gastronomy," he added.

The opening speech this year will be given by José Luis García, a journalist from Cadena Ser radio in the Axarquía.

In addition to the stalls, there will also be music and traditional dance performances by local groups, including the Trinidad Symphonic Band, the San Lorenzo Musical Group and the Zamarrilla Music Band from Malaga. In the afternoon, there will be the traditional 'chacineros' competition; a draw for lots of cured meats and a concert by La Húngara at 4.30pm.

There will also be a tapas route, including eight bars and restaurants, offering local dishes.


Visitors will also be able to see an exhibition of classic and vintage cars by the 'Amigos del 600' club from Almeria.




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Women surgeons gain ground

Progress. There are now more women than men among young surgeons, making their presence felt in a speciality traditionally dominated by men

SUSANA ZAMORA



Rosa Pérez, 28, always knew what she wanted to do. She had no doubts, not even when her experienced father invited her to reconsider and to think twice about choosing to study General and Digestive Surgery. He knew what he was talking about. Years of exhausting days, standing for hours in a space no larger than a floor tile, sleepless nights, working ungodly hours, 24-hour emergency cover... but she didn't care. She had seen what it was like in her own home, and she wanted to follow that example.

Today she is in her third year as resident at the Regional Hospital in Malaga and is convinced she made the right decision. She speaks with emotion about how surgery can change the course of an illness quickly. Her face changes and her voice trembles at the thought of that 'power' being in

her hands. Just one cut of the scalpel away. That's what fuels her to do her best every day in a profession which, because of its hardness, the physical effort it requires and the personal and professional sacrifice it involves, has traditionally been a masculine one. Until now.

The latest report from the Spanish Association of Surgeons reveals that the proportion of female surgeons in the youngest age group (between 25 and 35) is greater than males, 60 per cent against 40 per cent. The opposite is the case in the senior age group. Malaga is no exception to this general trend, which has been observed for the past five years due to more women in the faculties of medicine and the banishment of male stereotypes and prejudices.

Rosa is one of ten residents who are currently training to be sur-

Belinda Pérez (51) is a specialist in the Hepatobiliopancreatic Surgery and Transplant unit at the Regional hospital. Residents Pilar Gutiérrez (29) and Rosa Pérez (28) are training in general surgery there.

ÑITO SALAS



geons at the former Carlos Haya, seven women and three men. She works in equal conditions, with no aggravation, no sharp comments to affect her self-esteem and no poorly-disguised sexism, as those who preceded her have had to cope with.

Making their way in this profession was not easy for women, and nor was making themselves heard afterwards. They had to prove themselves twice over and raise their voices even more in order for anyone to listen. And that's what they did, despite everything.

"When I started in surgery I would cry when I got home every day because they treated me really badly. Repeatedly and explicitly, my colleagues would tell me that if I wanted to be a surgeon I could say goodbye to ever being a mother," says Marta Ribeiro, 52, who is the coordinator of the Breast

Unit at the Regional hospital in Malaga. That continual "ill-treatment" seriously affected the motivation and self-esteem of a woman who was always a brilliant student. "It was challenging and maybe if I went back to those times I wouldn't do it again. I really suffered, but at that time, when I was 24, nobody was going to stop me. If anybody told me "no" about something, that spurred me on," says this well-known surgeon, who has two children.

But she was on the point of throwing in the towel. "I had three or four low points during my residency and even wondered whether to change tack and study a different speciality. The messages that I was worthless were constant and almost every day I was ignored or insulted by my bosses because they wanted to make me give up. In the operating theatre I felt I was always

being examined and that made me put a certain zeal into my work which I didn't see my colleagues having to do," she says. Breast surgery was her escape route, a way out of that hostile environment which she perceived in general surgery. "If I hadn't done that, I would never have become coordinator," she admits.

In the operating theatre, that cold and aseptic space where everything shines and nothing smells; where time flies for those in green pyjamas and slows down for those who, undressed, place themselves in their hands; there, in that micro-universe of scalpels, gauze, scissors and flashing tweezers where the clock stops is where 51-year-old Belinda Pérez, a specialist in the Hepatobiliopancreatic Surgery and Transplant Unit of the Regional hospital has spent a large part of her life. A professional who

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even as a little girl already showed her potential, when she used to entertain herself by listening to her 'Nenuco' on her toy phone and repeating that one day she was going to be a "meiquido" (médico, meaning doctor).

Nowadays, she is known nationally in her field, but "it has taken a lot to get this far," she stresses. When she began as a resident in her hospital in 1998 there were no female assistant surgeons. Only she and another woman, Marta Ribeiro, were studying this speciality in Malaga. "We were like a monkey at the fair," she says. They had to prove twice as much to be equal to their male colleagues and, above all, turn a deaf ear to the unfiltered comments from their bosses. It was that, or give up. "Hey, so we've got a miniskirt type of surgeon," one said to her not long after she started. "That same person told me that women should be in the kitchen, not in the operating theatres," she says.

All this led to self-censorship for years. "I didn't wear a white coat, I always wore the green trousers and top so nobody would think that being a woman gave me any advantage. It was like that for the first three years of residency until I fi-

BELINDA PÉREZ

"If I had been a man everything would have been much easier"

MARTA RIBEIRO

"I really suffered; I considered changing to a different speciality instead"

ROSA PÉREZ

"Surgery can change the course of an illness and that's what attracted me"

PILAR GUTIÉRREZ

"I know what my predecessors went through; it has been different for me"

"In my first year they told me that if I wanted to save lives, with the body I had, I should be a lifeguard on a beach"

nally decided only to wear trousers when I had to," she remembers now.

She decided to continue and ignore improper comments against her. "I realise that I was brusque and difficult to get on with. They used to say that if they squeezed me they would find I had balls," says this surgeon who toughened up in a world of men where she felt she had to fight a great deal and also that if she had been a man everything would have been simpler.

She probably wouldn't have had to listen in her first year of residence, when she was asked why she wanted to be a surgeon and she said she wanted to save lives, and was told that with the body she had she would be better as a beach lifeguard.

"Instead of taking it badly I just went on my way, showing I was capable of, even though it meant working three times as hard as my colleagues, and bringing up a family at the same time. They also asked me why my husband let me work as a surgeon and who was bringing up my children," she says. But Belinda Pérez doesn't feel that she missed anything, "because when I am with them I am 100 per cent their mother," she says.

These women say things are very different now, compared with when they started. "The number of women in the faculties of medicine increases each year and more of them are opting to become surgeons. I am aware of what my predecessors went through, but I have never suffered any discrimination for being a woman," says Pilar Gutiérrez, a resident surgeon in her fifth year at the Regional hospital.

Belinda Pérez recognises the advances, but until a decade ago "at the age of 40 and an established career," she still had to show what she was capable of. "I began to feel I was a nonentity when they called me to be on a panel. They didn't want me because I was a doctor, or because I had published more than 100 articles, or because I work myself into the ground, or because I handle the database for the whole unit or because I'm a good surgeon. They did it because I'm a woman and they had to fill the feminine quota. That was just absurd," she says, as one of the women surgeons who, having battled against the system for so long, are not prepared to give up a single inch of the ground that has taken so much for them to conquer.

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Action from the game on Saturday, 20 November. **SALVADOR SALAS**

Malaga fight to maintain their unbeaten home form at La Rosaleda

Las Palmas' calm demeanour wasn't enough for a hungry home side

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. Malaga continued their superb unbeaten run at home, defeating high-flying Las Palmas 2-1 in last Saturday's evening game (20 November). The hosts knew that they had to win no matter what, as their poor away results have made it necessary for them to take advantage of their home ties.

La Rosaleda was rocking and fully supportive of the Blue and Whites. Both sides kept a well-balanced 4-4-2 and they had the same intention of pressing high and dominating possession, pushing up the pitch when they didn't have the ball.

Chances were shared equally, with Malaga putting in crosses that just didn't quite connect with any of the intended players.

Jonathan Viera

The visitors' play was very focused on Jonathan Viera, who dictated the game throughout

the opening 45 minutes.

Within the first 15 minutes, it was clearly Las Palmas in charge. Viera often dropped back looking for the ball and playing wide when receiving it.

The clearest chance of the half went to the Canarians, whose attackers danced beautifully

around the defenders to leave Jesé on his own to shoot wide.

But on the half hour mark, Malaga scored the opening goal after Paulino's skillfulness left Víctor Gómez with space to find Brandon in the box, who in turn passed it across the face of the goal to allow Antónín to slot

Malaga remain undefeated at home and they are still seventh in the table, just one point outside the promotion places

Their next league match will be away from home on Saturday 27 November against a struggling Burgos side

SECOND DIVISION

Results of Matchday 17

Fuenlabrada - Mirandés	1 - 1
Oviedo - Amorebieta	2 - 0
Malaga - Las Palmas	2 - 1
Almería - Valladolid	3 - 1
Cartagena - Burgos	1 - 0
Lugo - Eibar	2 - 2
Huesca - Ibiza	0 - 0
Tenerife - Alcorcón	1 - 0
Ponferradina - Sporting	4 - 1
Real Sociedad B - Girona	1 - 2
Zaragoza - Leganés	0 - 2

Table

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PT
1. Almería	17	13	1	3	33	12	40
2. Eibar	17	9	5	3	24	19	32
3. Tenerife	17	9	3	5	22	14	30
4. Ponferradina	17	8	5	4	23	15	29
5. Valladolid	17	8	4	5	25	20	28
6. Las Palmas	17	7	6	4	25	20	27
7. Malaga	17	7	5	5	17	19	26
8. Cartagena	17	8	1	8	22	24	25
9. Oviedo	17	5	9	3	18	15	24
10. Girona	17	7	3	7	20	19	24
11. Ibiza	17	5	8	4	18	19	23
12. Zaragoza	17	4	10	3	15	15	22
13. Sporting	17	6	4	7	17	21	22
14. Huesca	17	5	6	6	18	17	21
15. Lugo	17	4	8	5	22	22	20
16. Mirandés	17	5	4	8	24	28	19
17. Burgos	17	5	4	8	14	18	19
18. Leganés	17	4	6	7	17	19	18
19. R. Sociedad B	17	4	5	8	16	20	17
20. Fuenlabrada	17	3	8	6	13	18	17
21. Amorebieta	17	2	7	8	19	27	13
22. Alcorcón	17	2	2	13	13	34	8

home a much-needed goal.

The second half saw much of the same from both sides, but a second yellow early in the second-half meant that Malaga now had a number advantage.

With 15 minutes left, Viera found himself in space, crossed the ball back with Peybernes awkwardly heading it to the keeper and Benito quickly pounced on the mistake, smashing the ball home to bring things level.

La Rosaleda still roared the team on and Malaga bounced back immediately.

Sekou

The introduction of the forward Sekou Gassama prove to be key for Malaga. With just five minutes left, the hosts had a corner in which five players ran from outside the box, with Sekou scoring the second of the night with a thundering header in the front post.

A well-practiced set-piece that put the Blue and Whites ahead yet again, giving the hosts all three points and going one step closer to promotion.

The goal now is to secure 40 points in the 25 games left to finish the season

ANTONIO GÓNGORA

MALAGA. What is Malaga's goal this season? Over the summer it was forever changing and it still is as the competition progresses. The start point was focussed on staying up, but this idea soon became the objective of improving the position

achieved last season (twelfth), and a place in the top ten. This variation came as a result of the improvement in the salary cap due to the income provided by the agreement between LaLiga and investment fund CVC Capital, which will allow Malaga to enter about 45 million (15 percent for footballers in three sea-

sons). And the circumstances continue to improve even more for sporting reasons and noone rules out the option of entering the promotion play-offs, among the top six (now the team is seventh, one point from these positions). With this possibility, José Alberto López's team would have to add about 40 points in

the remainder of the championship (in 25 games).

It is foreseeable that the current bunching in the upper zone of the table, apart from Almería, which already has a large difference in points over the other teams, will mean fewer points than in previous years will be needed to achieve the goal.

In any case, the around 66 points that are expected for sixth place may be feasible for the Blue and Whites team, as long as they start to add something more in

their away games, something predictable as they improve in different facets, as the coach has warned. There will be twelve match days at La Rosaleda (with 36 points at stake) and thirteen more at home (with 39).

The club plans to bet on promotion next season, but without ruling out anything in this. Hence, the signings that arrive in the winter market need to raise the level of the squad and, if all goes well, should mean a step forward in the fight for the upper zone of the table.



A LOOK AT LA LIGA
ROB PALMER
Commentator, Sky Sports

Valverde and Manchester United

I'm not sure he needs to justify himself; he just needs to slap his CV down on the table and wait for the offer



One must smile at the Manchester United fans who got all sniffy when the name of Ernesto Valverde was linked with the vacant manager's job.

He's not a ranter and raver; he isn't the master of the soundbite; and he's certainly not a self-obsessed self-publicist like so many who throw themselves forward for the big jobs.

I'm not sure he needs to justify himself; he just needs to slap his CV down on the table and wait for the offer.

In these pages, I warned those Barcelona fans who wanted him out of office because the brand of football wasn't quite to their liking. At the time of his departure, Barça were top of La Liga and had

progressed to the knock-out stages of the Champions League.

Quique Setién stepped in; the season was written off. Ronald Koeman took over and the club went into crisis mode.

Few recognised what an incredible job he'd been doing at the Camp Nou. He'd won the double and back-to-back titles. He'd kept his dignity as all hell was breaking loose behind the scenes. He managed Lionel Messi, harnessed his talents, and kept his ego in check.

In the 19 months since he left, the issues have become public knowledge, Messi has departed, and the football has regressed.

Valverde has all the credentials to handle the tricky situation at Old Trafford. He's won leagues with Olympiakos and



Ernesto Valverde. EFE

Barcelona, took Espanyol to the UEFA final and claimed Athletic Bilbao's first trophy in three decades with the Spanish Super Cup. He can also apply the disciplines of dealing with

Messi to Cristiano Ronaldo.

Ronaldo has apparently given his vote to Luis Enrique. The Spain manager's response was to ask if it was April Fool's Day. The pace of life as the na-

tional team manager suits him right now.

Zinedine Zidane was also in the frame. In this current age, he's arguably the most accomplished manager in world football. He's the absolute top level and can wait for a vacancy to arise at PSG, Juventus, or the France national team.

He's not fluent in English and reports suggest that his wife doesn't want to move to England, so why should he take a job where he's going to be living out of a suitcase with few people to converse with?

There is a dearth of world-class managers. All the proficient coaches are earning big bucks in the top jobs. It's understandable that Manchester United would look at those who have succeeded with the major La Liga clubs. Pep Guardiola and Rafa Benitez made the transition.

Luis Enrique and Zidane look like non-starters. Valverde would be a perfect choice, but some United fans think that choosing a manager is like swiping on a dating app.

There is of course one former coach of a major Spanish club who knows Old Trafford inside and out. I wonder what Gary Neville is doing these days?

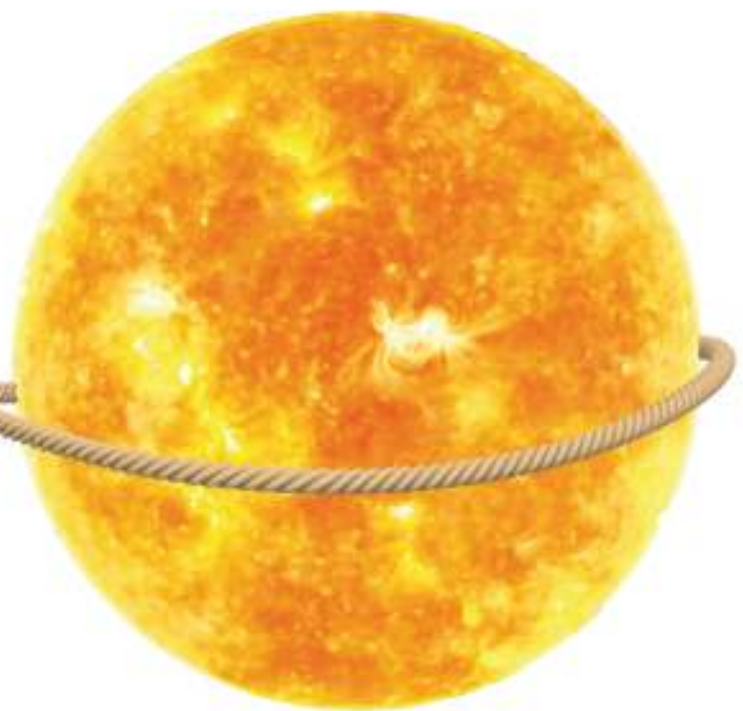
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Paco Ramos Llorca, Jacinto Castillo, Fernando Corrales, Alfonso Queipo de Llano, José María Martín Urbano and Joaquín Gallardo 'Guachi'.
JUAN CALDERÓN

When Malaga basketball played the Sixth Fleet

In the 1960s the Mediterranean had become the setting for many of the tensions of the 'cold war'. The USA and the Soviet Union were vying for control of certain strategic points of the planet. The Strait of Gibraltar and nearby area was one of the places marked in red by both blocs. After the Spanish Civil War, the US tried to win over the Franco regime and those negotiations ended with the Madrid Pacts of 1953. Under those agreements, four American military bases were to be set up in Spain in exchange for economic and military aid.

This is the reason that the main Spanish ports in the Mediterranean, including Malaga, were for decades a base for the ships that made up the famous Sixth Fleet of the US navy. These enormous vessels that sailed all round the world had thousands of crew members who were an important source of income wherever they set foot on firm ground.

Of course, the sailors who spent so much time away from home also had their hobbies. One of these was basketball and that is what lies behind one of the strangest stories about this sport in Malaga. The crews of these enormous ships included some young university students, and some even made it to the NBA. To stay in shape they used to organise basketball matches with teams from the places their ships visited. Those were very

History. In the late 1960s and early 1970s matches took place on board the American warships which anchored in Malaga bay during their missions in the Mediterranean

early days for this sport in Malaga. It was not very well known, but there was a group of players who were passionate about it and they had no hesitation in accepting the challenge to play against the Americans. Sometimes teams from the bases at Morón and Rota would come to the city, but the biggest attraction was going to play on the American aircraft carriers and huge destroyers.

The members of those teams still remember the matches with the Americans perfectly. They are names that form part of the history of basketball in Malaga, the 'old ones' as they are also known: José María Martín Urbano, Jacinto Castillo, Paco Ramos Llorca, Fernando Corrales, Alfonso Queipo de Llano and Joaquín Gallardo 'Guachi', among others.

Impact

They become emotional when they talk about it now, because that contact with a parallel society, American, where basketball was born, had an impact on them and the sport has brought them together forever. But how was it possible for those Malaga-USA matches to take place?

Queipo de Llano says Antonio García Melero and Juan Rodríguez Soto were key to this. The first matches took place on the Maristas pitch and also in the Plaza de la Marina, where the baskets were brought from the old Tabacalera factory in the

Huelin district...

"They were the ones who made contact with the Americans and the ones who called on us to play some games at the Maristas and Los Agustinos. There were visits to the ships and quite a few of us went there to play. They sent boats to take us out to the ships and they gave us snacks and Coca-Cola. I remember there were some players from American universities and the NBA on those ships. They were brilliant, they always won. Their basketball was light years ahead of ours, but we played by counter-attacking. We had Bonilla, Jaime Farache, Julio Vida, Fernando Corrales, Jaime Porras and Pepe Diano, who was very good and had been in Buenos Aires. His parents were Spanish and had emigrated to Argentina. That was the first Maristas team to travel around Andalucía, the Ademar de Maristas," says Queipo de Llano, from his formidable memory.

Those were other times and the American ships were so big that they couldn't enter the port and had to anchor in the middle of Malaga bay. They used to send launches to pick the players up and, of course, that was very exciting for people like Jose María Martín Urbano.

"The most interesting thing I remember is that there was a ship, I don't know if it was the Saratoga, that had to stay out at sea because it was so huge. To go and play, they sent launches

JUAN CALDERÓN



► Plaza de la Marina. A match was played there between American sailors and players from Malaga. The photo is included in the book 'Gigantes del baloncesto en Malagueño'.



▼ The Saratoga. The famous aircraft carrier was one of the ships on which the basketball games with local players took place.



▼ Paco Llorca, in one of the matches against the Americans. SUR



to fetch us and take us out to the ship. I was worried about how we were going to play, because what would happen if the ball fell into the water, in my innocence and the little we knew about the world in those days. When they took us up on the deck I was frightened by the sheer size of it. There was a hangar with several basketball courts and backboards like in the films, arched, and the space was enormous. Their teams had a lot of incredible players, crazy about playing in American shirts. I remember perfectly how they gave us small gifts, and we used to buy chewing gum and American tobacco there. They used to give us Coca-Cola too, but we already knew what that was because it was being promoted in Spain at the time. They played park basketball, the type that is played in the streets, and that was more attractive for

Martín Urbano: "I was worried because, in my innocence, I was wondering how we were going to be able to play if the ball fell into the sea"

The Saratoga, the Independence and the Puget Sound were some of the ships in the Sixth Fleet on which basketball matches took place

us," says this former coach.

Jacinto Castillo, who also played with those teams, remembers it as if it were yesterday and he is still impressed by the magnificence of ships like the Saratoga and the Independence.

"We were freaked out, it was like something from outer space as far as we were concerned. I will never forget arriving at the ship in one of the launches the aircraft carriers used to use, and it was gigantic. There was nothing bigger in those days. A big hole would open up in the side and we would go through there. We used to play in the third basement. They showed us round the ship once. It had restaurants and supermarkets and different kitchens; it was like being in the United States, with everything you could think of...the basketball court wasn't out on the deck, it was indoors, and that

caused a second problem. The floor was rubber. There was a layer of rubber over the iron and our shoes used to stick to it. Then, another problem was that the baskets were hung from the ceiling, and we didn't have those in Malaga at the time. Those were the first ones we had ever seen. The backboard was curved and much smaller than we were used to. It was really difficult to get the ball in," says Castillo, fondly.

The former player and trainer, who at one time was also a scout for the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks, says that unlike other branches of the American army, the aircraft carriers allowed taller people in the crew for technical reasons and that made it even more difficult when it came to playing them. Castillo also remembers matches on board the Puget Sound, which was an enormous

ship that was used to assist and recover lost ships.

Fernando Corrales, a sharpshooter of the time, also remembers matches with the Americans, although in his case it was against the teams from the bases at Morón and Rota.

"For some reason I didn't go to the matches on board the ships, but I did play against them in Maristas. Imagine what it was like, when we went onto the pitch and saw how tall the American players were... they came with their Converse All-Stars, tracksuits and kits. We were impressed by their boots alone. We did our best and nearly always lost, but we tried," says Corrales, who Martín Urbano says was the "figurehead" of the team.

Joaquín Gallardo 'Guachi' laughs when he remembers the legendary All-Stars. "We were desperate to get some of those boots. The locker rooms were impressive. I remember that one time the Americans were worried because they had a logistical problem. They needed 5,000 dozens of eggs and we told them that it would be impossible to find those in Malaga," he jokes.

Some of the pioneers of basketball in Malaga still have the gifts they were given by the Americans (patches, caps, some badges) but the impression of arriving on a ship several hundred metres in length is their most vivid memory, as Paco Ramos Llorca describes. He has some photos of matches, and he even took his wife to see the ship.

"There were 5,000 men on that ship. They picked us up in the port and took us out to it, it was a world all of its own. They moved the planes out of the way to clear the pitch. They hit us hard because they were good, but we were hard too. We beat them in El Palo, I do remember that. And among the crew there were some men from Puerto Rico who spoke Spanish and they took us on a tour of the ship with our wives," he recalls.

Half a century later these players still remember one of the most curious moments in the history of basketball in Malaga as if it were yesterday, despite all the years that have passed since then.

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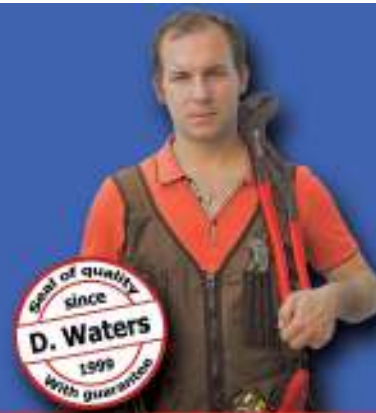
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María Torres was given a rousing welcome home at the train station. **ÑITO SALAS**

Malaga writes a new page in the national karate history book

Both María Torres, with an unprecedented gold, and Damián Quintero, with his third silver in a row, shine at the Karate World Championship in Dubai

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Saturday 20 November will go down in the Spanish karate history books, partly thanks to two Malaga karatekas who are already the province's most successful export in this sport. María Torres, international medalist and Iberoamerican champion, and Damián Quintero, runner-up at the 2020 Olympics, both stepped on the podium at the

World Karate Championship in Dubai.

They had both already picked up medals at the previous championship in 2018, but María picked up bronze in the team category, while Damián got silver as an individual. This time was different.

María hasn't just burst onto the scene - she was always there. However, her relatively short career has been a rollercoaster ride in terms of her performances at

big events. Her biggest disappointment was when she narrowly - and controversially - missed out on her ticket to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Reset

That was when the 24-year-old, champion of Spain and ranked sixth in the world, decided to take a break and reset, focusing on the upcoming Dubai championship. She exceeded expectations, pleasantly surprising the Spanish dele-

gation by qualifying for the final of kumite +68kg (sparring), something no Spaniard had done for 15 years.

On Saturday, María became the first Spanish woman to win gold in this kumite category. She did so by defeating Egyptian Okila Menna Shaaban in a frenetic duel which she won 5-4.

Meanwhile, Damián Quintero, in the twilight years of his career, continues to show why he's the most decorated Spanish karateka ever. He won his third consecutive individual silver medal after yet another kata (formalised sequence of movements that show offensive and defensive postures) duel against Ryo Kiyuna, a repeat of the face-offs seen at the last two World Championship and Olympic finals.

María became the first Spanish woman to win gold in kumite +68kg category

Damián continues to show why he's the most decorated Spanish karateka ever

Spanish F1 driver Fernando Alonso makes a long-awaited return to the podium in Qatar1

NEVE MATTHEWS

MALAGA. Fernando Alonso recorded the best result of his comeback season so far last Sunday, securing a third-place podium at the first Qatar Grand Prix.

Alonso, 40, had his best qualifying performance of the year, finishing fifth. The Alpine driver

was later promoted to third after Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen received grid penalties.

Alonso started off on soft tyres, with the Alpine team deciding on a one-stop strategy to minimise time spent in the pits.

This was the 98th podium of the Spaniard's career and his first since coming second for Ferrari

at the Hungarian Grand Prix in 2014. This sets a new record for the longest gap between podiums.

Summarising his feelings post-race, the double world champion said, "Yeah, unbelievable. Seven years and we finally did it."

It was a memorable day all round for Alpine with Esteban



Fernando Alonso in Qatar. **EFE**

Los Naranjos hosts the Spanish Open, the last stop on the Ladies European Tour

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Malaga is the European epicentre of golf from Thursday 25 November until this Sunday, thanks to the celebration of the final leg of the Ladies European Tour: the Andalucía Costa del Sol Open in Spain.

The Marbella golf club, Los Naranjos, is hosting the prestigious event that will bring together 72 players, the 64 best in the Race to Costa del Sol and eight invited by the organisation.

The greatest golfing asset in the province is Ana Peláez, 23, from Malaga who has recently become a professional.

She shone at the Spanish Open 2020 when she came third.

For her, this home event is a great test as she has set her sights on the tournament in La Manga (Murcia), in mid-December, where she will seek to get through to the Ladies European Tour (LET).

However, this does not mean that the Malaga resident does not aspire to get to the top again: "I will go out to win, that is always the goal. I also love playing in Spain and especially if it's in my land."

Peláez will be joined by Noemí Jiménez, from Marbella, and Laura Gómez, from San Pedro, to make up the trio of women from Malaga province in the competition.

Jiménez said, "I haven't had a good year, I've learned that you can't take anything for granted in golf; for me a great goal for this Open would be to finish in the top 10."

Gómez said, "I am feeling quite prepared, I am playing with the advantage that I have known this course since I was little...a good result would be to reach the top 10, but my aim is to win, hopefully!"

Ocon finishing in fifth. Alpine now have a 25-point lead on their rivals for fifth place in the Constructors' Championship, AlphaTauri.

With two races to go until the end of the season, the gap between Verstappen and Hamilton for the Drivers' Championship is now a nail-biting eight points.

Mercedes leads the Constructors' Championship points table, tailed by Red Bull Racing with a five-point gap.

The next race will be the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix on Sunday 5 December.

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THE STARS




Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
A brilliant offer can seem too good to miss, and it might be. Check that it ticks all your boxes, and that it really is as lucrative and positive as it seems.




Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
a potent Solar Eclipse could highlight a career move or offer that may soon see you soaring, Pisces. Never give up and never give in. You will win in the end.




Aries
March 21st - April 20th
Visionary aspects link with the urge to explore options that could expand your life in wonderful ways. Let your imagination soar.




Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Your love life gets a boost as idealistic energies help you and another to draw closer. And it could be because you share an interest that you feel so good about this.




Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
You'll start this week feeling that you're capable of anything. Before you get a move on, consider getting feedback; you'll gain from the practical advice that someone gives you.




Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
The thought of taking on new challenges could find you eagerly looking into all kinds of opportunities. Next weekend the Solar Eclipse could bring you an offer to snap up.




Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
What a week! You'll be on the starting block, ready and waiting for new adventures. Some of the ideas that show up may begin as a vision of what is possible.




Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
You and another may get on so well that it almost seems too good to be true. Whether this is a romantic tie, a friendship or business connection, it could be very idealistic.




Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
You may want to spend money to beautify your home, and perhaps give it some special attention. Spotted a brilliant idea online? Cost it out first, as it could run over budget otherwise.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
Scintillating romantic opportunities show up next week, and could include a sensational date night. Feeling creative? Indulge your talents and discover what you're truly capable of.

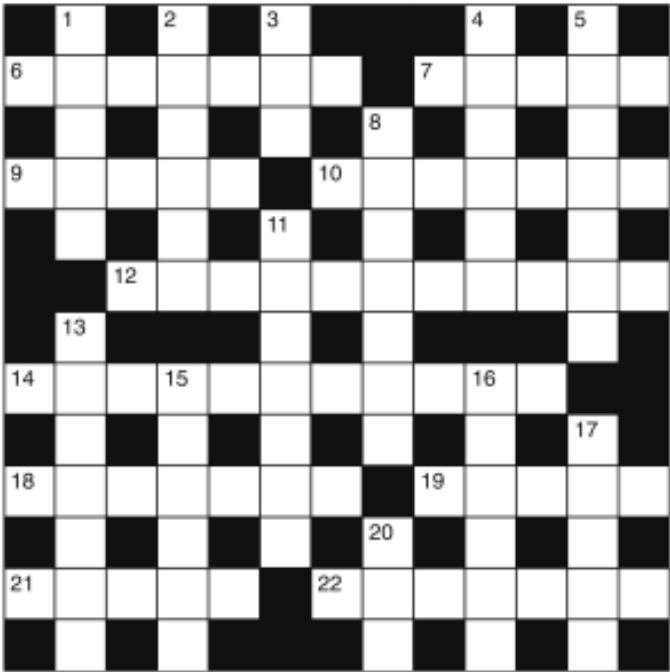


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November 23rd - December 21st
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Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
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Across

- 6 Games for strikers (7)
- 7 Arrived and left on a ship of the desert (5)
- 9 Unadorned one in a scheme (5)
- 10 Change the policemen (7)
- 12 Tube that isn't fine enough? (11)
- 14 Getting insurance and making for a safe place (6,5)
- 18 I raced against a man from the Middle East (7)
- 19 Obese man can be deadly (5)
- 21 Mother-of-pearl from a northern area (5)
- 22 Small bunch of flowers that may droop in the centre (7)

Down

- 1 Culpability for poor service? (5)
- 2 A tonic might produce movement (6)
- 3 Jewel Margaret returned (3)
- 4 Pop has written about a Greek poetess (8)
- 5 Being informed of a trial (7)
- 6 What an archer takes when given protracted applause? (7)
- 11 European upsetting Bengali (7)
- 13 Just a method of getting part of a golfcourse (7)
- 15 Take no notice of a different region (6)
- 16 Please get out and pass by (6)
- 17 Vehicle having to leave freight (5)
- 20 A great deal sold at auction (3)

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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

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

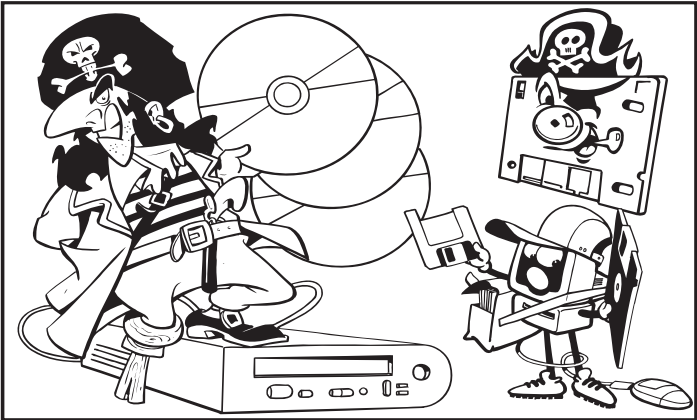
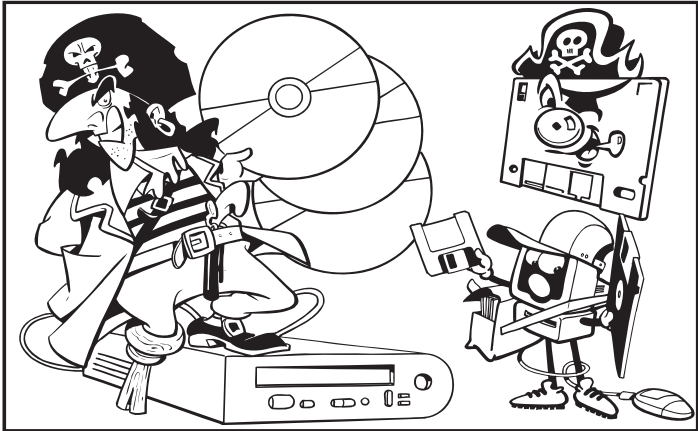
THE WORDPUZZLER

S	R	E	K	L	A	B	U	J	A
T	U	N	I	S	S	U	E	O	L
B	H	I	G	A	R	L	G	V	C
O	R	B	A	N	J	U	L	I	O
L	E	M	L	I	P	S	O	H	B
U	Z	O	I	A	D	A	K	A	R
A	V	L	O	R	I	K	O	R	A
N	E	S	S	I	R	A	B	A	T
D	E	S	T	O	M	B	A	R	I
A	C	C	R	A	J	U	B	E	A

Can you identify the African capital cities from the anagrams listed below?

- 1. Gliika
- 2. Raaher
- 3. Lunjab
- 4. Undala
- 5. Ustin
- 6. Tarba
- 7. Jabua
- 8. Aklaus
- 9. Carca
- 10. Krada

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



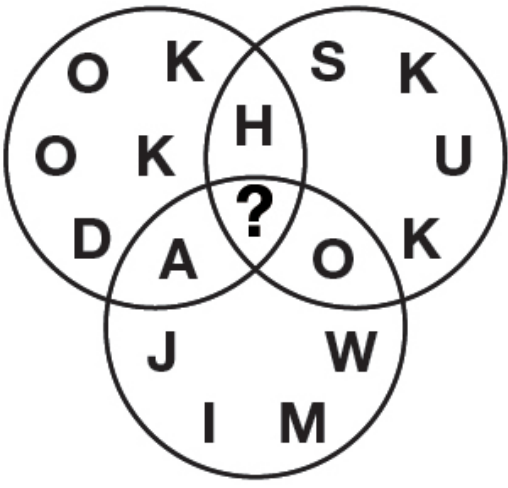
BATTLESHIPS

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

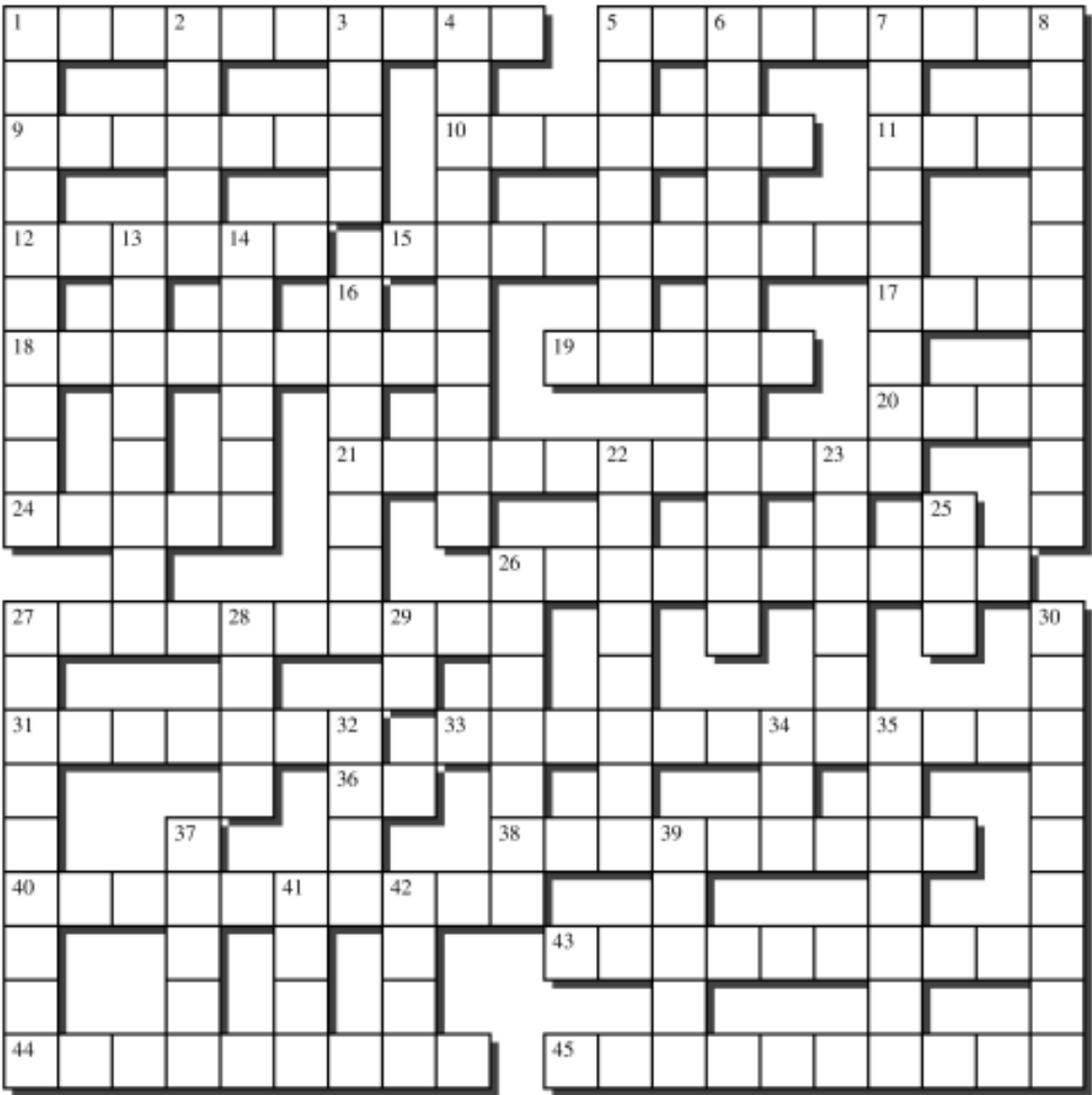
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A											3
B											2
C											4
D											0
E											2
F											1
G											3
H											1
I											3
J											1
	2	4	1	1	2	3	0	3	3	1	

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
- Down
- 1) Strategy (10)

5) Emperor (9)

9) Family (7)

10) She inspires (7)

11) Honey (4)

12) Hangover (6)

15) To disinherit (10)

17) I opened (4)

18) Locked in (f) (9)

19) Tide (5)

20) Tuna (4)

21) Integration (11)

24) Goddess (5)

26) Will (10)

27) Open to dialogue (10)

31) Palace (7)

33) Indifference (12)

36) You (2)

38) Frozen (m) (9)

40) Marriage (10)

43) To conquer (10)

44) Authority (9)

45) Monastery (10)
- 1) Illness (10)

2) Queen (5)

3) Age (4)

4) Travelling (10)

5) She starts (7)

6) Belongings (12)

7) They admired (9)

8) Relationships (10)

13) Successor (f) (8)

14) Crown (6)

16) Chapel (7)

22) They were residing (8)

23) Listener (6)

25) She ties (3)

26) Technical (m) (7)

27) Depressed (f) (9)

28) Eleven (4)

29) Neither (2)

30) Disorder (9)

32) Another (m) (4)

34) Role (3)

35) You swam (7)

37) Throne (5)

39) They win (5)

41) I measured (4)

42) Cream (4)

QUIZ

In which ocean is the Bermuda Triangle located?

1. Atlantic 2. Indian 3. Pacific
4. Arctic



Which is the smallest ocean in the world?

1. Indian 2. Pacific 3. Atlantic
4. Arctic

The Dead Sea is between which two countries?

1. Jordan/Sudan 2. Turkey/UAE
3. Jordan/Israel 4. UAE/Egypt

THE SUR IN ENGLISH COLUMN

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ANSWERS

Quiz answers

Jordan Rift Valley.
Bank to the west. It lies in the the east and Israel and the West salt lake bordered by Jordan to **Of interest:** The Dead Sea is a **Answer:** Jordan/Israel Russia.
Canada, Norway, Alaska, and bordered by Greenland, ocean in the world It is the Arctic Ocean is the smallest about 6.1 million square miles, **Of interest:** With an area of **Answer:** Arctic circumstances.
under mysterious are said to have disappeared a number of aircraft and ships the North Atlantic Ocean where region in the western part of Triangle is a loosely defined **Of interest:** The Bermuda **Answer:** Atlantic

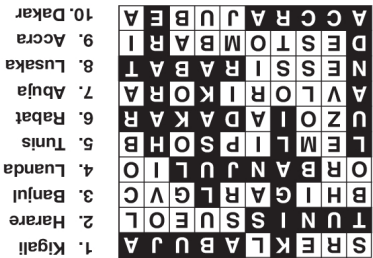
Circlegram

islands.
Shikoku, Iwo Jima, all Japanese question mark is I. Hokkaido.
The letter represented by the

Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 6 Matches; 7 Camel; 9 Plain; 10 Coppers; 12 Longbow; 11 Belgian; 13 Fairway; 15 Ignore; 16 Elapse; 17 Cargo; 20 Conage. Down: 1 Fault; 2 Action; 3 Giant; 4 Sappho; 5 Hearing; 8 Underground; 14 Tiding cover; 18 Iranian; 19 Fatal; 21 Nacre; 22 Lot.

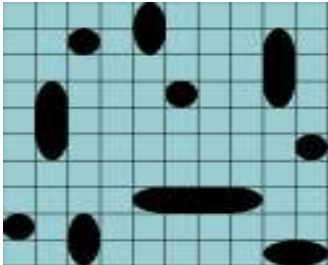
Wordpuzzler solution



Language Crossword



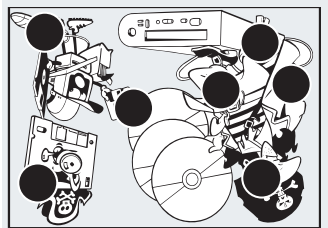
Battleships



Sudoku solution

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

The seven differences



Mushrooming in the mountains

A wealth of fungi. In autumn, when the temperatures drop and the first rain arrives, different species of wild mushroom can be found in the Serranía de Ronda, Montes de Málaga, Sierra de las Nieves and Sierras de Tejeda y Almijara

VANESSA MELGAR



A popular excursion. More people are discovering that hunting for mushrooms can be fun. **B. C.**



Don't eat types you don't know, don't listen to popular beliefs, and always go out searching with experts

The main thing to bear in mind when you go out looking for wild mushrooms is don't eat types you don't know, warns Beli Casillas, the director of Mico Time, based in Cortes de la Frontera.

Casillas advises being guided by experts and going out into the countryside with them, or taking part in organised day trips, to gradually acquire more knowledge and be able to distinguish between edible and poisonous varieties. Several have already taken place this autumn.

She says many popular beliefs about wild mushrooms are false, and that appearances can be deceptive. Be very careful about what you pick: some varieties are toxic and can even be fatal.

erras de Tejeda y Almijara, there is a long list thanks to the variety of vegetation.

Best places to look

However, she says the best places are: the Serranía de Ronda and the Genal valley in particular; the mountains around Cortes and Ronda, in the Málaga part of Los Alcornocales Natural Park; the riverbanks of the Arroyo de la Ventilla and the Guadiaro river; and the Sierra de Grazalema Natural Park, which in Málaga encompasses parts of Ronda, Cortes, Jimera, Benaoján, Montejaque and Montecorto.

"In the Serranía we have cork oaks, gall oaks, holm oaks, pine forests, pinsapos, chestnuts, pastureland, riverbanks... and in each of these ecosystems there are wild mushrooms associated with that type of vegetation, in different soils," she says.

At the beginning of the season, you can find species such as Caesar's mushroom, porcini, lactarius rugatus and parasol mushrooms, among others. Later on, when the temperatures drop even further and as long as it rains, you can look for saffron milk caps, bluefoots, porcini, chantarelles, king trumpet mushrooms, oyster mushrooms, yellow foot mushrooms and trumpets of death. In the spring, the favourites are the morels.

Be careful what you eat

The reason people go out to look for wild mushrooms, as well as enjoying the increasingly popular experience, is to eat them when they get home, but it is very important to remember that most wild mushrooms are not edible. Some people go out looking for them just to study, draw or photograph them. Many varieties are still hardly known. In Andalucía there are more than 2,500 species of wild mushroom in the regional government's inventory but Casillas says this official list needs to be updated.

Something to do this autumn? Go out and pick wild mushrooms. Where? In Málaga province, Los Montes, the Sierras de Tejeda y Almijara, the Sierra de las Nieves and the Serranía de Ronda are ideal places to go. The wild mushroom season starts this time of year, when the temperatures cool and it rains; they grow among pine trees, cork oaks, holm oaks and chestnut trees, among others.

So far this year there have been very few wild mushrooms. Beli Casillas, of Mico Time - a local environmental consultancy in

Cortes de la Frontera, says there hasn't been enough rain.

"We have gone straight from summer to winter. It is increasingly evident that our climate is changing, and it means that many of the species that normally appear at the start of the season never arrive," she says. However, there has been a good crop of Caesar's mushrooms and porcini in the Genal Valley, in the Serranía de Ronda, thanks to the rain which put out the recent fire in the Sierra Bermeja area, after it had burned nearly 10,000 hectares.

"The fungus, which is the organism that produces the mushroom, is always in the subsoil, below the ground or in decomposing organic material, but we will only see the mushroom when the conditions are good enough for it to appear," says Casillas.

The third 'f'

It all depends on the weather, but it can be said that in general Málaga province has a wealth of ecosystems and is therefore rich in fungi.

"We want this to be taken into account, and for people to talk

about the 'third f', in other words flora, fauna and fungi," says Casillas. As well as this type of tourism, Mico Time also advises and trains others, organising workshops on identifying wild mushrooms and preparing them for sale, and creating biomaterials (produced by fungi), among other things.

She says, for example, that close to Málaga city, in Los Montes, it is possible to find different species, especially those which grow near pine trees such as the saffron milk caps, and that in the Sierra de las Nieves and the Si-

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