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MALAGA CF FINALLY BAG AN AWAY WIN IN 2022 OPENER

More good news followed
Monday's victory as the Fifa
signing ban was lifted **P33**



Malaga, the Spanish province with highest population growth during the pandemic

The province has exceeded 1.7 million inhabitants for the first time with 17,000 new residents registered in 18 months

Malaga is the province that has seen the greatest increase in population in Spain during the months marked by the Covid pandemic, latest figures from the na-

tional statistics institute, INE, have revealed. More than 17,000 people joined the population census between January 2020 and July 2021, with the highest per-

centage increases being noted in small towns. Figures for the non-EU27 European group indicate an increase in British residents during the same period. **P2&3**



King Melchior's float passes the Alcazaba in Malaga city.
MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ

Bringing joy from the East

The Three Kings were able to parade through the streets in Malaga and Marbella, among other towns, this year, greeting excited youngsters from colourful floats. **P6**

Hospitalisations relatively low despite high Covid figures, says Junta

The regional authority wants to extend the Covid passport rule for hospitality until 31 January **P4**

INSIDE

A hairdresser giving hope to the homeless: Isaac Bousnane spends his days off giving free haircuts to people living rough in the city. **P14&15**

Costa refuse plant saves tonnes of unrecycled glass from landfill: Residents are urged to use bottle bins more **P12**

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Malaga is the Spanish province to see the largest population growth during the pandemic

The province attracts a wide range of new residents ready to settle down for good, and the population exceeds 1.7 million, for the first time

ANTONIO JAVIER LÓPEZ



MÁLAGA. In 18 months, some 17,247 people moved to Malaga with the province's population exceeding 1.7 million for the first time. According to Spain's National Institute of Statistics (INE) Malaga province saw a population increase of 1.02 per cent during the period between January 2020 and July 2021.

The figure makes Malaga the province that has gained the most population in Spain in absolute terms. And in relative terms, the Malaga increase of 1.02 per cent is only beaten by Guadalajara with 1.18 per cent, although the population in that province (265,508 residents) is six times smaller than that of Malaga.

Meanwhile, other major cities and their provinces are losing residents. The population of Madrid went down by 0.16 per cent; Barcelona by 0.1 per cent; and Bilbao 0.71 per cent. However, Valencia and Seville saw increases of 0.34 per cent and 0.07 per cent respectively, a slower rate of growth than Malaga.

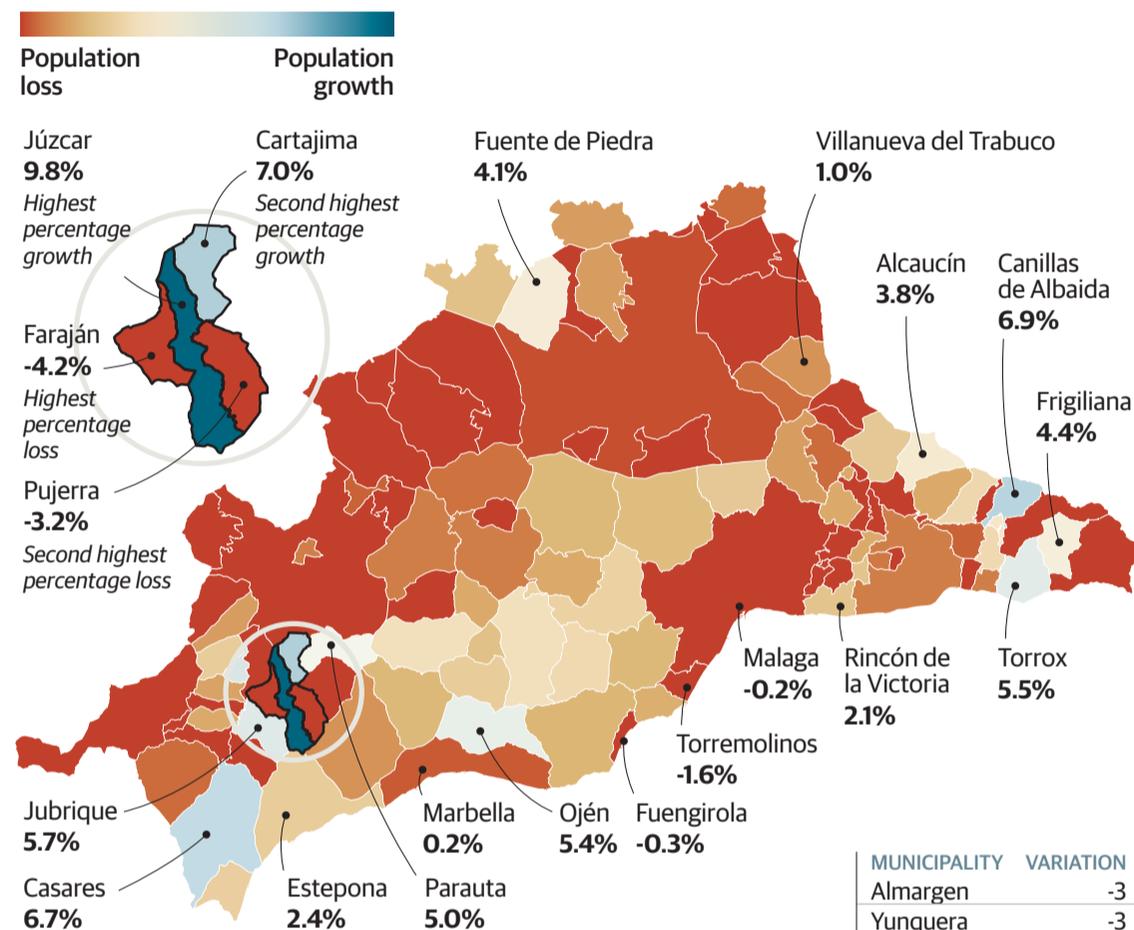
Among those who have new homes in Malaga is Laura Baena, a native of the province who lived in Madrid for 18 years. "I'm proud to have taken the step and that this pandemic, which is so terrible in so many aspects, has been a personal opportunity for me. Malaga has been the key to doing things differently. On a personal level, the change has been incredible," she said.

"Malaga is not the same place I left when I was 21. It is much more cosmopolitan and culturally super powerful. Malaga is a place where I not only want to live but somewhere I can develop professionally and generate wealth and opportunities," she added, stressing the high standard of living.

Regina Pérez Castillo, an art historian and teacher at the San Telmo school who has previously lived in Cordoba, Almeria, Granada and Seville, came for personal and professional reasons: "I arrived in September 2020. The school is the best in Andalucía," she said.

Population change by town

Between 1 January 2020 and 1 January 2021, percentage variation



2020-2021 variation in number of inhabitants

Only municipalities with more than 1,000 inhabitants in January 2021

MUNICIPALITY	VARIATION	MUNICIPALITY	VARIATION	MUNICIPALITY	VARIATION
Estepona	1,697	Fuente de Piedra	108	Alozaina	29
Mijas	1,347	Alcaucín	87	Istán	26
Benalmádena	1,060	Casabermeja	83	Almáchar	26
Rincón de la V.	1,022	Benahavís	81	Canillas de Aceituno	24
Torrox	994	Periana	70	Comares	19
Alhaurín el Grande	737	Sierra de Yeguas	68	Casarabonela	18
Coín	702	Tolox	67	Benaolán	17
Cártama	698	Almogía	67	El Burgo	13
Alhaurín de la Torre	698	Alameda	66	Cuevas de San Marcos	13
Vélez-Málaga	602	Monda	65	Ardales	12
Casares	459	Mollina	65	Villanueva del Rosario	12
Manilva	410	V. del Trabuco	52	Riogordo	11
Marbella	325	Sayalonga	46	Gaucín	6
Álora	224	Guaro	46	Arenas	4
Ojén	207	Colmenar	41	Cuevas del Becerro	4
Frigiliana	136	Arriate	30	Benamargosa	0
Pizarra	128	Antequera	30	Cañete la Real	0
				Ronda	-106
				Nerja	-126
				Fuengirola	-252
				Málaga	-1,055
				Torremolinos	-1,110

Source: National Institute of Statistics

INFOGRAPHIC ENCARNI HINOJOSA

Torremolinos and Malaga, the big losers

The latest report released by the INE shows that the municipalities in Malaga province to lose the most residents in 2020 in overall terms were the city itself and Torremolinos. The latter registered the

greatest loss with 1,110 fewer residents, followed by Malaga with 1,055 fewer.

At the other end of the scale, the five municipalities with the highest numbers of new residents were Estepona (1,697), Mijas (1,347), Benalmádena (1,060), Rincón de la Victoria (1,022) and Torrox (994). In the towns with larger populations,

however, these figures do not mean they lead the board in relative increase. The reduced growth in Malaga city therefore, is only a 0.2% drop, while the Torremolinos figure represents 1.6% of the total.

Looking back further, despite the loss in 2020, the city's population has grown by 69,824 in the last decade, a 4.29% rise.

The greatest population increases are in small towns

A.J. LÓPEZ

MÁLAGA. The highest proportional increase in population in 2020 was noted in small towns in the province, rather than in the city or the large coastal resorts.

At the top of the list is Júzcar in the Serranía de Ronda, whose small population was swollen by 9.8%. The figures released by the INE show that Júzcar is followed by Cartajima (7%), Canillas de Albaidas (6.9%), Casares (6.7%) and Atajate (5.9%) in terms of the percentage increase in people on the local population census (padrón). Of the ten municipalities with the biggest increases, more than half are villages with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, and none of them exceed the 10,000 mark.

José María Martín, 73, original from Puerto Real on the Cadiz coastline, is one of the new residents who helped put Júzcar at the top of the population growth ranking.

"My daughter has been here for three years. I had a stroke two years ago and needed somewhere quiet. I came to see her and when I arrived I fell in love with the place, the village and its surroundings," he said.

Another new resident in Júzcar, Carmen Kiernans, also said she moved, in her case from Madrid, in search of peace and quiet, as well as a reasonably priced property.

"The tranquility here is amazing and the village is charming," she said.

Paradoxically the statistics show that the two municipalities with the greatest relative loss in population, Faraján and Pujerra (with drops of 4.2 and 3.2% respectively), are close neighbours to the fastest growing Júzcar and Cartajima.

The mayor of Faraján, Fernando Fernández pointed out that families and younger people interested in moving to smaller towns are looking for two things: cheaper property and work. The latter is the hard part. "It's hard enough [to find work] for those of us already here," he said, also pointing out the difficult access by road.

British and EU residents make up a large part of the rise in inhabitants

More UK nationals have joined the Malaga population, the latest non-EU27 European figures indicate

A. J. LÓPEZ

MALAGA. As well as showing a significant increase in the number EU citizens joining the local population census since the beginning of 2020, figures also indicate a growing number of British nationals who have decided to settle in Malaga province. Brexit, and the complications it poses, have been suggested as the cause.

The National Institute of Statistics (INE) now counts the United Kingdom as a European country that is not part of the EU27, and British residents are now by far the largest nationality group within that category in Malaga province.

Transferring numbers of British residents in the province from the last quarter of 2019 to the non-EU European total in that period, shows that the proportion of Brits among those in the new category has increased by 15 percentage points. In the second half of 2019,

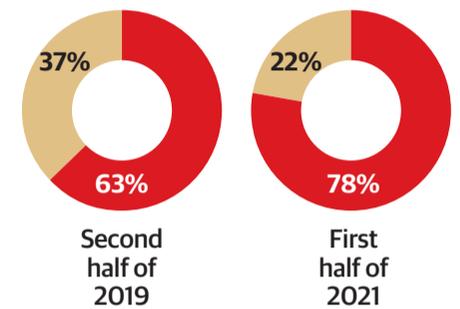
European population from outside EU27

Inhabitants on 1 July 2021 and the percentage difference from 1 January 2020, by age group

AGE GROUP	INHABITANTS ON 1 JULY 2021	DIFFERENCE
0 to 4 years	2,148	-14.7%
5 to 9 years	2,841	-2.7%
10 to 14 years	2,449	-8.8%
15 to 19 years	2,065	-8.7%
20 to 24 years	1,536	-32.7%
25 to 29 years	2,560	-22.9%
30 to 34 years	3,321	-25.7%
35 to 39 years	4,278	-25.3%
40 to 44 years	4,830	-20.7%
45 to 49 years	5,062	-14.3%
50 to 54 years	6,287	9.3%
55 to 59 years	6,986	24.3%
60 to 64 years	7,361	35.2%
65 to 69 years	7,567	39.1%
70 to 74 years	8,462	55.9%
75 to 79 years	6,032	59.3%
80 to 84 years	3,386	60.4%
85 to 89 years	1,458	51.8%
90+ years	740	60.1%

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British nationals
Rest of Europeans outside the EU28/EU27



To calculate the proportion of British residents in 2019 (when the UK was still part of the EU28) the number of British residents has been added to the total population figures of people of non-EU28 European nationality.

Source: National Institute of Statistics

INFOGRAPHIC E. H.

British nationals (if Brexit had already happened) would have formed 63% of the non-EU European group. In the first half of 2021, this proportion was up to 78%

Meanwhile the transfer of the province's British residents, with a large proportion of pensioners, to the non-EU European group has significantly pushed up the average age.

Between January 2020 and July 2021, the number of residents aged 90 or more grew by 60.1 per cent while the number of residents aged 85 to 89 also increased by 51.8 per cent.

The number of residents aged 80 to 84 and 75 to 79 also increased by 60.4 per cent and 59.3 per cent respectively.

However, non-EU European residents aged 30 to 34 decreased by 25.7 per cent, as did the number of youths and children which saw decreases across all age groups.

New residents from EU countries have also helped swell the population figures in Malaga province. Of the 17,247 new residents gained during the pandemic, almost a quarter (4,132) were from EU countries, according to the figures from the INE.

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MARBELLA - FUENGIROLA - MANILVA



Hospitals are withstanding the latest coronavirus surge, says the regional government. EP (FILE PHOTO)

Let's focus on Covid hospitalisations and not infections, urges the Junta

The president of the regional government also suggested shorter quarantine periods for asymptomatic or mild Covid-19 cases

SUR

MALAGA. In a context of hundreds of thousands of daily Covid-19 infections nationally, but with a level of hospitalisation far below previous waves, the regional president of Andalucía, Juanma Moreno, said on Tuesday that the emphasis should not be on the

high rate of infections but rather on the lower number of patients entering hospital or dying.

"The level of clinical incidence is much lower than in previous waves [in Andalucía], so I think we should not emphasise the number of infections," he said at a press conference in Malaga. He added

The Junta said this week that it would ask for an extension to the rule requiring Covid passports in hospitality venues until 31 January

that he thought there was a case for shortening quarantine periods in order to reduce the numbers off work with no symptoms.

Case rates drop slightly

On Wednesday this week, reported case rates in Andalucía dropped slightly for the first time in several weeks, reflecting a fall in new cases being reported.

The rolling 14-day rate per 100,000 in Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, was 1,449, similar to the Andalusian figure.

The number of people in hospital with Covid-19 on Wednes-

Pre-departure tests for England dropped and Day 2 test rules change

Pre-departure testing is no longer required for fully vaccinated people returning to England. Neither will arrivals to the UK have to isolate until they get a negative PCR test. The changes come into effect today (7 January). PM Boris Johnson said that the relaxation was due to the previous measures having little impact now. From 9 January, fully vaccinated travellers arriving in England will be able to take a cheaper lateral flow test by the end of day two after arrival, instead of a PCR. Self-isolation will only be required in the case of a positive test. At the time of going to press, it had not been announced whether other parts of the UK would follow England's lead in easing the rules.

day in Malaga province was 298, up 33 per cent in a week. However the number in intensive care was 48, down two per cent.

The Junta said this week that it would ask Andalucía's top court to extend the need to present a 'Covid passport' to be able to access the interior of hospitality premises until 31 January, when the current measure ends on 15 January.

To follow detailed local data on case rates in your area and other figures around Covid-19: www.surinenglish.com

Booster jabs rollout continues with people in their 50s

SUR

MALAGA. The Andalusian Health Service (SAS) made appointments available from Wednesday this week for Covid-19 booster jabs for people born in 1966 and 1967 (55 and 54 years old) and earlier.

In addition, from Tuesday this week, an appointment can be made to vaccinate children under seven and six years of age (those born in 2014 and 2015) with first doses.

Appointments for those 50 and over are expected to be opened up next week from 12 or 13 January, as well as those aged 5 from 10 January.

Regional Health Minister Jesús Aguirre said at the press conference following the meeting of scientific experts - this week held in Malaga - that the group of 55 and 54 year olds represents "a total of 262,000 Andalusians", adding that during this weekend "all health centres will be vaccinating".

For adults, the third, booster dose is available if six months have passed since the second dose of Pfizer or Moderna, three months since the second dose of AstraZeneca vaccine and three months since vaccination with Janssen.



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Flight delays at Malaga due to 'taró' fog phenomenon

Dense 'taró' fog caused by warm air moving over the cold sea affected much of the Costa del Sol this week. On Tuesday morning it was so thick that Malaga Airport was put on alert, with some planes delayed up to two hours between 6am and 10am. Passengers commented that even road signs into the terminal were unreadable.

NITO SALAS



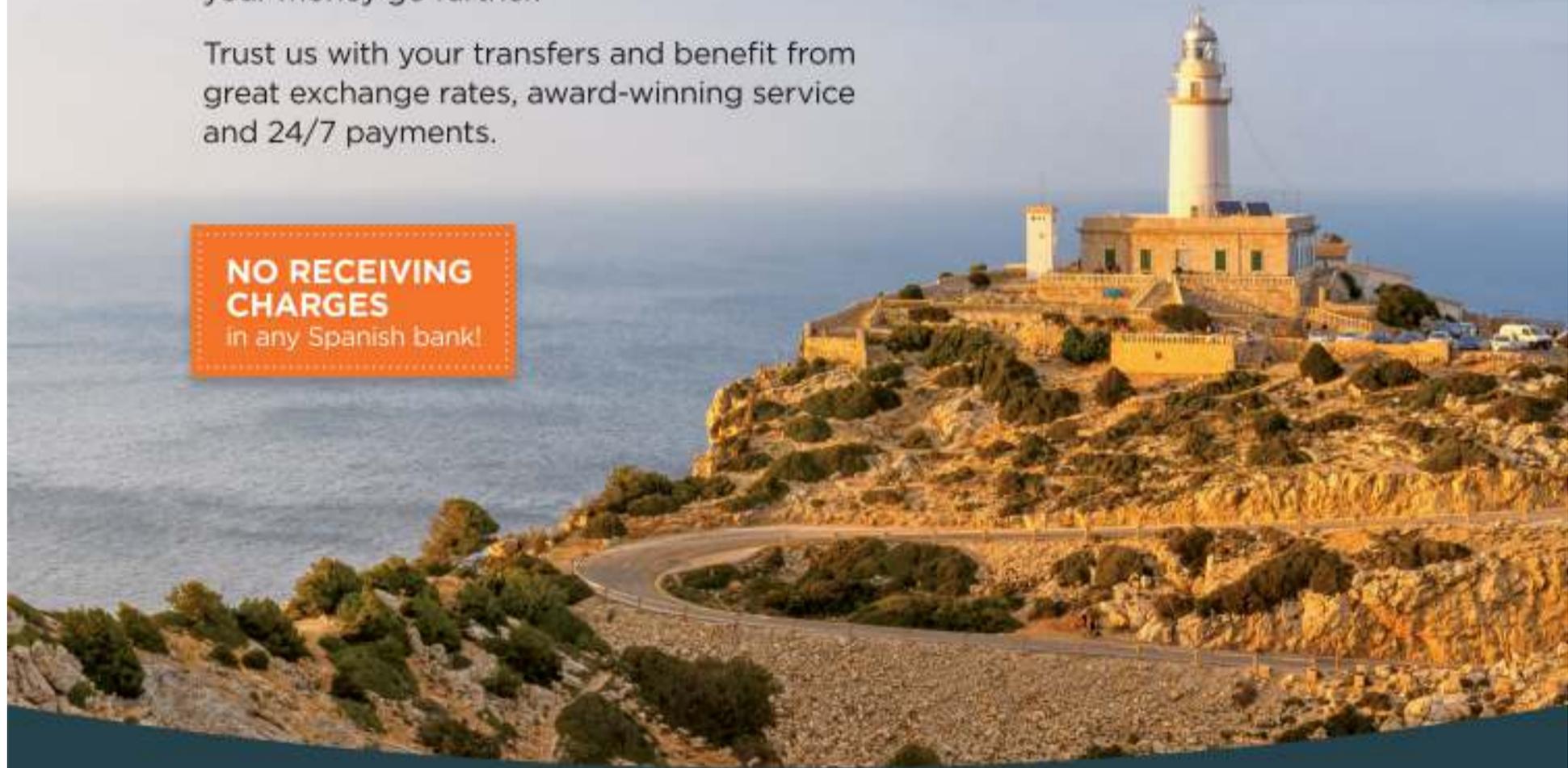
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'REYES MAGOS' IN PICTURES



The Three Wise Men sailed into Puerto Banús with gifts for the children of Marbella. JOSELE

Three Kings deliver cheer to round off the holiday

After last year's absence, traditional parades returned to the streets, with Covid precautions

I. GELIBTER / SUR

Traditional 'cabalgata' parades returned to the streets of cities, towns and villages across Spain on Wednesday as the Three Wise Men from the East and their extravagant entourages arrived bearing gifts for the children.

Last year the pandemic pre-

vented the 'Reyes Magos' Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar from making the grand entrances they are used to, but on Wednesday in many towns they were able to parade through the streets, albeit with Covid precautions in place.

The air buzzed with excitement among the youngsters who lined the streets in Malaga city, hoping to catch some of the sweets thrown out by the Kings or their many colourful helpers. The floats carrying Their Majesties and their pages were accompanied by colourful street entertainers and cartoon characters.

Every 5 January the Kings like to use various means of transport. In Alhaurín el Grande they travelled on their traditional camels, but they chose to arrive in Fuengirola by helicopter and in Puerto Banús by yacht.

In towns where the authorities had cancelled parades as a precaution the Kings spent most of the day greeting youngsters who were eager to deliver their letters in person.

And after hours of waving and smiling their real work began, delivering gifts for children - and grown-ups - to find on the morning of 6 January.



The Kings arrived in Fuengirola by police helicopter. SUR



King Balthazar greets the crowds in Malaga. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Camels carried them into Alhaurín el Grande. A. JIMÉNEZ

Meet Adam, the first baby born in Malaga province this year and the fourth in Andalucía

JESÚS HINOJOSA

MALAGA. His name is Adam, he weighed in at 3.74 kilos and measured 51 centimetres long. He was the first baby born in Malaga province in 2022, and the little one made his appearance at Malaga's Hospital Materno Infantil at 2.42am on the morning of 1 January, the Junta de Andalucía's Ministry of Health reported.

Adam was the fourth baby of the new year to be born in And-

lucía. Rocío had the honour of being the first at the Hospital de Jerez de la Frontera (Cadiz) at 0.33am, followed by Jenifer, who was born at 0.49am in Seville. The third was a baby girl born prematurely in Granada, at 1.25am.

The first baby of the new year born in Spain was Alexa, she made her debut just as the clocks finished chiming midnight at the Sant Pau Hospital in Barcelona.



The nursing team at the Hospital Materno Infantil in Malaga with the newborn. SUR

Larger towns on the Costa del Sol to offer free bus service for residents

Marbella, Fuengirola and Benalmádena already have the project under way; other towns such as Torremolinos and Mijas are yet to commit to the initiative

IVÁN GELIBTER

COSTA DEL SOL. Several larger towns along the Costa del Sol have committed to a plan to provide a free urban bus service for residents. The measure will not only be implemented for the benefit of the local people's pockets, but

also to promote the use of public transport in a bid aimed at a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

One of the first towns to propose the measure was Marbella, which, since May 2019, has offered free urban bus services for registered residents who possess the free Municipal Mobility Card issued by the town hall. There are currently 69,765 active cards in Marbella, 15 per cent of which are gold cards issued to the over-65s.

The initiative will also be introduced in Fuengirola. The town's mayor, Ana Mula, said that the new service would be fully functional this year and that it



Initiative to provide free buses. SUR

would promote "sustainable mobility with improved frequency, reduced waiting times and incorporate new routes using low-consumption buses," the mayor explained.

Benalmádena already offers free bus tickets for pensioners and students and public transport will be free to all residents during the first few months of 2022. The town hall is also considering increasing the frequency and routes of the service.

In Torremolinos and Mijas, urban public transport is not free for residents, but Mijas has been offering a free shuttle service to tourist hot spots for several years.

112 REPORTS



Malaga firefighters. SUR

MALAGA

Arsonist arrested filming fire brigade

Á. FRÍAS / J. CANO. Local Police in Malaga arrested a 42-year-old man while he was recording a blaze that he himself had started in the El Bulto district of the city. The incident happened at around 10.30pm on 27 December. A witness had alerted the emergency services to a burning rubbish bin. Police spotted a man fitting the description given by the witness, filming the firefighters on his phone and after a short chase, arrested him.

FUENGIROLA

Violent killer admitted to psychiatric centre

Á. FRÍAS / J. CANO. The Provincial Court in Malaga has ordered that a mentally ill man be admitted to a psychiatric centre for up to 24 years for the violent murder of his mother and her pet cats on 6 May, 2018. The man, 41, suffers from paranoid schizophrenia and at the time of the murder was not adhering to treatment. The man killed his mother using a kitchen knife as she was packing for a move to a new house in Coin.

MALAGA

Man stabbed over a stolen TV

Á. FRÍAS / J. CANO. A 48-year-old woman has been arrested in the Las Flores district of Malaga after police were called on New Year's Eve to report a robbery and a seriously injured person. On arrival at the address, they found a 42-year-old man lying in a pool of blood. The woman, who was renting the property, said that she had awoken to find the TV gone and had accused the man of stealing it. She is alleged to have stabbed him with a 17cm knife.

Lost dog that hid in Malaga Cathedral on New Year's Eve reunited with owners

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Rafaelillo, a much-loved dwarf Portuguese Podengo, owned by the family of José Manuel Vela in Malaga, was known to be a bit jumpy. When the family made plans to celebrate New Year's Eve away from home in a hotel in Nerja, they warned the dog's carer in the city that he might make a run for it when he was out on a walk. And the dog did just that. As soon as he heard the news, José headed back to the city to join with neighbours and friends searching for the dog. At around 10pm, a young couple spotted a very scared dog that had taken refuge in the door of the Cathedral and posted his picture on social media. With the help of the Malaga Animal Protection Society, José was soon reunited with the distraught runaway.



Runaway and owner reunited. SUR

Work starts to reconstruct parts of Mijas' coastal path

The affected parts of the path have been closed to the public in order to be dismantled and completely rebuilt

TONY BRYANT

MIJAS. Mijas town hall has announced that the repair work to the three sections of the coastal path affected by last November's storms will begin next week.

The work will be carried out in the areas of Doña Lola, Oceano Beach and Calahonda Beach, all of which suffered severe damage to the foundations of the wooden footpath and the railings.

Parts of the walkway in these areas were totally destroyed by

the strong winds and five-metre-high waves that battered the coastal areas during a storm that caused more serious damage than previous episodes of rough weather.

The affected parts of the path have been closed to the public in order to be dismantled and completely rebuilt.

In the case of the section in Doña Lola, one of the worst affected areas, the glass railings, the cantilevered platform and retaining wall will also have to be replaced. A breakwater will be installed to minimise further damage by future storms.

The works have an approximate budget of 280,000 euros and an execution period of three months.

Investigation launched to find cause of dead fish in Fuengirola river

T. BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. The town hall in Fuengirola has requested that the Junta de Andalucía investigate the cause of the death of hundreds of fish in the Fuengirola river.

The dead fish - believed to be mullet - could be seen floating in the stretch of river between Sohail Castle and Miramar shopping centre earlier this week.

The council said this week that it has found no evidence of toxins from the town's sewage system, suggesting that the problem could have arisen in a different municipality through which the river flows.

Experts study rise in deaths involving young people and drugs on the Costa del Sol

JUAN CANO

MALAGA. A 19-year-old boy out with a friend for an evening. A 20-year-old, running across the AP-7 motorway, naked. A soldier, 24, who throws himself into a swimming pool after partying all night. A girl, 20, consuming with her boyfriend. A mother in her thirties going for a night out with her friends. A 31-year-old British man trying to jump from a balcony into a swimming pool, although from that distance it was impossible for him to reach the water.

All these cases, which have been reported by SUR in recent months, are different types of people in very different situations, but there is a common denominator: analyses carried out after their deaths show that they all tested positive for one or more drugs. The National Police and the Institute of Legal Medicine (IML) have begun investigations after a sharp increase in deaths associated with consumption of drugs in Malaga province.

The data is still being studied and it is being refined as much as possible to only include deaths with certain characteristics: young or middle-aged people who were not known to have any illnesses, who took drugs more or less occasionally and, in general, did so when they were out for the evening.

To put it another way, deaths which are hard to explain unless they occurred from an adverse reaction to psychotropic drugs, and ruling out cases of acute drug addiction and illnesses associated with it. On the other hand, the study has included deaths through other causes such as being run over, drowning or falls, where it has been shown that the victims had consumed drugs and their deaths were the result of "unusual" behaviour such as stripping naked and crossing a dual carriageway in the middle of the night.

Period of study

The period being studied covers a couple of months, from mid-August to mid-October last year. During that time there were more than 25 deaths in Malaga province associated with the consumption of narcotic substances, although some may be discounted in the end if, after investigation, other causes of death are found. Curiously, there are only two women among the victims.

To understand the dimensions of this rise in drug-related deaths, this newspaper has consulted different police, forensic and legal sources to see what the average per month would normally be in Malaga province.

There were more than 25 cases in Malaga province in just two months last summer, and many of the victims were only in their twenties



"It is rare for there to be more than four in a month," one of them told us. In the period being analysed, the average is more than 12 a month, in other words three times higher than usual.

The different specialists we consulted said, however, that there could be many factors behind this rise in deaths. One, as simple as it may seem, is the pandemic and easing of restrictions due to the mass vaccination of

the population. "That could have led many people to feel more uninhibited than usual, because they had not been able to go out for so long," said one source from the judiciary.

Another of the factors to be taken into account is that these deaths occurred in the summer, when more people are inclined to go out late at night, so one of the variables of the study is to compare this with the same time

in previous years, although obviously 2020 does not serve as a reference.

In 2019 there was also an increase, but "not as pronounced as this one," and curiously it didn't occur in the summer but during the spring.

Possible adulteration

The third factor has more to do with the composition of the substances than with sociology and

During the period under investigation, the number of deaths after taking drugs was three times higher than usual in the province

Police are also investigating cases where people were run over or had drowned after taking drugs and behaving strangely

this is the one, really, which most concerns the authorities.

The shadow that hangs over each of these increases is the possibility that the drugs had been adulterated, which is why it is essential to determine which types the people who died had taken.

The drug present in most of these deaths is cocaine, although in several cases ecstasy had been taken, such as José Carlos, a 19-year-old who lived in the Netherlands and had come back to Malaga for a holiday to see his mother and brother. He died on 16 August after ingesting several tablets while out partying with a friend. The police arrested three people in connection with this case.

One of the possibilities is that the cocaine had been cut with some substance in a lethal proportion, and this appears to have been what happened in Cáceres, where two people died and another 15 were poisoned after an excessive amount of atropine (a substance that acts on the central nervous system, first by stimulating it and then depressing it) in the white powder.

However, another possibility being considered by the specialists is that it hadn't even been adulterated, but the victims had simply snorted cocaine of a higher purity.

"It could be that some of those who died, many of whom were foreigners, were used to consuming lower purity cocaine in their own country. If they come here on holiday and snort more than they normally would and on top of that it has a higher percentage of cocaine, that could explain an adverse reaction," said one of the sources we consulted.

"They need to get to the root of the problem," said a source. "The most important thing here is to go through the chain and find the stash which the drugs they consumed came from and analyse it to see what it is made of. That is the only way to find out with certainty whether the drugs had been adulterated or not," he said.

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Number of unemployed in Malaga province falls almost 45,000 in a year

MALAGA / MADRID

The amount of people out of work is nearly back to its pre-pandemic levels and there are record numbers in work in Spain, official data says

F. JIMÉNEZ / J. M. CAMARERO

Malaga province, including the Costa del Sol, ended 2021 with 44,732 unemployed, fewer than the start of the year. The increase in those in work has not quite brought the jobless totals down to the same level at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, but almost.

At the end of 2019, there were 148,845 out of work locally. This compares to 151,554 recorded in the province by the regional government's employment service at the end of 2021.

The updated local figure for the end of December was 1,471 down on a month earlier, after a rise of three months at the end of the summer tourist season. The fall in

unemployment locally during 2021 was 22.79%, a little above the fall nationally of 20.12%. Malaga has been the best performing province for job creation in Andalucía.

The service sector particularly benefitted with new work last month, with extra hiring going into the Christmas season.

National data

Spain clawed back 776,000 jobs in 2021, with unemployment dropping to 3.1 million, according to Social Security data. There are now a record 19.8 million people nationally paying into the Social Security system through being in work, up even from before the start of the pandemic. Just over 100,000 were still on furlough schemes in Spain in December.

The service sector particularly benefitted last month, with more work going into the Christmas season



Mayor Ana Mula visits the old centre on Monday to discuss plans. SUR

Town hall makes progress with new market building

FUENGIROLA

TONY BRYANT. Fuengirola town hall is moving forward with the project for the future Mercacetro market building, which will replace the old one on the same site. It says it will become the "commercial epicentre and symbol of the new Fuengirola".

It is hoped that the new shopping centre, which the town hall described as "an important milestone for local economic progress", will contribute to improving the image of the town, making it more "commercially dynamic and attractive" to local

businesses.

The current market, on the junction opposite the Cercanías train station, dates from the 1980s. The town's mayor, Ana Mula, explained that because of the building's aesthetics and characteristics, it has poor accessibility and lacks natural light. Therefore, its demolition is planned in order to build a new one.

The avant-garde design, chosen from 13 ideas submitted during a contest last year, will have two floors and is based on arches and metallic lattices, which will distribute the light and serve as an energy saving element.

IN BRIEF

MALAGA

30m aid package for Malaga hotel chain

P. MARTÍNEZ. The government has authorised a 30-million-euro grant to help save the Malaga-based Soho Boutique group hotel chain. It will be a mixture of a loan for shares and an ordinary loan.

The chain opened its first hotel in Malaga in 2014 and now has 34 in different parts of Spain. It currently offers the largest number of hotel beds in Malaga city.

MALAGA

Iberia affiliate, Air Nostrum looks for crew

SUR IN ENGLISH. Air Nostrum, Iberia's franchised airline for regional flights, is set to hire new cabin crew. There will be a selection in Malaga next week (13 January) at the NH Malaga hotel from 9.30am

Those interested should send their CVs to Air Nostrum using this weblink: <https://jobs.airnostrum.es/> and attend the interview without waiting for an invitation.

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Residents denounce "wave" of burglaries in the Axarquía

Homeowners in Almáchar, Macharaviaya and Iznate are demanding greater police presence after five thefts in the last month

EUGENIO CABEZAS

AXARQUÍA. Around fifty residents spread over the villages of Macharaviaya, Iznate and Almáchar took to the streets last Tuesday to protest over "a wave" of burglaries in rural properties in the area and have demanded a greater police presence after five houses have been burgled in the last month.

According to Miguel Ángel Me-

rino and Yolanda Pérez, who live in the area, the thefts have taken place in the early hours of the morning and in properties that were empty at the time, as the owners only spend weekends or holidays there.

"We need more police presence and Guardia Civil in the area, or the villages need to create rural guard posts to monitor the roads," said Merino.

In the latest incident thieves completely ransacked a property, taking household appliances, a telescope, clothes and other valuables. "But what hurt me the most and humiliated me was that they urinated on one of the beds and in the kitchen, it was disgusting," the



Around 50 people took to the streets after a wave of burglaries. **SUR**

victim, Antonio, told TV programme Canal Sur during the protest last Tuesday.

There are also cases of 'squatters' in empty houses, with at least

one house currently believed to be illegally occupied. The local councils have written a letter to the regional government demanding that action be taken.

Granada province magnitude 3.5 earthquake is felt on Costa del Sol

A. NOGUÉS

MALAGA. A magnitude 3.5 earthquake in Granada province on Wednesday morning (5 January) was also felt in different areas of Malaga province.

The seismic movement was registered at 11.19 am with its epicentre in the town of Lentejí, according to Spain's National Geographic Institute (IGN).

The IGN said the tremor was felt in several municipalities on the Granada province coast including Almuñécar, Guájtar-Faragüit, Otívar and Salobreña. In Malaga province it was felt from Nerja to Malaga city. No personal injuries or material damage have been recorded.

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The six new officers with mayor José Alberto Armijo and other officials. **SUR**

Six new local police officer positions created in Nerja

NERJA

E. C. Nerja town hall has recruited six new officers to its local police force, with the recruits starting in their posts last week.

Nerja Mayor, José Alberto Armijo, welcomed the new officers and wished them "all the luck" in their work. "Your incorporation into the staff of the local police of

Nerja is a clear indicator of the commitment of this government to ensure that the police force has the necessary human resources," said the mayor in a statement.

With these additions, the number of local police staff now stands at 40 and there are plans to fill a further 10 vacancies through secondments this year, bringing the total to 50 officers.

Malaga's provincial authority invests in upgrading water treatment plants

MALAGA

E. C. Malaga's provincial authority, the Diputación, is to allocate 2,26 million euros to improve four wastewater treatment plants, located in Alameda, Alcaucín, Canillas de Albaida and Frigiliana.

The reform and modernisation of the facilities will be managed by the Provincial Water Consortium of Malaga and are part of an overall package of works that will continue in 2022 and that will cost ten million euros.

The deputy for the Environment, Inland Tourism and Climate Change, Cristóbal Ortega, announced the investment on Tuesday, stressing "the need to maintain the infrastructures that exist in the province so that they continue to function correctly."

HERE AND THERE



Torre del Mar promenade. **E. C.**

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

Three-million euro boost for tourism

E. C. Kings' Day came early for Vélez-Málaga town hall as on Monday it received almost three million euros in European funding to improve its tourism infrastructure. The money will be divided into four areas: sustainable transition, energy efficiency, digital transition and competitiveness.

TORROX

Contract awarded for Torrox funeral parlour

E. C. Torrox town hall has awarded a contract to develop a plot of land on the coast with a view to turning it into the town's first funeral parlour. Currently Torrox residents have to travel to the funeral homes in Vélez-Málaga or Nerja for funerals. The contract has been awarded to the company Smarttech Systems S. L.

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA

Officer fired after helping drugs gang

E. C. A Guardia Civil officer who fought a lengthy legal battle to prevent himself from being kicked out of the force after he was found guilty of assisting drug smugglers, has been expelled. He was caught in 2009 and sentenced in 2019 to 18 months in prison and a fine of 713,644 euros for crimes against public health.

Costa refuse plant saves tonnes of unrecycled glass from landfill

CASARES

The waste management centre boasts special equipment which rescues recyclable materials from general rubbish

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

MARBELLA. Everyone knows what igloo-shaped bottle banks look like; in fact, glass is one of the items that people recycle most and it is very easy to keep it separate from the rest of the rubbish. That's why it is surprising to learn that last year the Complejo Ambiental Costa del Sol recovered 4,000 tonnes of glass from traditional rubbish bins. This is especially so when you bear in mind that 11,226 tonnes were placed in bottle banks and collected by the Mancomunidad de Municipios' street collection service.

In fact, it represents over one-quarter of the 15 tonnes that are collected altogether. This is by no means an excuse for people not to recycle their glass items, but the environmental complex tries to separate as many recyclable materials from domestic rubbish as possible so they can be used again. In 2017, Urbaser invested in special glass recovery equipment, so that it can be separated from the rest of the organic material.

The company which holds the concession for the plant in Casares treats everything that arrives from the blue, yellow and grey rubbish bins, for example cardboard, plastic and organic waste. Lorry loads of old furni-

ture and other household items are also brought here.

The glass is collected by Eco-vidrio, a company which has 3,286 bottle banks on the Costa del Sol. This was the first type of recycling container to be installed in the region and this year marks 30 years since they were first introduced in Spain.

When the refuse lorries arrive, they unload into big pits. It is easy to see at first glance that recycling is not as common as you would expect, and that among the remains of food and face masks there are numerous yoghurt pots, milk and juice cartons and crisp packets as well as broken jars and bottles and an infinity of coffee capsules and aluminium tops from wine bottles. In fact, the main reason for incorporating new equipment in 2017 was the proliferation of the new types of coffee machines which use capsules, because this changed the way people prepared coffee and created a new waste product.

Huge pits

The operators use big mechanical grabs to remove the rubbish from the pits and place it on conveyor belts to start the process of separation and treatment. Every grab picks up 2.5 tonnes of waste and each operator deals with about 300 per shift.

As soon as the items start to move on the belt, the workers remove bigger ones such as towels, pieces of wood and mattresses during an initial manual sorting process. After that, a second process begins, in which the materials are separated onto dif-



The conveyor belt at the rubbish treatment plant in Casares. JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

ferent conveyor belts. In total, two kilometres in 167 sections.

After the manual sorting comes the ballistic system, a densimetric table that detects the density of the items through the way they move. Then there are innovative separation techniques, such as bar screens and optical separators, which enable pieces of glass measuring between ten and 50 millimetres to be recovered. Previously, this would not have been possible. After passing through the rubbish containers, the lorries, the

pits and the grabs, the glass is in very tiny pieces. Once these have been separated, the machinery propels them into different areas.

Fermentation

The organic waste continues its journey to the fermentation bays. They are in a space which is 13,000 square metres in size, equivalent to two football pitches. This is where the rubbish spends eight weeks in order to ferment, and from there, more glass will be retrieved.

In order for this to be done, the organic waste goes to the refining plant, which as its name suggests, refines it with a final filtering. The material obtained sets off on a new route, from which the organic part will go for compost and the coffee capsules, aluminium strips from the necks of wine bottles and the pieces of glass are deposited in specific containers.

The Mancomunidad's delegate for urban solid waste, Juan Luis Villalón, said: "Thanks to this technology we can recover a lot of material which is potentially recyclable from our rubbish, including glass, which is 100 per cent recyclable."

He added: "By doing this, we ensure that these quantities of glass do not end up in landfill and contaminate the compost which is obtained as the final product after the refinement of the organic waste."

"The large amount we recover shows how important it is to continue to work on information and awareness campaigns so people don't throw bottles and glass jars into the rubbish containers instead of putting them into the bottle banks."

Treasures found among the rubbish

As well as the glass, metal and aluminium elements are also separated out at the Complejo Ambiental Costa del Sol and lost objects are sometimes discovered among them. The workers in this department found some real treasures last year. There are often items of cutlery, some of which are silver, but also quite a lot of jewellery.

The plant is currently hold-

ing about 1,500 pieces of jewellery containing about 3.5 kilos of gold in total, all of them found among the rubbish. Most are wedding rings, but some with diamonds have also been discovered.

You wouldn't think anything found among domestic waste could be romantic, but last year the staff discovered a letter written by a soldier to his girlfriend 47 years ago, dated 21 April 1974. Unbelievably, it was still in very good condition.

HERE AND THERE

TORREMOLINOS

Carmen procession gains special status

SUR. The Junta de Andalucía has declared the procession of the Virgen del Carmen in La Carihuela, Torremolinos, to be a Festival of Tourist Interest. The region's delegate for Tourism in Malaga, Nuria Rodríguez, met with the new mayor of Torremolinos, Margarita del Cid, on Monday to confirm the promotion. Rodríguez said, "Although Torremo-

linos stands out for its beaches, its gastronomy, its important hotels and its location a few minutes from Malaga Airport, added authenticity is provided by celebrations such as the Virgen del Carmen procession, a unique and highly anticipated event."

The procession is held on 16 July and attracts more than 25,000 spectators. It starts in the fishing district of La Carihuela from the parish of Nuestra Señora del Carmen and concludes at Rincón del Sol beach where the traditional seafaring mass is held.



Part of the procession. SUR

COSTA DEL SOL

Costa stores can open 26 Sundays in 2022

JUAN SOTO. Large stores in Malaga city, as well as the main Costa resorts from Manilva to Nerja, will be able to open on 26 out of 52 Sundays in 2022, plus some public holidays. This year Malaga city joins the list of towns declared as of 'Gran Afluencia Turística' which entitles them to more retail freedom due to the large numbers of tourists. Stores and shopping centres will now be able to open every day at Easter, as well as every Sunday during the summer months and in December, among others.

BENALMÁDENA

Three Kings bring special rucksacks for children

TONY BRYANT. The Benalmádena port authorities have joined with the local council in order to make the Three Kings' visit a "magical day" for children. More than 1,000 rucksacks containing gifts were distributed among the children who attended the arrival by boat of the Magi on Wednesday.

The new Omicron variant of the coronavirus meant that the Three Kings could not embark on their tour of the streets again this year.



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Isaac Bousnane cutting the hair of a homeless man. FRANCIS SILVA

A hairdresser giving hope to the homeless

He is becoming quite well-known on the streets of Malaga. Isaac Bousnane, 35, who is originally from Mesquine in Morocco, has become a hairdresser to the homeless in the city. First thing in the morning he prepares his backpack, putting in all the tools he needs to smarten up even the most untidy beards. He then starts his tour of the parks, squares and corners where, with difficulty, those who have almost lost hope of ever getting a roof over their head again survive. In Malaga about 150 people are in this situation, according to the council's Social Rights department.

These visits have become a way for this barber to "recharge energy" and he usually makes them on his days off. It was when the lockdown ended that he decided to help people who live in the streets and have no way of paying for haircuts themselves. He was living in Marbella at that time and he came up with this idea when he suddenly realised how many people he had seen living rough. "I want to carry on doing this for the rest of my life," he says.

"Actually, it isn't so much that they need a haircut; what they appreciate is being able to let off steam and have someone listen to them," says Bousnane.

He always takes the opportunity to stress the message that it is never too late to start again,

Society. Isaac Bousnane, 35, spends his days off giving free haircuts to people who are living rough, to encourage them to pick up their lives again

IRENE QUIRANTE



and he says that is what he wants to do, to help them to regain enough confidence to take control of their lives again and get off the streets.

Today, Bousnane makes his first stop in the Plaza de la Merced. On a corner, taking advantage of the heat from a fritter stall a few metres away, three people are sitting on a bench. They are surrounded by suitcases, wine cartons and alcohol bottles. He approaches them confidently. "Good morning, how are you? I'm a hairdresser and wondered if anyone would like a haircut," he says.

There is silence for a few seconds. The only woman in the group, 51-year-old Rosa María González, finally perks up, rather incredulous at this stroke of luck. While Bousnane places a gown around her neck and searches for his comb and scissors in his bag, they start to converse. She tells him he can call her Rosi. He talks to her with as much affection as he would one of his relatives, or like a friend. "You wait and see

how pretty you're going to look; they'll all be fighting over you," he jokes, to which she laughs out loud.

Carefully, he starts to untangle the knots which have been in her

hair for days. "It's OK, you can pull it, there is enough pain in my soul scarring me already. It doesn't matter if a bit of my hair comes out," says Rosi, trying to smile but not really succeeding.

As he works, she starts to tell him some of the things that have happened to her in life. In her two lives, really, because her homelessness marks a before and an after. She says she was always the cheerful one in her household, but two years ago she lost her job and then other problems started to occur. Overwhelmed, she sought solace in drink and that addiction ended up with her living on the street.

Overcoming addictions

"Most people in this situation have problems with drugs or alcoholism or with their families. The main problem is that they think they will never be able to get out of this and start again from scratch," says Bousnane. But they can, as he knows, because he is an example. Although he was never without a roof over his head, he says he lost everything when he tried to set up a business and the people who were going to be his partners disappeared with all the money.

Isaac Bousnane began his life over again from "less than zero", he says. He had no alternative but to accept his new situation because giving in, even though he often felt he didn't have the strength to go on, was just not an option.

"These people have to face up to the situation they are in and overcome their addictions," he says. He knows this is not an easy task, but nor is it impossible. He says so to these clients, respectfully, but without mincing his words.

The woman whose hair he has just cut gives him a big hug, which he reciprocates with genuine warmth. After sweeping up the hair on the ground and disinfecting his equipment, he puts it back in his rucksack and continues on his rounds. As we walk down Calle Alcazabilla he marvels at how beautiful Malaga is. "That's what I want to do: to make people who can't afford to go to a hairdresser feel beautiful too," he explains.

His next stop is the Paseo del Parque. As he approaches the open-air theatre at the Eduardo Ocón auditorium, he sees a familiar face. It is Daniel Kaminiski, a 35-year-old from Poland, who has set out his few belongings in an area surrounded by trees, to give himself a certain privacy. Bousnane has already trimmed his beard once before, and he jumps at the chance of a second shave.



“It isn’t the haircut so much; what they really need is to let off steam and have someone listen to them”

While the hairdresser is getting everything ready, he asks Daniel how he is, whether he has been looking for work and whether he has been able to talk to his family.

“I need help,” says Kaminski. He doesn’t think he is capable of giving up drugs on his own, or getting out of the hole he feels trapped in. He thinks nobody will want to employ him because he has no papers and isn’t fluent in Spanish, although he speaks and understands enough to hold a conversation.

“You have to make the effort and ask; there are people who speak less Spanish than you and don’t have papers either, and they manage to find work,” says Bousnane, trying to motivate him. Despite the man’s despondency, the barber doesn’t lose patience and doesn’t stop trying to convince Kaminski that if he puts his mind to it, he will eventually find a job. However, he tells him he needs to “change your attitude, because all this is in the mind”.

To him, everything is clear. “These people need someone to give them a bit of a push, to help

Bousnane stresses the same message to the homeless people he meets: “It’s never too late to start again”

them recover their self-esteem,” he says. He hopes that some of these people whose hair he cuts and beards he trims free of charge will find the confidence they need to take back control of their lives.

“There are some people who I never see on the street nowadays; maybe they went back to their own countries or they asked for help. I want to think that things are better for them now, anyway,” he says, optimistically.

A chain effect

Bousnane wants this social project that he is carrying out on his own during the pandemic to end up doing even more good one day. His aim, he says, is for more hairdressers in Malaga, and even in other towns and cities, to join the initiative and cre-



Isaac returns the hug of a woman after cutting her hair. F. SILVA



At the Eduardo Ocón auditorium shaving a man. F. SILVA

ate “a chain effect” to help people who are in a situation of extreme vulnerability.

It is with that in mind that he posts some of his work on his Instagram account (IG: Isaac Vantino), with before-and-after photos of people who are living in the streets. He says he has received messages from several people who are also interested in doing something to help. He is also thinking of giving lessons to apprentice barbers and for his students to become fully involved in the experience. “That way we could reach more people and be of more help,” he says.

Bousnane also says he gains more than he gives when he improves the appearance of people in need.

“I have learned a great deal since I started doing this; it helps me to realise how lucky I am and to get to know people who have their own story and are sometimes not even treated as human beings,” he says.

This hairdresser is an example of the fact that, despite everything, there is still a place in this world for humanity and empathy.

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Pamela Twissell-Cross. SUR



Lloyd Milen. SUR

Two UK nationals in Spain are named in the New Year Honours List

The British Consul General in Barcelona and the Royal British Legion Welfare Coordinator have both been awarded MBEs

SUR IN ENGLISH

MALAGA. The two UK nationals in Spain awarded MBEs in the New Year Honours List, published last Saturday, are Lloyd Milen, British Consul General in Barcelona, and Pamela Sheila Twissell-Cross, District Community Support Coordinator, Royal British Legion, Spain (district north)

Milen has responsibility for the UK Government's relationships with the regions of Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and Aragon, and also for Andorra.

In addition, Milen is responsible for supporting the tens of

thousands of UK nationals who live in those regions.

As for visiting tourists, he has spearheaded Stick with your Mates - an award-winning campaign to reduce the number of serious falls affecting young British visitors to the Balearics.

UK Ambassador Hugh Elliott said: "I, and the communities that he serves, are very grateful for his constant commitment to making a difference in their lives."

Milen said: "Growing up as a gay kid in Middlesbrough, I never imagined I'd have the role of Consul General in a city like Barcelona, nor that I'd receive an honour such as this... I hope it helps demonstrate to kids growing up and wondering about their future that anything is possible."

Retiring to Spain after a long career in the NHS, Pamela Twis-

sell-Cross became involved with the Royal British Legion as a welfare volunteer caseworker in 2011, becoming District Community Support Coordinator three years later.

Despite being voluntary, the role is almost full time - coordinating all the welfare work for an area spanning the France/Spain border right down to Almeria, including the Balearic Islands.

In 2020, Pamela and her team assisted 569 people.

Hugh Elliott said: "This honour is very richly deserved."

Pamela Twissell-Cross said: "I feel very honoured to be nominated for this honour, let alone chosen."

"It was a complete surprise and probably the most wonderful surprise I have ever had. I do wish my parents were still here to see it."

Canaries still main area for irregular migration

The government says 41,632 migrants reached Spain by land or sea in 2021 and a charity has said 4,404 more died or went missing at sea

SUR

MADRID. According to provisional figures published by the Ministry of the Interior this week, 41,632 migrants arrived in Spain without the necessary documentation by land or sea in 2021, 164 more than a year earlier. The data does not include airports, nor the unprecedented breach of the border at Ceuta in May when thousands crossed in a couple of days.

The Canaries is still the region receiving the most immigrants by sea - 22,200 arrived that way in 2021, 480 fewer than 2020.

A charity working with immi-



Migrants arrive in October. EFE

grants has reported the high number of deaths on sea crossings from Africa in 2021. Caminando Fronteras says that there were 4,404 deaths or disappearances from the small 'patera' boats crossing to Spain.

Left-wing allies of government are unhappy with new labour laws

SUR

MADRID. The national government is defending criticism from its left-wing allies over the recent agreement to reform a 2012 labour law they were unhappy with. The republican Basque and Catalan nationalist parties - ERC and EH Bildu - say the reforms don't go far enough to meet the government's manifesto commitment. These two parties' votes

are needed to get the reform through parliament. Ministers say the reform is the result of a negotiated pact between unions and the business sector which cannot now be reopened.

The main changes to the law aim to overturn elements set in 2012 by the conservative PP party that left-wing parties had always said were too favourable to employers and focus on collective bargaining. Collective deals made by unions for individual sectors now have priority over companies' individual deals.

Business leaders and conservative politicians had feared a more radical reform would threaten Spain's entitlement to EU Covid-19 development funds.

THE EURO ZONE MARK NAYLER

Lone shark



Details of a strange and intriguing legal dispute emerged this week, in which a woman approached Spain's Constitutional Court after a judge in the Balearic Islands dismissed her case. Misleadingly, the story has been reported by some publications as proof that the country's highest tribunal - a panel responsible for making precedent-setting decisions about citizens' fundamental rights -

has ruled that, in Spain, paying off debts with sexual favours is legal. Thankfully, though, it's done nothing of the sort - although the Balearic judge's decision seems questionable.

The details of the case are as follows. A woman, 38, asked her former brother-in-law, 58, if she could borrow fifteen thousand euros. He agreed without stipulating conditions, but later requested oral sex

"two or three" times a week until the debt was repaid. His debtor complied on five occasions, saying she felt "psychologically obliged" to do so, before refusing to continue with the situation. Her ex-brother-in-law then demanded repayment, at which point she took the case to a local court. There, a judge found no evidence of coercion or sexual abuse on the defendant's part and noted that his arrangement with his ex-sister-in-law had been terminated as soon as she withdrew her consent.

The male protagonist of this story hardly emerges as an exemplar of virtue. He appears, rather, as an unscrupulous opportunist, a lone loan shark more interested in sex than in sanely uncompetitive interest

rates. The crucial issue from a legal standpoint, then, is whether his morally dubious behaviour constituted sexual abuse (i.e. an actual crime) - not whether sexual acts are a permissible way of repaying debt. Either way, Spain's top tribunal has refused to consider arguments for and against the issue, declaring that it lacks sufficient "constitutional significance".

Perhaps the Constitutional Court should hear the case, though, because the Balearic judge's decision is questionable. He characterised the arrangement imposed by the brother-in-law, the exploitative creditor, as a "freely agreed relationship" that came to an end when the woman wanted it to. Yet this characterisation

minimises, if not completely ignores, the central role of debt in that "relationship".

Would the woman have performed the sexual favours if she hadn't owed her former brother-in-law money? If the answer's no (which it surely is), then the fact of her debt alters the notion of "consent" at play in their arrangement. Certainly, the ex-brother-in-law abused his power in the role of creditor - but is that (or should it be) "merely" a moral failing on his part, or an illegal act?

In other words, this bizarre case raises interesting legal and moral questions, but it doesn't show that Spain's top court has declared it legal to demand sexual favours from vulnerable debtors.

Challenging times ahead this year, warns the Gibraltar government

GIBRALTAR

The chief minister says "we must fasten our collective seatbelts," and the deputy CM confirms there will be some tough decisions to make in 2022

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. People in Gibraltar face challenges this year, due not only to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic but also with regard to the negotiations about Gibraltar's future relationship with the EU.

Chief minister Fabian Picardo and deputy chief minister Dr Joseph Garcia, who holds the Brexit portfolio, have both warned recently that 2022 will be a challenging year, with Garcia saying there will be some tough decisions to make.

Picardo is due to make his full New Year's Address very soon, but in a statement in the meantime he told the population "we must fasten our collective seatbelts, because the political year to come is

going to be no easier than the two challenging years we have just been through".

He was referring to the EU negotiations, and said that they will bring change, whether they succeed or fail.

In his New Year message Dr Garcia spells out what some of the changes could be, depending on whether agreement is reached with the EU or not, saying that the importance of a successful outcome to the treaty negotiations is not lost on anyone. He explains that if there is no treaty, there is likely to be greater bureaucracy, disruption and red-tape for citizens and businesses in Gibraltar in their interactions with the EU.

Both ministers have also stressed that they will not accept any deal that impinges on British sovereignty, and that they will walk away from a treaty rather than compromise that.

The talks with the EU began later than expected, but it is hoped that they can be concluded by Easter. In the meantime, as Picardo warned, "we must fasten our collective seatbelts".



The golfers were presented with their shirts. SUR

Disabled golfers receive their shirts for May's Pro-Am

SUR. Ian Halliwell, the CEO of the Cairns Cup, visited Gibraltar last week to present members of the Gibraltar Disabilities Golf Team with their representative shirts for the Pro-Am golf tournament in London in May 2022.

The Cairns Cup is Disability Golf's Ryder Cup equivalent. It is held biannually and it is anticipated that in 2030 it will take place locally, at the San Roque Golf Club, with Gibraltar acting as the host city. As part of the Cairns Cup legacy, the organisation is already actively involved with athletes in Gibraltar, donating equipment to help

promote the game among disabled youngsters.

A team of three golfers will represent Gibraltar in the events leading up to the competition in May. Halliwell said "by involving some of the youngsters in their first event, we hope that this will actively increase the involvement of young players from Gibraltar and also help with the promotion of golf as well. Golf can be a considerable therapeutic aid to those involved and, who knows, one of these athletes may well go on to represent Europe at a subsequent Cairns Cup. That is my sincere hope".

IN BRIEF

COVID-19

Windmill Hill visits suspended temporarily

D.B. Visits to HMP Windmill Hill have been suspended temporarily until 17 January due to a number of positive Covid-19 cases and in order to stop the spread among inmates and visitors. The Prison Superintendent said on Tuesday that this had been a difficult decision to make, and he hopes that visiting can return to normal with effect from that date.

TOURISM

Caleta Hotel closes after 57 years

D.B. The iconic Caleta Hotel in Catalan Bay closed its doors for the last time on New Year's Day, as it is to be demolished. A new, larger Hilton hotel will be built on the same site, and is expected to take three and a half years to complete. The Caleta opened in 1964 as the Caleta Palace, and has been a family-run hotel ever since. It holds happy memories for many people from Gibraltar and elsewhere.

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GET A QUOTE

LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Dead fish

I must reply to the article [on your website] about the dead fish in the Fuengirola river. The council say that it could be water another municipality - that cannot be. I live right next to the stretch of river and there has been no flow of water into what is essentially a lake despite the recent rains the various "crossing points" have remained dry. They also say it cannot be raw sewage; that is also strange as I reported to them using their app that there was a constant flow of dirty water across the footpath and there were also a large amount of human faeces in that water which then discharged directly into the river just across from Dunnes. It may have come from the Miramar Hotel or the nearby apartments. They did not reply to my report and that water is still flowing into the river. In the stretch in question there are a number of very large bore pipes feeding into the river they are suspiciously close to the sewage pipeline that borders the river. Finally and in the six years I have lived here there have often been large numbers of fish deaths, normally caused due a lack of oxygen, but the water has always remained clear. This time the water was black, a colour not seen before. The council have had work crews netting the dead fish from the river since just after Christmas. **DAVID BINDER**

Shakespeare in
Andalucía

I'm a literary historian and my specialty is English print in old-regime Spain. Readers may recall my discovery of the first Shakespeare to reach Spain, a first edition of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* which was in Madrid by about 1640. Now I'm working on a book-historical study of all English-language copies of Shake-

speare in Spain in pre-1810 editions. As there may be copies in private collections (there are over two hundred volumes in institutional libraries), I want to ask readers to let me know if they know of any. Again, I am looking for anything by or about Shakespeare, in English, in pre-1810 editions. My email is john.stone@ub.edu. Thanks in advance for your help.

DR JOHN STONE

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Good truck charm

Apparently, nobody wants to be a lorry driver any more. According to all reports, there is currently a critical shortage of people wishing to climb behind the wheel of a truck and hit the road. Sadly, the situation is set to get much worse unless radical action is taken.

To this end, let's consider some of the many brilliant perks that being a lorry driver has to offer in a bid to entice our younger readers (under 55) into the profession.

First, you can listen to country music all day in a non-ironic way. Jolene, *The Gambler* and *Your Cheatin' Heart* are all excellent tracks but only a trucker is allowed to wind the windows of his vehicle down and sing along full-throttle while waiting at traffic lights. Doing so in a Ford Mondeo, by contrast,

may lead to incarceration under the mental health act.

Secondly, you can eat burgers and hot dogs all day long. In fact, I suspect it's compulsory to eat burgers and hot dogs all day long. Surely, this is any young person's dream.

All the dietary habits you got told off for when you were fifteen are now perfectly legitimate as you cut loose and burn rubber, devouring miles of endless highway (or possibly sit in a lay-by waiting for a mechanic). Anyway, fast food heaven is only an HGV licence away.

Another marvellous plus-point to being a trucker is that you can use CB radio and give yourself a nickname - sorry, handle - like *Womblechops*, *Cat In The Hat* or *Night Stalker*. OK, maybe not the last one, but the possibilities are infinite.

Once you've got your name

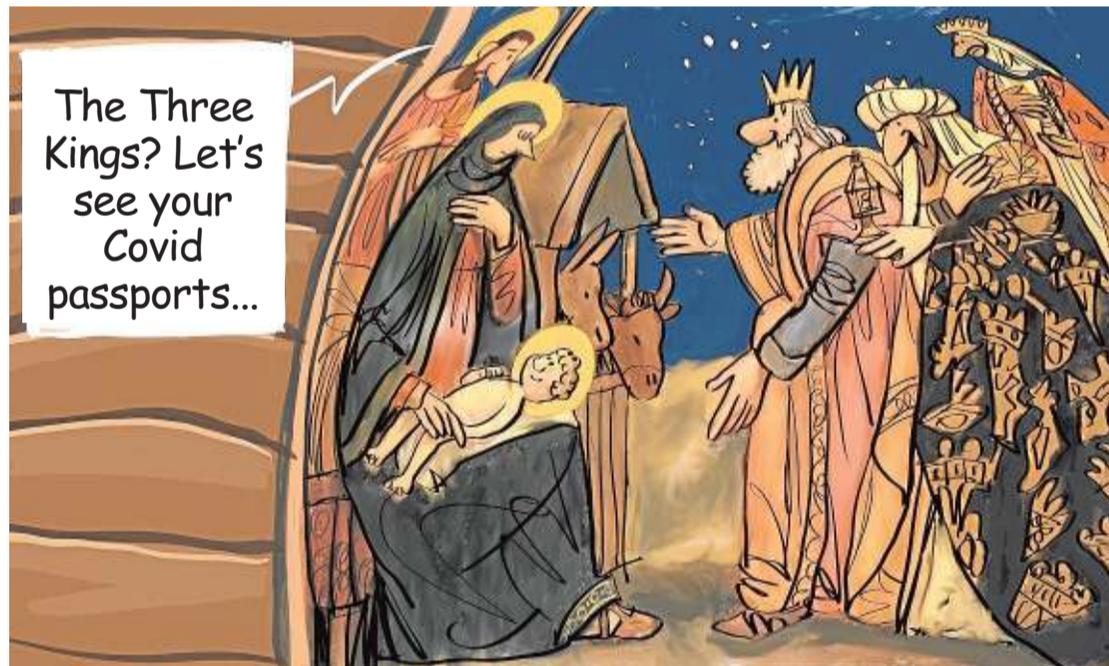
- sorry, 'handle' - you can say things like 'catch you on the flip flop' without being arrested. (It means 'see you on the way back', apparently).

Maybe best of all, though, is the fact that if you learn to reverse a double-trailer truck around a corner, so impressive will it be that you can marry anyone in the world of your choice.

Never mind poetry and music and a great sense of humour and all the boring old tropes like that. No, who could possibly resist anybody whose brain is capable of coordinating their little hands and feet on the controls in order to facilitate the most difficult manoeuvre known to mankind (apart from avoiding the one creaky stair in the house after five pints, obviously)?

Anyway, 10 - 7, Good Buddies.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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THE BOTTOM LINE
IGNACIO LILLO

Victims of our own success

Back in December we reported that an international ranking had placed Malaga as the second best city in the world for foreign residents. The first was Kuala Lumpur, and look how far away Malaysia is. This week, my colleague Antonio Javier López has written about official INE statistics that highlight the boom in the area - Malaga is the Spanish province that has gained the most population during the pandemic. No less than 17,247 individuals have become

Malagueños by choice in just 18 months and the population has surpassed the 1.7-million mark for the first time in history.

At first glance, it's all local pride and chest-beating... 'Malaga is the best place in the world to live, Paradise on earth and now they're discovering what we Malaga natives knew already.' I echo that very Andalusian phrase, 'To er mundo e güeno' (There's good in everybody), coined decades ago by a group of neighbours in Malaga, and it means that all those who

want to enjoy, share and work in this blessed land are welcome.

However, once that Malagueño pride has calmed down, something more worrying remains, and a question begs an answer: How many more new residents will fit before the province bursts at the seams? There are already signs of this in terms of traffic and the return of bottlenecks, pressing water shortages and exorbitant house prices, which point to the fact that saturation could be close.

The people of Malaga, at least those of us who are concerned about these kinds of issues, are not fickle; we have not been asking for years for new works just for the sake of asking, and of course in Malaga not everything has been done, as some politicians would have us believe to justify the lack of investment. The province urgently needs infrastructure to support

a population growth that is unparalleled in all of Spain, as the official data clearly shows.

We need to get back the trains that have been taken away from us and extend the line to Mijas and Marbella, because that is where the demand is growing the most. We need drinking water without having to continually look to the sky in the hope of rain - we are overdue a desalination plant for the Axarquía area. We need water treatment plants so as not to pollute the sea, which is our main source of income, and new roads to relieve the sharp increase in the number of residents in the east side of Malaga city.

We go on about sustainability, but it is totally unsustainable to continue to grow at this rate in Malaga without having adequate infrastructure. If not, we'll soon be victims of our own success...



SALES winter

FASHION, ACCESSORIES, SPORTS, TECHNOLOGY, LEISURE, RESTORATION, HOME
DIY, TOYS, FOOD, BEAUTY, HEALTH AND MORE

La Cañada
SHOPPING

IN THE FRAME

'Brexit has ruined my life and I'm not even British'

Fashion. Jenny Mander is a professional singer and dancer turned fashion blogger and stylist and regularly posts about body image and OCD

JENNIE RHODES



Many people will already be familiar with the name Jenny Mander: either through her career as a professional singer and dancer on the Costa del Sol; or because they follow her social media pages on fashion, body positivity and mental health.

Jenny has been in Spain since 2003, when she saw an advertisement for a job as a dancer, having decided "spontaneously" to leave London, where she had been living for three years.

The job wasn't quite what she expected: "It turned out to be for something like Go-Go dancers on the beach in Marbella," she recalls.

"That really wasn't what I was after. I was a bit shocked to be honest," she laughs.

However, she decided to stay and did find work as a singer and dancer; she has also worked in the world of language education, while keeping her interest in fashion alive, largely through social media, and collaborations with photographers, make-up artists and other fashionistas.

Jenny, 44, is originally from

Helsingborg in Sweden. Her maternal grandparents were Polish, but moved to the Nordic country after the Second World War and before Jenny's mother was born.

"My grandparents adapted completely to Swedish life. My Grandmother had been in Auschwitz and my grandfather had fought in Austria, Italy and eventually ended up in a camp in Finland," Jenny explains.

"I come from a family of strong women," she adds, reflecting on the hardships endured by her grandparents' generation. "We have a strong European sense in the family and my grandparents spoke a lot of European languages," she adds.

She puts her own keenness to travel and live in other countries down to her family's background and in 2000, after finishing her studies at a performing arts school in Sweden, Jenny moved to London, where she really felt she "belonged". "Brexit has ruined my life and I'm not even British," she laments.

After leaving London in 2003 to come to Spain, Jenny



Jenny chose a classic Parisian look for a recent Christmas concert in Torrox Costa. **SUR**

always thought that at some point she would always be able to return to the UK capital to pursue a career in the performing arts and combine it with her other love: fashion.

However, with Brexit making it very difficult for Europeans to move there and get work permits, Jenny recognises that, as a freelancer, it would be difficult to go back.

"I love England, but I can't just go there, make contacts and build up work. I would probably have to do a job that I didn't like just to earn

"I'm not the typical 20-year-old skinny influencer and I like to show people how to break the rules in fashion"

enough money to get a visa and the pandemic has taught me that I want to live my dream."

Jenny's dream has always been to pursue a career in the performing arts and fashion.

At the age of 14 she and some friends started copying looks from fashion magazines.

"I went ballistic with fashion when I was 14. I wanted to wear things that nobody else was wearing and I've never stopped."

Jenny started a fashion blog in 2014, but it was during the lockdown in 2020 when she really started to "treat it like a job".

As well as writing about fashion, she also wrote about body image and her own struggles with OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder).

Like many, Jenny also uses Instagram. "I'm not the typical skinny 20-year old influencer, but I love fashion and I want to show women my age that they can break the rules and wear what they want," she explains, adding, "But in the end, people have to feel comfortable in what they wear."

"I break the rules all the time and tell women in their forties for example that it's OK to wear a miniskirt. I follow some amazing fashion bloggers in their 60s who always look great."

Another of Jenny's concerns is the waste involved in the fashion industry with so much 'fast fashion' ending up in landfill.

"I wear a lot of vintage. I love mixing old and new but I think fewer items of each style should be sold. I can't say that I don't go to Zara. Of course I do, but I don't buy as much as I used to. In the past I would go to the sales and go ballistic. Now I use apps like Vinted and shop in vintage stores."

Jenny sees Malaga as an exciting place to be at the moment in terms of fashion. She's also hoping to start singing again after a seven-year break and says, "Someone told me recently that Malaga is 'so on the map'. There's a lot of opportunity for some exciting collaborations."

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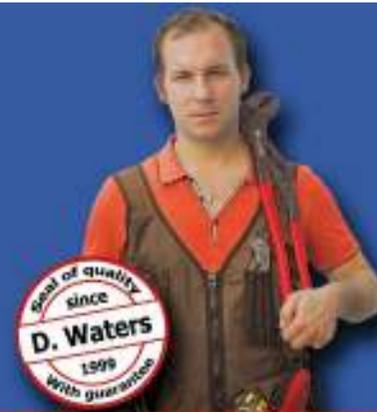
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**Offers
 of the
 week**

From the vegetable farms to the table

The Carrefour centres in Estepona, Mijas, Fuengirola, Torremolinos and Valle del Guadalhorce have a wide range of seasonal fruit and vegetables from local producers

Eating vegetables and greens is an essential part of a balanced diet, so the Carrefour centres in Estepona, Mijas, Fuengirola, Torremolinos and Valle del Guadalhorce place a wide selection of fresh and seasonal fruit, vegetables and greens at the disposal of their clients.

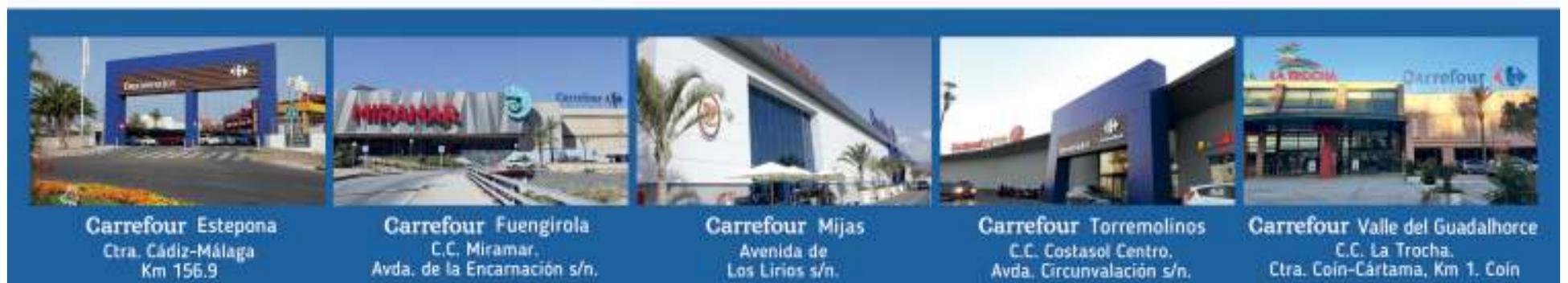
To guarantee freshness, quality and flavour, these hypermarkets have agreements with vegetable farms and local suppliers so clients can enjoy the taste of freshly harvested produce at the best prices.

That's why the entire fruit and vegetable section occupies a prime place in the area known as La Plaza (The Square). This allows clients to see, in a glimpse, where each item on sale is displayed. A global vision that facilitates shopping and improves time optimization.

As well as local producers, Costasol has a wide range of Sabor a Málaga (Málaga Flavour) brand products and agreements with suppliers from the Axarquía and other places in the region. In addition, there is a selection of Bio and organic products for the more conscientious consumers. All of this makes their fruit and vegetables a benchmark for quality.

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	 <p>0.89€ per kilo</p> <p>PINEAPPLE Variety: Golden Rippe Category: I</p>	

*Offers valid at the Carrefour centres in Valle del Guadalhorce, Torremolinos, Mijas, Fuengirola and Estepona until the 17th of January, 2022.



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DENISE BUSH

GARDENING

Commelina erecta

A member of the spiderwort family, Commelinaceae, *Commelina erecta* is a low-growing herbaceous perennial native to South America.

Common names for this pretty, ground cover plant include Asiatic dayflower, widow's tears and, in Spanish; 'flor de Santa Lucía', 'hierba del pollo' and 'santa protectora de los ciegos'.

Members of the genus *Commelina* are trailing plants that only grow upright when given support from other plants. *C. erecta* is taller than others in the genus, hence the specific epithet 'erectus'. It has soft, jointed stems that can reach 90cm long and which may root where the joints touch the soil.

In the

spring, small blue flowers appear in clusters at the ends of the stems. The blooms have two large blue petals and one small white one. They only stay open for a day but there are usually several buds in each cluster which open within three to four days of each other. The flowers are self pollinating and form spherical fruits containing two to three grey or black seeds.

The leaves are lanceolate, up to 15cm long by 3cm wide and a bright, shiny green.

In temperate climates, *Commelina erecta* can be perennial, in cooler regions it can be grown as an annual.

Propagation is by seed, cuttings root easily in water or the tuberous roots can be divided and potted up.

A good location for this plant is somewhere that gets dappled shade all day in the summer. Although it will grow in dry, sandy soil, it prefers a rich, free-draining compost and will be much healthier if watered regularly during the hottest months. It is suitable for meadow plantings, hanging baskets, ground cover and containers.

In damp climates, *Commelina erecta* is known to be invasive but can be easily controlled by weeding out unwanted seedlings.

In traditional medicine, an extract of the plant was used to treat itchy eyes, cure small wounds and parts of the plant were macerated in rum and used topically to alleviate spider bites.

Commelina was named after the three Commelijn brothers, all of whom were Dutch botanists.



Commelina erecta and close up (inset). WIKIMEDIA

READERS' PHOTOS



ALISON GARCÍA

Non-stop flowering

"It never stops flowering!" comments Alison García about her *Leonotis leonurus* or lion's ear plant. This gorgeous, orange-flowered, South African native is a woody perennial and member of the mint family.



DAVID CALLAGHAN

Colourful snapdragons

The genus *Antirrhinum*, commonly called snapdragon, is native to Europe and can often be found growing wild in the countryside. These colourful blooms are growing inside a greenhouse belonging to reader David Callaghan in Antequera.

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

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

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



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DEBBIE
BARTLETT



WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

7 JANUARY 1970

Spain's first plane hijacking takes place

The pilot on a flight from Madrid to Zaragoza was ordered to fly to Cuba, then Albania, by an 18-year-old student with a authentic-looking toy pistol

His name was Mariano Ventura, he was an 18-year-old IT student and probably nobody would ever have heard of him if he had not attempted to carry out Spain's first plane hijacking during the evening of 7 January 1970, using a toy pistol that he had bought the previous day.

Iberia's flight IB 032 had taken off from Madrid for Zaragoza as normal, but 50 minutes later Ventura produced the pistol and grabbed a female crew member, forcing her into the cockpit with him, where he told the pilot to fly to Cuba. On being told that the

plane didn't have enough fuel, he ordered him to fly to Tirana in Albania instead. When the pilot said that wouldn't be possible either, the teenager threatened to kill all the passengers, one by one.

The pilot said he would have to land at Zaragoza to refuel, to which the hijacker agreed, but as they started their approach, despite the gun still being held to his neck, the pilot warned air traffic control what was happening.

By the time the plane landed, the runway was surrounded by military vehicles, police cars and as many tractors and lorries as it had been possible to find in the time.

Once the plane was on the ground, the military authorities ordered all the runway lights to be turned off. Ventura insisted that the aircraft had to take off again with enough fuel for Tirana within 15 minutes or he would start killing



Mariano Ventura being led away by detectives. ABC

everyone on board, but as the military authorities tried to engage with him by megaphone, engineers were deflating two of the plane's tyres and a mechanic removed some of its fuses so its electrics would not work.

The authorities told the teenager that if he gave himself up he would go to jail for a couple of years and that would be the end of it, but if he harmed anybody he would be shot the very next day.

Ventura left the plane via an

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Avión	Plane
Vuelo	Flight
Secuestro	Hijacking
Pistola	Handgun
Pasajeros	Passengers
Azafata	Stewardess
Piloto	Pilot
Cabina	Cockpit
Amenazar	To threaten
Destino	Destination
Combustible	Fuel
Disparar	To shoot
Juguete	Toy
Sobrevolar	To fly over
Pista	Runway
Neumáticos	Tyres
Fusibles	Fuses
Entregarse	Give oneself up
Fusilar	To execute by firing squad

auxiliary stairway, and witnesses said he showed no signs of fear or nerves and that he "reeked of alcohol".

Spain's first plane hijack had lasted four and a half hours.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

SOLAR PV PANELS

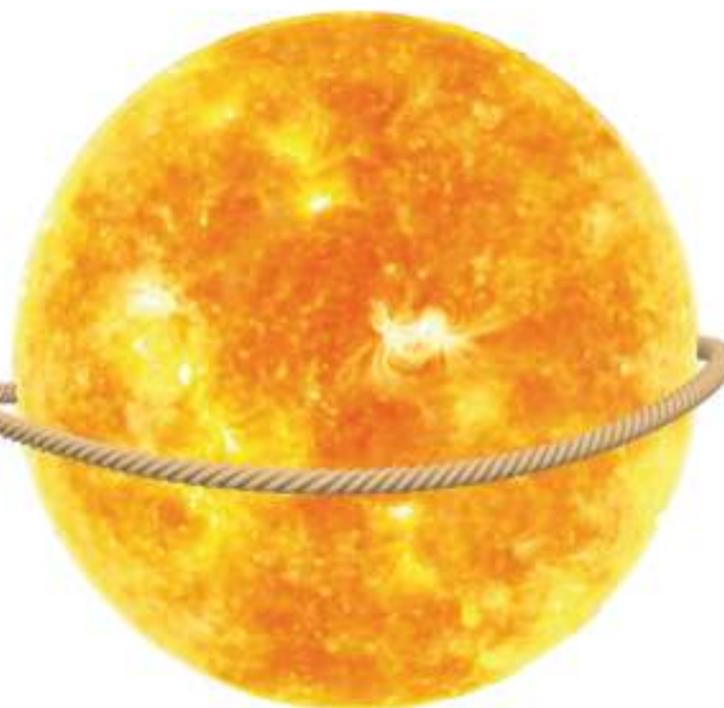
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The story of a building next to the river: a factory that exported perfume to Europe

ÁLORA

A French family took advantage of the important citric production of the Guadalhorce valley to make perfumes and oils

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ

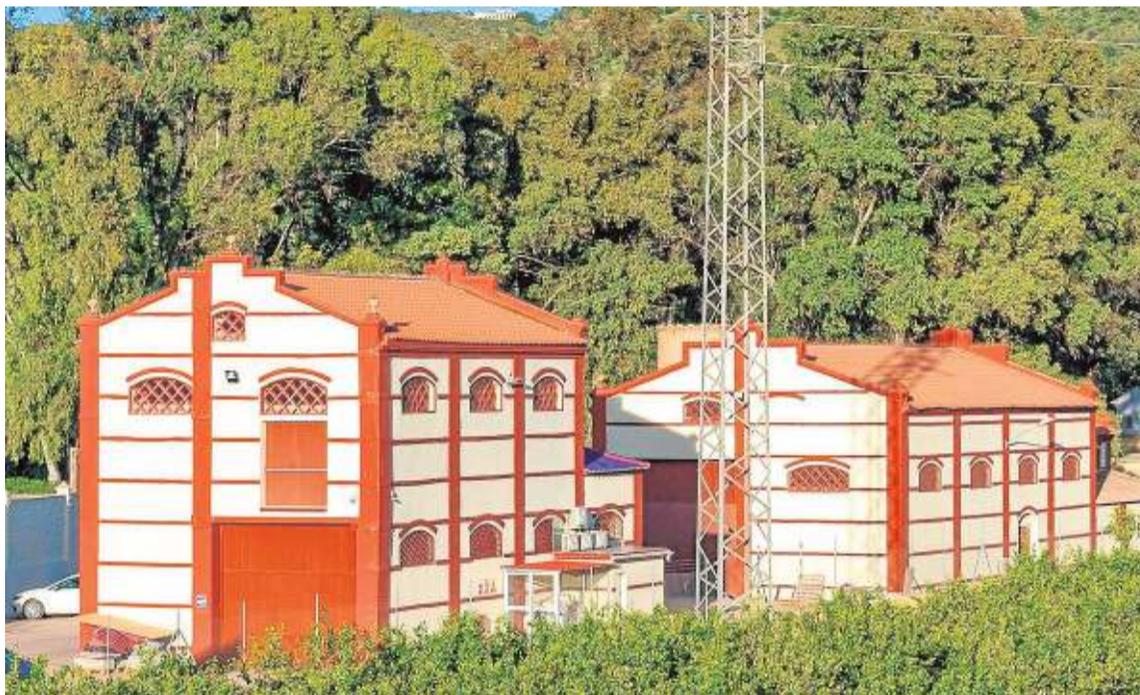
In 1930, Dionisio Saisse and his French family decided to go on a new adventure in the Guadalhorce valley, the citrus fruit paradise.

Their chosen destination was Álora, where they constructed a building which nowadays is part of the municipality's history. Perfumes and essential citrus blossom oils are the fragrances that bring back memories of the Saisse Cavalier factory, a company that transformed Álora into a reference for worldwide exports in the last century.

Located next to the Guadalhorce river and the railway line, the factory remained active from the 1930s until 1972.

"It's a very iconic building for Álora, and it has survived serious floods such as the ones in 2012," said María José Sánchez, who is in charge of the Álora museum.

"A lot of locals have worked there, they know what the fac-



The building that housed the old perfume factory in Álora. SUR/ARCHIVE

tory meant for the area."

Back in the 19th century, the Historic Spanish Dictionary of Geography and Statistics already cited the production of essential oils from lemon and bitter orange peel in Álora.

It all came from the extensive harvest of citrus fruits in the area, fertile land irrigated by the Guadalhorce river.

The manufacture of perfumes

in the town continued in the 20th century, thanks to Dionisio Saisse and his heirs. The French family had a well-known exporting past: since the end of the 18th century they sent raw materials to the French town of Grasse, considered to be the perfume capital of the world. And in 1930 they decided to settle in Álora to manage their own factory.

The factory's location, next to the Guadalhorce, provided the supply of newly-picked citrus blossoms that guaranteed a great result in the distillation process, obtaining a more concentrated essence and oil from the bloom.

The complex, which still stands today, was made up of two buildings.

One was dedicated to the distilling process, while the other

served as a warehouse and water deposit.

According to Pablo Pérez, the factory's original roof was composed of blue and white tiles, but had to be restored after the Civil War bombings.

The building also included a shed and an industrial chimney that extracted the citrus flower water and pure essence through classic techniques and equipment made in Grasse.

After decades of exports, the Saisse Cavalier family decided to close the factory in 1972, a year that saw a noticeable lack of raw materials needed to make their products.

The boilers, two of the most iconic pieces that were conserved after the closing, were lost after the estate was abandoned. As Pérez explained, the bigger boiler was made in Gainsborough, UK, by Marshall, Sons & Co. The other, smaller one was made in 1916 in the French foundry of Leroux & Gatinois.

In 2006, after decades of neglect, a private developer installed a nightclub in the factory, which would end up closing just two years later. Later, the 2012 floods destroyed a lot of what remained, due to its poor condition.

The iconic perfume factory remained unused until a few years ago, when it was acquired by the construction firm Leba, which restored the complex and installed offices and warehouses. According to the firm, the Sinerba Foundation will create a new space in the factory devoted to professional training.

The mini Danish castle in Lagos

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

A Danish man living in El Morche has built a small roadside fort which has quickly become a new tourist attraction and perfect selfie spot

EUGENIO CABEZAS

Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers who have been passing the crossing of the old N-340 road between El Morche and Lagos will no doubt have spotted a new property. However, this one is somewhat different from the modern houses being built in the Vélez-Málaga area.

It is a small castle made from hundreds of stones taken from the beach which stands majestically on top of some rocks. The name, 'El Castillo del Búho' (The Owl's Castle) can be seen on the main façade of this intriguing little fortress, upon which an Andalusian flag flies.

The man responsible for the creation of this curiosity is Anton



It has taken 43-year-old Dane Anton Jensen two months to build his miniature castle. E. CABEZAS

Jensen, a Dane who has been living in Torrox for five years.

"I came here on the recommendation of a friend, who was already living here. He told me that the climate and the people were much better than in Copenhagen," he explains.

Jensen says he is a great fan of sculpting and collecting shells from the beach. "I love making sculptures with them, motorbikes and animals, but this is my first piece of street art," he says.

During the two months it took to build the castle, the sculptor says, "everyone who passed by congratulated me on my work, even the police."

In fact, the place has already become a regular place for selfies and photos, as it offers a magnificent view of the Vélez-Málaga coastline from its easternmost coastal village, Lagos.

"Nobody from the town hall has said anything to me either, I have done it out of love for this place, which has welcomed me so well over the years. I want to stay here forever," he says.

'El Castillo del Búho' is named after a partner that Jensen had in Copenhagen. "I also did it as a tribute to her," he reveals.

TELLING TALES

PETER EDGERTON

No smoke king

An impish winter wind whipped in over open sands and across the promenade. John turned up the collar on his coat, hunched forward, shoved his hands into his pockets and strode back towards the cottage where his wife Bernadette and Jack, their eldest son, were preparing an evening meal for the family's New Year's Day celebration.

As he walked home, John was overcome by the familiar sense of resolve that had gripped him on the first of January every year for the last five years but this time he was more determined than ever to succeed. He simply had to stop.

It didn't help his cause that Bernadette smoked a packet a day and, even though she would make the effort to step out into the front garden if the weather was sufficiently clement, simply hearing the click of the lighter or catching sight of a waft of smoke drifting over their pristine flower beds was often enough to lead him into temptation. He'd actually made it through to February last year but then just wasn't able to resist one afternoon when he caught his wife surreptitiously lighting up on the landing, while a relentless rain storm battered the windows outside.

It wasn't just at home that John had problems, either; his friends down at the Dog and Duck were being brutally honest with him lately, especially David the village doctor. In fact, David had brought it up when they'd met for a drink just before Christmas.

"I'm not really asking you any more, John. I'm telling you. I'm at my wits' end and, to be honest, it's beginning to damage our friendship. For five years solid you've been talking about it. Please, please, stop now - for your own good and the good of our relationship."

"OK, I know, David, I know. I'm sorry, it must be so annoying for you. You've told me so often but, really, I just can't help myself. Mike and Terry are a pretty disgusted with me too, I think."

Indeed they were.

As he turned the key in the

lock and pushed open the front door, John caught the first tantalising smell of the family's traditional New Year's Day feast - beef casserole. Jack was a dab hand with his mother's recipes.

"Crikey, it's bitter out there. How long until dinner?" Neither waiting for, nor expecting an answer, John took of his coat, flung it over an old kitchen chair and kissed little Amy on the top of her head before pouring himself a large glass of white wine.

"Where's mum?"

Jack hesitated. "She's, er, she's -"

Just then, Bernadette came running downstairs, looking vaguely guilty and smelling strongly of Benson and Hedges' finest. Clumsily, she tried a distraction tactic.

"Grub's up in five minutes. Wash your hands everyone."

John stepped towards her, smiling mischievously. "Can you give me one of those little beauties, please? I really can't resist. Just this once."

An exasperated cry of "Oh, dad!" rose in eery unison from the two children but they'd seen enough by now to know that their plea would be in vain. John took the packet from his wife's hand, slid out a cigarette and tapped it on the table, before raising it up very slowly towards his lips.

"You see this, everyone? Well, as you know, I haven't touched one of these things in over five years now and I have to tell you again, it's the best thing I ever did. I feel so much better for it, both in body and in mind." He turned to his wife. "Bernadette, love, you really need to give up this year, too. I'll help you. Oh, and as for David, I've told him a thousand times he really has to stop smoking but now he just gets defensive and annoyed. It's really not that hard - let me tell you again how I did it..."

By now Jack had left the room and Amy was colouring her book with such fervour that she'd all but shredded one of its pages. Meanwhile, Bernadette just stood there, shaking her head in disbelief.

When would John finally find the resolve to stop telling everyone at every opportunity about giving up smoking five years previously?

SOCIETY SCENE

ARCH

Equine sanctuary marks 12th anniversary

T. BRYANT. The Andalusian Rescue Centre for Horses (ARCH), a volunteer-run sanctuary that offers a lifeline to abused and abandoned equines, marks its 12th anniversary this month.

Last year, despite the disruption caused by the pandemic,

the Alhaurín El Grande-based charity managed to rehome almost 40 equines.

President, Jill Newman Rogers, said, "The team and our supporters have been brilliant throughout the year and their dedication has allowed us to keep going through all the difficult times and restrictions. We could not have continued without their generous help and donations."



The dedicated team at the ARCH sanctuary earlier this week. **SUR**

NERJA INTERNATIONAL CLUB

Meeting will relaunch popular Nerja social club

J. RHODES. The Nerja International club will be reopening after a six-month break, on Tuesday 11 January from 11am. Existing members and guests will be offered a free glass of Cava to "come along to hear about our planned forthcoming events and for information on the future of the club," explained newly-elected president, Robert Winchester. The club has been established for over 40 years. "It has served the community, and has been a well supported club. I feel passionate about its survival and with the help from the other committee members I hope to bring it back," he said. The Club address is Calle San Juan 42, Bajo, 29780 Nerja. For further information Robert can be contacted by email: winchesterdesignandbuild@btinternet.com.



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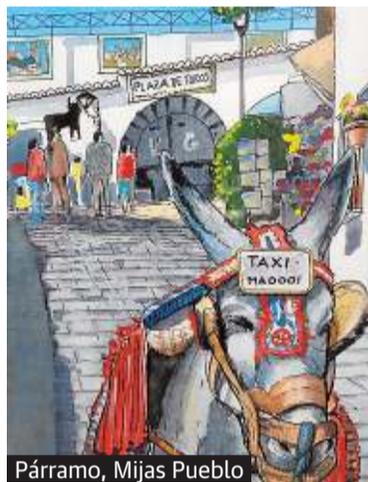


EXHIBITIONS

Fernando Calvillo

LA CALA DE MIJAS. Until 7 January. Centro Cultural de La Cala.

Metamorfosis, an exhibit of a selection of work by self-taught painter, Fernando Calvillo. The paintings are presented in different formats, such as treated paper, metal sheets and acrylic, and different styles such as abstraction and realism.



Párramo, Mijas Pueblo

Juan Manuel Parra Párramo

MIJAS. Until 7 January. Casa Museo. The exhibition consists of pencil drawings as well as paintings, in a variety of styles.

Javier Peinado

ESTEPONA. Until 12 January. Casa de Las Tejerinas. Cuaderno de Viajes is the title of this exhibition by Javier Peinado.

Espejito, Espejito

MARBELLA. From 7 January until 15 March. Reiners Contemporary Art, CC Camoján Corner.

The exhibition Espejito, Espejito by Sali Muller

My Secret Garden

PUERTO BANÚS. Until 16 January, 2022.

Belgian artist Arne Quinze is exhibiting a collection of his aluminium sculptures, inspired by nature, around the streets and port of Puerto Banús.

Brigitte Bardot

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

Introverso

MALAGA. Until 17 January. Sala Alfajar, C/Císter 1. The exhibit Introverso will display ceramic art by Mónica Rivas Lee. www.alfajar.es

Malaga Picasso Museum

MALAGA. Museo Picasso Málaga, Calle San Agustín. **The Walls of Malaga.** Until January. 900 residents of Malaga, from all different walks of life, cultures and ages, have taken part in this exhibition by taking photos of parts of Malaga. These photos have been mounted on a map of the city and are displayed as a mural.

MUPAM's new photographic exhibition by a Malaga artists' group

MUPAM is holding a collective exhibition of photographs and video installations by artists and members of FAMA

CLAUDIA SAN MARTÍN

MALAGA. MUPAM opens its doors to present a collective exhibition with a feminine accent. In it, twenty five female artists and photographers come together in 'Auto-poesis', which aims to recreate the identity of the artists in confluence with their environment. Their experiences are reflected in these forty images in different formats including installations, photobook and video art.

The exhibition, curated by Elena Pedrosa, is the result of the work of the Colectivo de Fotógrafas Artistas Malagueñas, known as FAMA. It includes works by Cristina Savage, Alba Blanco, Laura Brickmann, Lola Araque,



One of the artists involved in the exhibition. SALVADOR SALAS

Lucía Villar, Verónica Ruth Frías and Victoria Abón, among others. These women are all participants in the cultural life of Malaga, so they bring their perspective and vision of the city and its possibilities through their art.

The exhibition, which can

be seen until 27 February, is part of the new programme prepared by the museum.

MUPAM is also offering guided tours throughout January from Tuesday to Friday at 6pm and Saturdays and Sundays at 1pm at its premises at 1 Paseo Reding in the city centre.

www.museopicassomalaga.org.

Picasso Casa Natal

MALAGA. 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. The Pompidou in Malaga is also exhibiting some of his works until February 2022.

Centre Pompidou

MALAGA. Muelle Uno. <https://centrepompidou-malaga.eu/> **La Ecología de Las Imágenes.** Until 17 January 2022. An exhibition by 11 French and Spanish artists. Videos, photos and contemporary art. **From Miró to Barceló.** Until 6 February, 2022. The semi-permanent exhibition is entitled De Miró a Barceló. Un siglo de Arte Español (From Miró to Barceló. A century of Spanish art). This chronological journey through a century of Spanish art shows that the generation of contemporary artists has kept alive the spirit of the avant-garde with extraordinary energy. This exhibition has been joined by the works of sculptor Julio González.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

MALAGA. **Uncertainty's Grace.** Until 30 Janu-

ary, 2022. Markus Muntean (Austria, 1962) and Adi Rosenblum (Israel, 1962) produced this eight minute video clip to reflect the diverse possibilities of non-religious spiritualism in a consumer society.

Dieter de Greef. Until 20 February. Coup de Théâtre by Belgian artist Dieter de Greef will be exhibited for the first time in Europe at the CAC. The exhibition consists of paintings in different formats completed over the last four years.

Patricio Cabrera. Until 28 February. Seville artist Patricio Cabrera, is exhibiting over twenty of his works in different techniques and formats in this exhibition entitled El Labrador y el Astronauta.

Habitar la Pausa. Until 16 January. Students that form part of the VIII de la Beca Artista Residente de Postgrado 2021 la Facultad de Bellas Artes de la Universidad de Málaga, will be exhibiting their works.



Espejito, Espejito, Marbella

Piña de las Tentaciones

MALAGA. Until 10 January. La Casa Amarilla, C/Santos.

Ania Sáenz de Buruaga is the new artist showcased at La Casa Amarilla which is featuring collections by many well known artists including Pigsy, Eryl Pall, Misskafaina among others.

Art For Change

MALAGA. Until 23 January, 2022. Sala de Exposiciones, Jardín Botánico La Concepción. The exhibition aims to make the viewer reflect on the sustainability of the planet by providing a complete overview of visual arts from Malaga in the second decade of the 21st century.

100 Years of the Foreign Legion

MALAGA. Until 15 February. Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, Plaza de la Constitución. The exhibition is organised by the Ministry of Defence with the support of the Museo del Ejército, the Asociación de la Legiónarios de Honor, the Fundación Tercios de Extranjeros and the Asociación Bernardo de Gálvez. The exhibition consists of photos and documents that cover the 100 years history of the Spanish Foreign Legion.

Mamones vs Human

MALAGA. 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 hypocritical values, sex, religion and politics.

Metal Dennis Manarchy

MALAGA. Until 15 January. La Térmica.

An exhibition of photographs by American artist Dennis Manarchy. The models in the photos have been made-up using metallic spray paint and dressed with fantastic objects from 'Radio Guy' Steve Erenberg's collection. The items include industrial artifacts and rare medical instruments.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

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

Sorolla in Javea. Until 16 January 2022. Sorolla's summer vacation in Javea in 1905 was the catalyst for a series of paintings which demonstrate his recognised style coming to maturity with rocky coasts and bright light reflecting off the sea with figures in the water. Around 20 canvases from that period have been lent by the Sorolla Museum in Madrid.



Patricio Cabrera, CAC Malaga

Museum Jorge Rando

MALAGA. C/ Cruz del Molinillo. www.museojorgerando.org. The Jorge Rando museum is celebrating its seventh anniversary this year and has a special exhibition entitled Soldados by Jorge Rando. A new exhibition, in conjunction with The Chinese Art Museum is called Huellas de Oriente. The exhibition will include pieces by Dao Zi, one of the main promoters of Chinese contemporary art in China; Zhang Fuye, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts among many other accolades: and Liu Xuguang, modern and contemporary artist and intellectual. www.jorgerando.org

Poster collection

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. Until 9 January. Casa Fuerte Bexmiliana. Twenty posters advertising films by Luis García Berlanga, one hundred years after his birth.

Bernardo Ocano

EL MORCHE. From 14 January until 10 February. Bio Beach Club restaurant, Paseo Marítimo. Figurative Art in Harmony Abstract is an exhibition by Venezuelan artist and architect, Bernardo Ocano

Playmobil

ALMUÑÉCAR. Until 9 January. Casa de la Cultura. From one of the biggest private col-

lections in Spain, four dioramas and a nativity scene created with Palymobil figures.

MUSIC AND DANCE

La Cochera Cabaret

MALAGA. Avda de los Guindos.
8 January, 10pm. Deltó tribute to Extremoduro.
14 January, 9pm. Subze 2021 Tour.
22 January, 10pm. La Bengala
Tickets: www.lacocheraentradas.com/

Clarence Jazz Club

TORREMOLINOS. Calle Danza Invisible, 8.
7 January, 10pm. Philip Adie Trio.
8 January, 10pm. Antonio Lizana.
info@clarencejazzclub.com

La Posada

MALAGA. Vincci Posada del Patio, Pasillo de Sta Isabel.
7 January, 8pm. Daphne & Nicky.
14 January, 8pm. Play On.
www.tallerblues.es

The Rob Sas Band

COSTA DEL SOL. Various venues.
8 January, 10pm, Benavista. The Rob Sas band will be playing in the Melòdia bar and restaurant.
29 January, 9pm, Benalmádena. Bar los Motos.

Unicaja concerts

MALAGA. 8 January, 12pm. Sala Unicaja María Cristina.
The students of La Cajita Musical de Málaga are performing A Las Puertas de Palacio, a concert themed around princesses and villains for all the family. Tickets 8€: www.ticketentradas.com

New Year Concert

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Paseo Marítimo.
9 January, 12.30pm. New Year Concert by the Municipal Band.

THEATRE AND OPERA

Currents by Mayumana

MALAGA. 8 January, 5 and 8pm, 9 January, 7pm. Teatro Cervantes.
Created for the Festival of Lights in Jerusalem, Currents is inspired by the two inventors Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla. Tickets: <https://www.unientradas.es/>

Salon Varietés

FUENGIROLA. 7.30pm daily, 7pm Sunday. The Salon Varietés Theatre, Calle Emancipación.
Jack and the Beanstalk. Until 9



Bernardo Ocano, El Morche

The silk screen prints of Christian M. Walter on display in Taller Gravura

The German artist resident in Granada is exhibiting some of his works created over the last thirty-five years

CRISTINA PINTO

MALAGA. It was around forty years ago when German-born screen printer Christian M. Walter, considered one of the best silk screen artists in the world, met with Marian Martín, co-director with Paco Aguilar, of Taller Gravura in Malaga.

Now the gallery is exhibiting over 35 of his works dating from 1986 to 2021.

1986 was when Walter, together with his wife, decided to embark on screen printing with his own workshop: "I was born in Germany but I learned screen printing here. When I arrived in Spain I was self-employed. With my wife, we



Christian M. Walter with his works. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ

opened our own company and we saved 500,000 pesetas with which to get furniture and our own stamping equipment and that's how we started. There are times and places where you can't learn from abundance, but on the

contrary, you learn from a lack of resources. That has always impressed me," he explained.

Thirty-five years later, a small portion of what he has achieved can be seen until the end of this month.

January.

Echoes of the Beatles. 8, 9 January.
Johnny G Jukebox Gold. 15, 16 January.
Tickets: boxoffice@salon-varietestheatre.com or call: 952474542

LECTURES AND TALKS

The Arts Society

COSTA DEL SOL. 10 January, 4.30pm.
The Journey of the Magi: Origins, Myth and Reality - the True Story of the Three Kings. A lecture by Leslie Primo. www.theartssociety-costadelosol.org/
NERJA. 11 January, 6pm. Live at the Centro Cultural or by zoom to your home. Guests welcome 10€.
Lecture as above. www.theartssocietynerja.com

National Museum lecture series

GIBRALTAR. Monthly at John Mackintosh Hall.
13 January, 7pm. Dr Jennifer Ballantine. "Two Gibaltars - the one that lies before him and the one that exists in his mind" (Mark Sanchez, Ruina): The convergence of the past upon Gibraltar's fast changing topography.

NATIVITY SCENES

Diocese of Malaga Living Nativity Scene Postponed.

MALAGA. 14th in the afternoon, 15 January all day. Casa Diocesana Málaga.
Students from diocesan schools will interpret different passages from the Gospels telling the story of Jesus' infancy. There will also be a bouncy castle, Royal Post Box, Christmas

crafts and workshops as well as live music. Every year the organisers, with the help of the Children's Oncology Volunteers (AVOI) collect toys and gifts for disadvantaged children.

Thyssen Museum Neapolitan Nativity

MALAGA. Until January. Patio de las Columnas, Museo Carmen Thyssen Málaga.
Archicofradía de los Dolores de San Juan have installed the traditional 'Belén napolitano' which is free to visit during the opening hours of the museum.

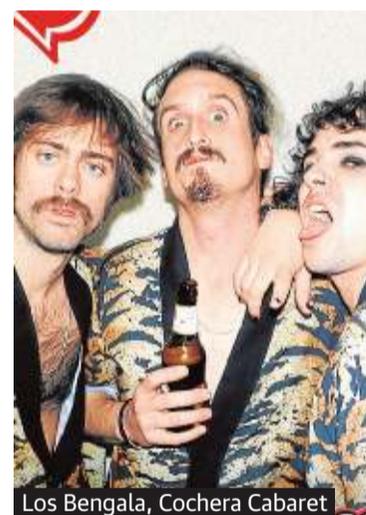
Christmas Nativity Scenes

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. Until January. La Sala Mare Nostrum de La Cala del Moral.
The municipal nativity scene made by Agustín Gómez Fuentes.
VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 7 January.
Visit the nativity scenes in the Palacio del Marqués de Beniel, the Museo de Vélez-Málaga and the Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Francisco Hernández.

MORE IDEAS

Las Luces del Botánico, Christmas Garden

MALAGA. 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. There will also be illuminated silhouettes of



Los Bengala, Cochera Cabaret

king Alfonso XIII, Sissi Emperatriz and Queen Isabell II.

Bridge Lessons

FUENGIROLA. Every Tuesday, 11am - 1pm from 18 January. Restaurante La Chispa, near the Feria ground.
Fuengirola International Bridge Club is offering a course of bridge lessons to beginners and rusty players. The first three weeks are free and there is no obligation to continue. The full course is 15 weeks and the weekly cost is 6euros. Information and to register email: frankdeakin@aol.com or call: 603358489.

Lux Mundi

TORRE DEL MAR. Mon and Wed 10am-1pm, Fridays, 11am - 1pm. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, Avda Coach trip to Marbella and Plaza Mayor. 20 January. Various departure points. An excursion to Marbella Old Town. Enjoy a coffee in the beautiful Plaza de los Naranjos/Orange Square and meander through the narrow, cobbled streets. At 2.30pm, drive to

Plaza Mayor in Malaga to shop in the Designer Retail Outlet, McArthur Glen. Tickets 19€ visitors or 16€ for Lux Mundi card holders. Bookings: 952543334 or email: luxmundi@luxmundi.org

Fitness walk

MALAGA. 8 January, 3pm. Check-in at Torre Mónica, C/Pacífico.
The walk will proceed along the Paseo Marítimo a distance of 5km approximately, returning to the starting point at around 4.40pm. Pets, pushchairs or children under ten are not allowed. Pre-registration required 11€. Tee-shirts 5€. <https://fitnesswalk.eu/> or email: info@fitnesswalk.eu

O. V. FILMS

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

Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

MALAGA. Centro de Ocio, Plaza Mayor, Avda Alfonso Ponce León. Tel: 902902103. www.yelmocines.es.
West Side Story: 12.45 (Sun); 15.45 (Fri-Sun); 18.50 (Tues); 21.55 (Mon, Wed, Thurs).
Canta 2: 13.45 (Sun); 17.10 (Tues).
Spiderman No Way Home: 13.30 (Sun); 16.30, 22.30 (Fri-Sun); 19.30 (every day).
The Card Counter: 19.40 (Tues).
Flag Day: 19.50 (Tues).
The King's Man: 22.20 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. C/ Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922. www.yelmocines.es
West Side Story: 19.10 (Tues)
Matrix Resurrections: 20.00 (Tues).
Spider Man No Way Home: 19.15 (Tues).
The King's Man: 21.30 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MALAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902220922
The Card Counter: 20.00 (Tues).
Matrix Resurrections: 12.15 (Sun), 20.15 (Tues)
Spider man No Way Home: 12.50 (Sun); 19.00 (Tues); 22.10 (every day).
The King's Man: 21.45 (Tues)
Westside Story: 12.25 (Sun); 18.50 (Tues); 22.00 (every day).

Cinesur Miramar

FUENGIROLA. Avda de la Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.
Spiderman No way Home: 12.15, 16.00, 19.00, 22.00 (Fri-Sun)
Matrix: Resurrections: 21.15 (Fri-Sun)
The King's Man: 19:30, 22.20 (Fri-Sun)
The Card Counter: 15.45 (Fri-Sun)
Canta 2: 12.20, 16.00, 17.00 (Fri-Sun)
West Side Story: 12:00, 18.00 (Fri-Sun).
American Graffiti: 20.00 (Tues).
Point Break: 20.00 (Thurs).
La Traviata opera from Rome : 20.00 (Thurs).

Cinesur Ingenio

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Avda Juan Carlos, 1. Tel: 667773187.
La Traviata opera from Rome : 20.00 (Thurs).



'I really love being in my living room'

For decades, the kitchen was the place in the home where people gathered, but then some time ago it moved to the living room, or a combination of both in open plan homes. Now that we have so many devices the TV does not have the power of getting people together that it used to have, but the sofa still does, to watch television, or chat, or to read on your own.

Marina Acosta, who is an interior designer from Bilbao and an expert on preparing homes for sale or rent, tells us how to provide 'warmth' for the living

Decor. It is the most-used room in the home and here are some ideas on how to ensure that it is a delightful place to be

YOLANDA VEIGA

room without needing a fire. Or... do we need a fire? Well, "a fireplace brings a living room alive and it is decorative in its own right," according to a guide to great decor in 'El Mueble' magazine, which is a trend-setter for interiors.

The sofa
Do you dare to buy white?

Marina Acosta says the sofa is the most important item of furniture, so sit on several and try them out before buying. Then, decide on which colour you want. She recommends pale colours. "Nowadays there are

bomb-proof fabrics which mean that we can choose pale colours without worrying. That means you have an almost blank canvas to work on," she says.

The specialists at El Mueble agree. "You can't go wrong with a white sofa. It's timeless, brings light into a room and doesn't influence the use of other colours," they say. Colour can be provided by cushions, and also the walls. "The choice of textiles for the cushions also helps us to create the ambience we want. Neutral colours with floral patterns, or stripes, soft designs in linen and cotton... they give a homely



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◀ Photos of rooms remodelled by Marina Acosta

touch. On the walls, paper with plant motifs is good, because it is a way of bringing nature indoors," she says. With regard to the size of the sofa, the specialists say it doesn't have to "fill" a wall. "The ideal is to have one which is between 60 centimetres and one metre shorter than the wall, so it doesn't look boxed in and can breathe," they advise.

The TV Best 'hidden'

The image of a family sitting around watching TV is old-fashioned now. "The layout of the living room doesn't have to depend on the TV, but in reality it still does. Instead of it being a determining feature, it is a good idea to consider a revolving or mobile stand so it can be seen from different angles," says Marina. And, far from making it a central feature of the room, the trend is to make it less noticeable. "You can use pictures, panels or bookcases whose structure means you can hide it," she says.

Coffee tables

The trend is for round ones these days

Round tables are very fashionable at the moment, although in this case personal taste and space are determining factors. "Glass tables are popular, but they can seem cold. Wooden ones with iron details provide warmth and are easier to clean," say the experts at El Mueble.

"If there isn't a lot of space, you could consider pouffes, because they don't occupy much visual space and they can be used for different purposes, for example as a coffee or occasional table, a footrest or a seat if you have visitors and need somewhere for them to sit," says Marina Acosta.

The bookcase

The star of the room

"If the sofa will forgive us for saying so, a bookcase is the star piece of furniture in a room," they say at El Mueble, and they recommend one with thick shelves, at least three centimetres, and plenty of books. Marina Acosta says this has become trendy out of necessity: "With the pandemic, a lot of people were working from home, so in many cases where a bookcase had a usable corner, they made a desk for themselves there," she says.

Going for the Scandinavian touch

Frida Ramstedt is the author of one of the most successful design blogs in Scandinavia. In her book 'The Interior Design Handbook', she gives ideas on how to decorate a living room Nordic style, which is very popular. These are some of her recommendations.

Don't clutter shelves with books

If you want to display ornaments and books, leave about 30 per cent of the shelf empty and put the heaviest books on lower shelves. The ideal depth is from 30 to 40 centimetres.

A little light next to the TV

Placing a table lamp on the television table makes the room cosier and helps to soften the strong contrast between a highly illuminated screen and dark surroundings, says Frida.

How many decorative items?

There should be an odd number, not even, and placed in triangles, overlapping a little, made with different materials (wood, metal, glass...) and in different sizes.

The height of pictures

The ones you hang behind the sofa should cover two-thirds of the wall, and placed so that the central point of the picture is 1.45 metres high and at least 15 to 30 centimetres above the back of the sofa.

The length of curtains

They should hang two or three centimetres below the window or the windowsill, and if they are full length they should be two to three centimetres above the ground, says Frida.

What if we want to eat in the living room?

If you put a dining table in the living room, the rug should be longer, extending at least 60 to 70 centimetres beyond the table, so that when the chairs are pulled out they are still on the rug. If the table is round, have a round rug; if it is square, a square rug. If the table is round, place a round lamp above it, 55-65 centimetres above the top.

Doubts about wall colours

Matt paint hides defects but marks more easily and is difficult to clean. Glossy paint brings light and is easier to clean, but irregularities do show up more.

The coffee table

This should be two-thirds as wide as the sofa. The recommended height is 40 centimetres, and it should be 30 to 40 centimetres away from the sofa.

A blanket on the sofa

If the sofa is like a 'chaise longue', Frida Ramstedt recommends placing different-sized cushions at each end and a blanket at the foot.



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From beer bellies to birthmarks. Sayings we have heard all our lives debunked; a full moon doesn't trigger childbirth and a cut onion won't cure a cough

ISABEL IBÁÑEZ



There are sayings we have heard all our lives that we take for granted and pass down through the generations. Here, three experts reveal that some of these are myths, because, after all, eating 'migas' really does not make your breasts bigger.

Myths about food

Dr Giuseppe Russolillo, who is the president of the Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, demolishes a few of these popular beliefs for us.

Beer belly

These prominent stomachs which prevent some people seeing parts of their body without the help of a mirror are simply due to an unhealthy diet and lifestyle, he says. "People who accumulate abdomi-

nal fat aren't eating a healthy enough diet. Of course, it's possible that they do drink beer, but there are others who don't and they also have a stomach like this," he points out. "This is android or visceral obesity which accumulates in the belly and waist and poses a high risk, much more so than if the fat is deposited in the buttocks or thighs, because being in the belly, close to the viscera, it increases cardiovascular risk, especially in women. And the likelihood of diabetes," he explains.

'Migas' make breasts bigger

This one really makes Dr Russolillo laugh: "It's completely false, there is absolutely nothing to back it up, under any circumstances. It's just funny," he says. And obviously, the same goes for peanuts.

Chocolate cheers us up

Eating a lot of chocolate can release a series of neurotransmit-



ters at cerebral level that make us feel better: "It's possible that when you eat a food like this, it helps the synthesis and secretion of serotonin, maybe. In general, these are sweet foods or foods that remind us a lot of our childhood, and they may help cheer us up, although not because the food itself has that capacity, but because it releases a series of neurotransmitters," explains this nutritionist.

Chorizo gives you spots

Dr Russolillo says this can happen with any food which is very high in fat. "If you eat a diet with a lot of fat, especially those of animal origin, as well as putting on weight there can be reactions such as the appearance of acne," he says.

Melon is gold in the morning, silver at lunch and deadly at night

That's a well-known saying in Spain, but this expert confirms that there is no evidence to support the idea that the time of day makes melon any better or worse for you. "I do believe in listening to your body, though: if you realise that every time you eat a certain product you get acne or don't feel well, then find something else or try it at a different time of day. This one is a myth because there

is no evidence for it, but if something makes a person feel ill and it carries on over time they should consult a nutritionist because it's not a good thing to cut foods out of your diet," he advises.

Sex, pregnancy and birth

Gynaecologist Francisco Carmona responded humorously to some of the things people say about sexual relations, conception, pregnancy and birth, fertile ground for old wives' tales.

Putting your legs up after sex makes it easier to become pregnant

This is something you often hear, even from highly-educated people. Dr Carmona says he has a couple of friends who are doctors and are convinced it works, "but it has nothing to do with it". "What is essential is that the spermatozoa have the capacity for spontaneous movement, that they are able to move linearly, not in circles. And orgasm is important for women because these contractions act as a Hoover for the sperm," he says. He also points out that the ovary that is ovulating releases sub-

stances that cause the male cells to move towards it more than towards the other ovary.

That bump is a boy...

This is one of the most common myths, people who think that the shape of a pregnant woman's stomach - pointed, higher, lower - indicates whether she is having a boy or a girl. "Definitely not. I did an internship with a gynaecologist who had a reputation for always guessing the sex of the baby to come from the shape of the bump. He would say to the pregnant woman: 'You're going to have a boy,' but in his papers he would write that it was going to be a girl. So if he was right about what he had said, great, and if he was wrong and they came to ask for an explanation, then he would take out his papers and it would be very clear that he had predicted a girl! You have a 50% chance of getting it right, it's easy!"

If a pregnant woman doesn't satisfy her food cravings, the baby will have a birthmark

Dr Carmona jokes that pregnant women are very keen to keep this myth going because it means they can insist on being indulged. "There's nothing more to be said about it," he says.

Eat everything so the foetus gets used to different tastes

So they will love asparagus... or maybe not. It's like when people say pregnant women shouldn't drink cow's milk because otherwise the baby will develop an intolerance to it. Everything a mother-to-be eats or drinks decomposes into other components and it is those that are passed to the baby via the umbilical cord. So, no.

Does a full moon trigger childbirth?

There are plenty of studies to confirm that there are no more births than usual during a full moon, although this is a widely held belief. "Otherwise the hospitals would be overwhelmed, and that doesn't happen. I don't know where this belief has come from, I suppose it has to do with the tides being caused by the moon, but oceans are vast expanses of water, while the water that a pregnant woman carries is very small indeed," says Dr Carmona.

Remedies and other stories

We asked Lucía Galán, who is a paediatrician and the director of Cen-

"A lot of people think if a woman puts her legs up after sex it will help her get pregnant, but it won't"

DAANGEROUS ADVICE:

If you're choking, drink water

No, this is something you absolutely should not do because the water will block the small amount of air you're taking in and make things worse. Pediatrician Lucía Galán says it is important to stay calm when someone is choking, and try to help them to cough. "Encourage them to cough. If after a few seconds that isn't having any effect and they are getting worse, get someone to call 112 while you start performing the Heimlich manoeuvre: stand behind the person who is choking and put your arms around their body. Close one fist and place it just above the navel, thumb side in. Grab the fist with your other hand and push it inward and upward at the same time, making a J shape. Repeat this from six to ten times, as necessary. Continue until the obstruction disappears. If the person loses consciousness, then you need to start doing CPR on them," she says.

tro Creciendo, to clear up some misconceptions.

Does saliva cure?

"Well, I know there is a saying about 'licking your wounds' but we really don't recommend that anybody does that, says Galán. She explains that human saliva contains a large variety of bacteria which are inoffensive in our mouths but can cause serious infection in open wounds elsewhere on the body. "In fact, human bites, when they break the skin, become infected more easily and are more serious than those caused by animals," she says. The best way to treat a wound is to clean it with water and soap and disinfect it with antiseptic.

If it itches, it's because it's healing

Not necessarily so. Sometimes a wound can itch as part of the scarring process, but Dr Galán says it can also be because it is becoming infected. "The itching doesn't always mean it is healing, so be careful," she says.

If you get cold you'll catch a cold

"The common cold isn't caused by cold weather but by a virus. In other words, if there is no virus there will be no common cold, even if it's freezing outside. And viruses are transmitted by close contact between people when one of them is carrying it; people understand that more now, because of the coronavirus," says Dr Galán.

So what happens in winter, in that case? Respiratory viruses particularly like the cold to reproduce and stay active, and that's why there are more of them in the winter than

in the summer. "Also, in winter we tend to be indoors more, so there is more contagion and the low humidity inside also helps the viruses to replicate. That dryness in the atmosphere means our mucous membranes are not sufficiently hydrated and our virus-cleaning systems don't work fully," she says, referring for example to the little hairs in our noses that help to trap and clean out germs. So during the winter, spending more time with other people in heated rooms which dry out the atmosphere is "the perfect storm for becoming unwell". She does point out as well, though, that prolonged exposure to cold "can cause hypothermia and weakens the immune system, but not if you're just popping out to take the rubbish to the bin without a jacket on".

Tilt the head back to stop a nosebleed

Quite the contrary, actually, because if you tilt your head back it can mean all the blood goes to the throat "and that could make you cough, choke or vomit," says Dr Galán. What we should do is sit the person down and lean them forward slightly so any blood that reaches the throat can be expelled through the mouth. "We tell them to breathe through their mouth and press our fingers on their nostrils for a few minutes until the bleeding stops. Normally, it will have stopped in about ten minutes," she says. It is best not to blow the nose or put paper or cotton wool in the nostrils, because removing it could make the bleeding start again.

Got a cough? You need a cut onion

"Well, cutting an onion into quarters and leaving it by the bed won't cause you any problems, but apart from the smell, which will linger for weeks, it won't help the cough. The cough might get better, but it won't be because of the onion, or at least there is no scientific evidence to say it is, I'm sorry," says Dr Galán. "And saying 'it works for me' is no substitute for scientific research. That's like saying I always drive through a red traffic light and nothing has ever happened to me, so it must be OK. Well, if that is the case, why aren't we all doing it?" she says.



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Misunderstandings

ANDREW J. LINN



Of all the books about Spanish food and wine that have been published over the last half decade, possibly the worst have been written by Americans.

Travelling around a foreign country, eating in restaurants and collecting recipes from co-operative natives should be

the easiest thing in the world. Far from it apparently.

The lazy way is to translate an already published book from its original idiom to that of the proposed published version, although little things like weights and measures, names of ingredients, and references to cooking utensils, can be hidden traps.

The lazy way to write about Spanish food and wine is to translate an already-published book

Within the EU, we are all singing from the same hymn sheet, but globally there are significant areas for potential misunderstandings.

These are often of a cultural nature, like believing that tapas can be eaten with a coffee, or an authentic paella or 'arroz' should be cooked in an oven.

The specific culprit in this

case is referred to as a 'Paella... for a covered barbecue, Paella al Weber' which turns out to be the name of the manufacturer of the barbecue, not the style of paella.

One star recipe is swordfish with pine nuts and raisins, a method I have never heard of. Marmitako, the famous Basque tuna dish, is introduced as a fisherman's dish to be prepared on a boat - but mentions oven time! Duck with pears is seemingly a well-known Spanish dish, but, rather like the venison with shallot sauce, is clearly the author's invention. This last is notable for a listed ingredient of eight ounces of cold butter. Is there another option?

WINE OF THE WEEK

Ramos Paul 2006

A notable wine for several reasons, not least being its excellent quality. Made with Tempranillo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot, it is heavy and very tasty. Two years in wood, and although quite expensive, worth splashing out on occasionally, above all when someone needs to be convinced that Malaga reds can hold their own against more well-known regions. Around 34 euros.



A Spanish origin for a classic dessert?

Pavlova. The legendary white meringue with cream and fruit has pride of place on dinner tables and could have roots in several countries

ALEKK M. SAANDERS

When looking up the word 'Pavlova' on the internet you come across pictures of a meringue dessert decorated with red fruits and berries. Unsurprisingly, many don't have a clue that Pavlova is actually the surname of the Russian prima ballerina of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries who settled in England. Nowadays it is mostly the dessert that immortalises Anna Pavlova's name, or rather surname.

Anna Pavlova was born in Saint Petersburg on 12 February 1881. It is thought that classical ballet did not come easily to the young girl, who was taunted by her fellow students with the nickname 'the broom.' However, during her final year at the Imperial Ballet School,

she performed many roles with the principal company and her performance drew praise from the critics.

Ballets Russes

By 1908 Anna Pavlova had begun to tour abroad. Pavlova worked briefly for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes that used to come to Spain, and later formed her own company. It is believed that members of her troupe were largely English girls with Russianised names.

Eventually England became her home. In 1912, Anna Pavlova bought Ivy House in north London, where she lived until her death in 1931.

Together with her husband, the ballerina maintained a studio in her house to teach ballet arts to English children. Moreo-



Pavlova is an elaborate dessert made with meringue, fruit and fresh cream. SUR

ver, like most Londoners, Pavlova was passionate about gardening. In her garden she planted exotic flowers, but they often died in the London climate. She loved flowers and one of them now bears her name.

English rose-breeder Peter Beales named his hybrid pale pink tea rose Anna Pavlova. However, it is the meringue dessert that has come to immortalise Anna Pavlova's name.

Anna Pavlova was the first bal-

lerina to tour with a ballet company around the entire world. The dessert is believed to have been created in honour of Pavlova either during or after one of her tours to Australia and New Zealand in the 1920s.

Known also as 'the pav', this popular dish with its simple recipe, has become an important part of the national cuisine of both Australia and New Zealand, and both countries claim to have invented the dessert.

Despite that, it possibly might have originated from Europe in the 18th century.

A large meringue construction, covered with whipped cream and decorated with nuts and fruits, was made in aristocratic kitchens across German-speaking lands more than two centuries ago.

The Spanish connection

During the Baroque period, there was allegedly a great demand for the Spanische Windtorte dessert in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

This 18th-century Austrian dessert was particularly fragile because it consisted of rings of baked meringue filled with cream and fruit. Therefore, the piping of the meringue, the baking process and subsequent construction of the dish required patience and careful attention to detail.

The Spanish reference apparently came about due to the Austrian House of Habsburg and their fascination with all things Spanish. It may also be part of a more distant time when Catholic pilgrims followed the Camino de Santiago through Spain.

There is apparently only one place on the Costa del Sol, located in the very centre of Malaga, where pastry chef José Antonio Subires creates Pavlova in his patisserie all year round.

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Malaga finally bag an away win

The Blue and Whites defeated Alcorcón by one goal to nil on Monday in a hard-fought game, with promotion now back within their sights

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. Malaga started their year with a hard-fought win over bottom-placed Alcorcón on Monday evening.

Head coach Jose Alberto stuck to 4-4-2 formation, with Ramón, Chavarria and Ismael Casas coming into the starting XI, as several players had tested positive over the Christmas break.

The game started off fairly even in possession, as both teams approached their attacks with caution. But the visitors soon took over the reins of the game after ten minutes, although not really being able to create many chances.

Alcorcón did their best to thwart Malaga's progress, squeezing their players through the middle and forcing the Andalusians to look for space down the flanks.

Malaga improved towards the end of the opening 45 minutes, and even had a good chance to open the scoring if it were not for a bad final pass into the box.



Malaga players celebrate Paulino's goal which one them the match in Alcorcón. AGENCIA LOF

But the Blue and Whites seemed sluggish, as if the Christmas break was still in the back of their minds, and half-time couldn't come quickly enough.

José Alberto made no substitutions at the break, clearly happy enough with how his players had performed.

Alcorcón started the second half much stronger, noticing that the game was very much open and could still be won; and the hosts took control of the game for the first 15 minutes, but still

Malaga sign Vadillo after Fifa ban is lifted

The club wasted no time when Fifa lifted its ban on signing after an agreement was reached to pay a debt to former goalkeeper Cenk Gonen. Their first winter arrival, winger Alvaro Vadillo on loan from Espanyol, was announced on Wednesday.

with very few chances to show for it.

Malaga subbed Kevin and Ismael on into the game with half an hour to go, in the hope the wide players could inject some much-needed energy into the team.

Malaga did slowly come back into the match, but both teams were still locking horns, unable to break the deadlock.

And then, with ten minutes to go, Paulino scored from a corner. The Malaga player took advan-

SECOND DIVISION

Results Matchday 22

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

Table

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GC	PT
1. Almería	21	14	3	4	37	14	45
2. Eibar	22	12	6	4	34	26	42
3. Valladolid	22	12	4	6	34	24	40
4. Tenerife	22	11	5	6	28	17	38
5. Ponferradina	22	10	7	5	28	20	37
6. Girona	22	10	4	8	30	25	34
7. Las Palmas	22	9	7	6	29	26	34
8. Cartagena	22	10	3	9	28	28	33
9. Oviedo	22	7	11	4	25	19	32
10. Málaga	22	8	6	8	21	28	30
11. Burgos	22	8	5	9	23	23	29
12. Sporting	22	7	7	8	22	25	28
13. Ibiza	22	6	10	6	21	24	28
14. Huesca	22	6	9	7	22	21	27
15. Mirandés	22	7	5	10	30	34	26
16. Zaragoza	22	5	11	6	17	23	26
17. Leganés	22	6	7	9	24	25	25
18. Lugo	21	4	12	5	25	25	24
19. Amorebieta	22	3	11	8	26	33	20
20. Fuenlabrada	22	3	11	8	16	24	20
21. R. Sociedad B	22	4	5	13	18	30	17
22. Alcorcón	22	2	5	15	16	40	11

tage of the first Alcorcón defensive error of the night, heading the ball in from close range after it came off a home player.

Malaga hung on until the end of the game, maintaining their one-goal lead, to pick up a much-needed, first away win of the season and kick start 2022.

The Blue and Whites now face Sporting Gijón on Sunday, as they return to La Rosaleda for the first time this year in their quest to keep their promotion hopes alive.



The bizarre story of a crisis-ridden club

FC Barcelona have enough twists and turns to last a decade of chronicling the club

Just when followers of FC Barcelona thought they'd experienced it all in 2021, 2022 stepped forward and said: 'hold my cerveza'.

The bizarre story of a crisis-ridden first half of the season spilled over into the back straight as the club unveiled Ferran Torres. "Barcelona are back," proclaimed Joan Laporta, just hours before the Barcelona president and the new €55-million signing were sent into isolation after testing positive for Covid.

Another twist to the story was the admission that the club couldn't yet register the former Manchester City man as

they would exceed the salary cap.

Xavi let the complication of the situation slip: "Let's see how the salary cap situation is. There'll have to be some players leaving. If we get (Ousmane) Dembele to re-sign and lower his pay, it would allow us to get Torres in."

Good luck with that! Dembele is currently negotiating what happens when his contract runs out in the summer. He'll be expecting a rise rather than a wage cut.

Of course, several senior players did take a cut at the start of the season when the club needed financial wiggle

room to make way for Sergio Agüero. Alas, the unfortunate Argentinian only wore the shirt five times before enforced retirement.

There's been enough twists and turns to last a decade of chronicling the club. Remember the Lionel Messi saga ran throughout the summer and Antoine Griezmann started the season before he was loaned to Atlético Madrid.

Already this season, 42 players have been handed a matchday shirt in La Liga and the Champions League. Xavi - and Ronald Koeman before him - have needed to dig into the reserve and youth team to reach

a full complement of players.

The upside in a very downbeat season is the emergence of the young talent as the obstacles have been removed to reach the first team. Gavi emerged in September and the 17-year-old was soon given a Spain national team call. Nico González is still officially a B team player yet looks like the long-term successor to Sergio Busquets for both club and country.

In fact, the Spain national team for years to come could be drawn from this current Barça squad. Gavi, Pedri, Ferran Torres, Eric García, Ansu Fati are already established in-

ternationals.

Ferran Jutglà, Ilias Akhomach, Estanis Pedrola and Álvaro Sanz have all hit the ground running, most of them running very fast.

The enthusiasm seems to have inspired the senior players. Goalkeeper Marc-Andre Ter Stegen put in his best performance of the season in Mallorca, Gerard Piqué seems to have rediscovered his authority, and Sergio Busquets has missed just a single game this season.

One player who won't be seen for a number of weeks is the exciting Austrian teenager Yusuf Demir. There's a clause in his contract that triggers an extra payment when he makes 10 appearances on loan from Rapid Vienna.

The clubs are negotiating and, until then, he's one of many unavailable to Xavi.

Once it was the coach who made the biggest decisions at the Camp Nou, now everything is run past the club accountant before a team sheet is handed in.





◀ Keanu Merten and Rafa Montero with their boards on the beach in Estepona. **SUR**

The future of world kitesurfing is from Estepona

Kitesurfing. Keanu Merten and Rafa Montero have become Spain's rising stars in this sport after their recent victories in the first Junior World Cup

JOSÉ MARÍA MARTÍN

The future of Spanish kitesurfing is more than assured, as was made clear when the Junior World Cup came to an end in Tarifa a few weeks ago. This town in Cadiz province witnessed five victories by competitors from Spain in the nine possible categories, highlighting the excellent work which is being done with young kitesurfers. Among the new champions were 16-year-old Keanu Merten and Rafa Montero, 14, who are both from Estepona and won the under-17 and under-16 categories respectively.

For some time, both have been making a name for themselves

among the best riders in the country and also at European level. In fact Keanu Merten, who was born in Germany and has been living on the Costa del Sol since he was a child, has just been proclaimed champion of the Spain Kiteboarding League in junior and senior category 2021. He achieved this in June, when he was 15, in a competition which took place in video format and not in person, the first of this type to have been organised since the lockdown.

"It has been a brilliant year," says Keanu. He currently competes in Strapless, one of the different forms of kitesurfing in which a surfboard with no straps

for the feet is used. The waves are used to jump and perform tricks in the air, no matter how difficult they may seem. These were the tricks which this young man demonstrated during the latest world championship in Tarifa.

"I wasn't sure I could win because a lot of good people were competing. I was nervous, but in the end we were very happy," he says. In the final he beat Noah Nicolas, who is also from Spain, to become world champion.

Ambition is another sign of identity of this young sportsman who is already dreaming of making a name for himself among older competitors.

► The riders from Estepona pose with their trophies after winning the junior world championship in Tarifa. **SUR**



► Rafa Montero, wearing a Malaga shirt, performing one of his tricks during a training session. **SUR**



"My aim is to do the full international circuit and be in the top three. I think it will be possible, with time," he says.

The Junior World Championship also crowned another athlete from Estepona, Rafa Montero, in a category in which he had to compete with rivals up to two years older than him.

"We had to go to another country for one of the trials, where the conditions were different, and I found that hard. I wasn't expecting to win, the standard was very high and I didn't know most of the riders, so that put me under pressure," says Montero, who recalls that he didn't know how to react when he realised he had won. "You don't know what to do. I felt really strange and very nervous, but very happy at the same time," he explains.

Rafa competes in Freestyle, a very technical format in which the main objective is to perform jumps while disengaged from the harness which connects the rider from the kiteboard, permitting them to perform as many tricks as possible. His display in the final, in which the spectators got out of their seats to watch in amazement, was more than enough to win him the world title. It was a trophy which put the perfect finishing touch to a year to remember, in which he also won the Spanish junior championship.

Nor is he immune to the ambition which characterises the other young competitors. "I would like to win the world championship every year and then go on to do the same in the senior category," he says.

Family and school

Despite their calling to be the best at their sport in the future, these two riders from Malaga province have their feet on the ground, at least during the time they are not kitesurfing. Both are keeping up to date with their studies, although they admit that, at times, their schoolwork does not allow them to train as much as they like. They usually spend four or five hours a day after school, as long as there is enough wind.

Behind their success, as well as their training, lies the support from their sponsors, the CD Kitesurfing de Estepona, which has seen them grow, and the efforts of their families. Their fathers, Eric Merten and Rafael Montero, have not only transmitted their love of this sport to their children, but have also become their main advisers.

Both families have plenty of reason to dream of flying high now, and not only on the water.

QUOTES

Keanu Merten
Under-17 world champion

"It has been a brilliant year. I wasn't sure I could win because a lot of good people were competing"

Rafa Montero
Under-16 world champion

"I'd like to win the junior championship every year and then do the same in the senior category"

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Aries
March 21st - April 20th
The angle between Mars your ruler and Neptune can cause energy and confidence to dip. Simplify, and set your priorities.

Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
How do you really feel about someone? This week's nebulous planetary picture could muddy the waters, making it hard to decide. However, you'll know without a doubt what you want.

Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Unexpected issues could upset your plans, or you might miss an opportunity. You may be dreaming big dreams, but lacking the motivation to put them into action.

Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
You might strike gold if you allow yourself to be guided by your intuition. Take extra care with business and financial matters though.

Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
You'll be in full creative mode, and with your imagination knowing no bounds, anything seems possible. However, give your plans a reality check. Then you'll be under no illusions about anything.

Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
It's just as well to complete key tasks early, as things may go wrong when you don't want or need them to. Sensitive energies mean you'll be open to vibes.

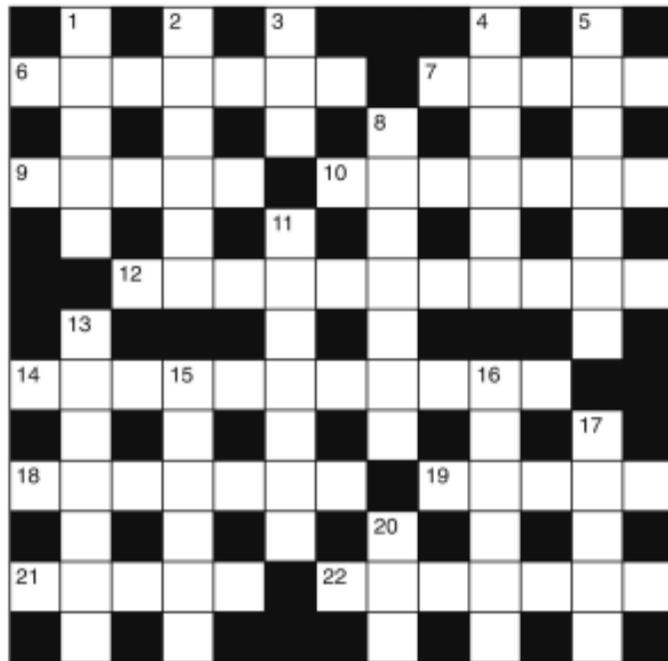
Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Mercury goes retrograde, so there may be misunderstandings or mixed messages. Yet as the Sun moves to align with potent Pluto, something can shift by the week's end.

Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
You could be drawn to splurge on anything that promises to brighten your day, provides entertainment, or makes a difference to your life. A pause for thought might save you money.

Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
With Mars in your sign angling towards Neptune, it's best to go with the flow than waste energy. Be vigilant when committing to anything, as something might not be as it seems

Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
Trying to get a grasp of a situation may be more difficult than it should be. It may be wise to postpone any decisions until you have a clear grasp of things.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11495



Across

- 6 To escape – nonsense! (3,4)
- 7 One who reaches his highest point at work (5)
- 9 Once a sort of boat (5)
- 10 Graduate in rather costly pre-eminent position (7)
- 12 Church leader's at home with serious transgression (8,3)
- 14 Worker finds help among fellows' female servants (11)
- 18 Close agreement, it would seem (7)
- 19 Religious leader finds sailor with a missing boat (5)
- 21 Display of temper on stage? (5)
- 22 Verdict justifying the search? (7)

Down

- 1 Hold up the Spanish within 24 hours (5)
- 2 Father takes a canine up to the temple (6)
- 3 Fighting rising, though inexperienced (3)
- 4 Miserable maids lost by lake (6)
- 5 Cult's leader at one time taking it to mean bigheadedness (7)
- 8 A garden laid out in the West Indies (7)
- 11 Make progress through a loan (7)
- 13 Army officer picks up account in Spanish island (7)
- 15 Girl had pen broken (6)
- 16 Only the head of a nonentity? (6)
- 17 Certain to be tied up (5)
- 20 Is it a blow when it's a great success? (3)

SUDOKU BY HANZO

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

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

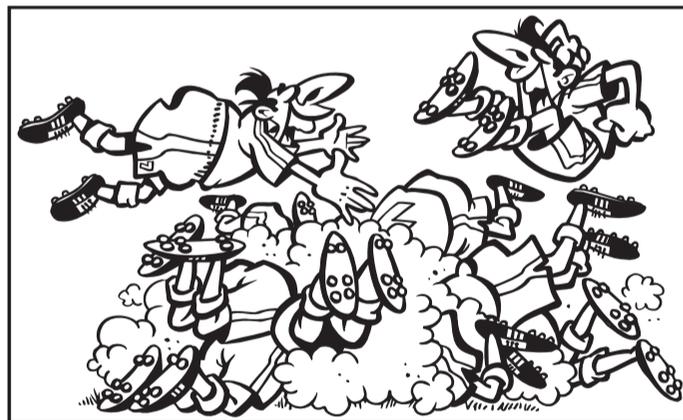
THE WORDPUZZLER

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

Can you identify the words missing from the titles of the Frank Sinatra films listed below?

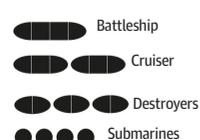
- 1. --- Came Running
- 2. --- at Heart
- 3. --- and the Seven Hoods
- 4. None but the ---
- 5. Tony ---
- 6. --- and Dolls
- 7. Pal ---
- 8. The --- Deadly Sin
- 9. Come Blow Your ---
- 10. From --- to Eternity

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



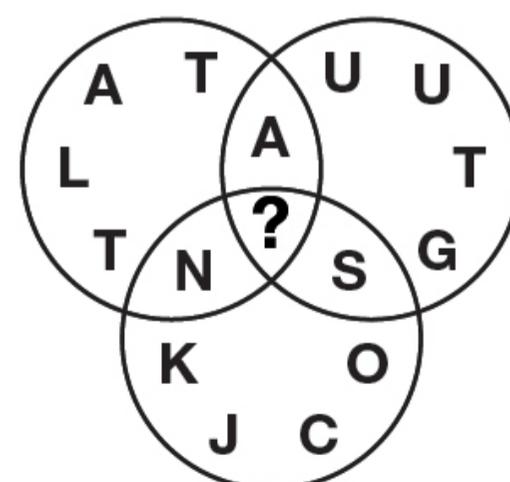
BATTLESHIPS

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.



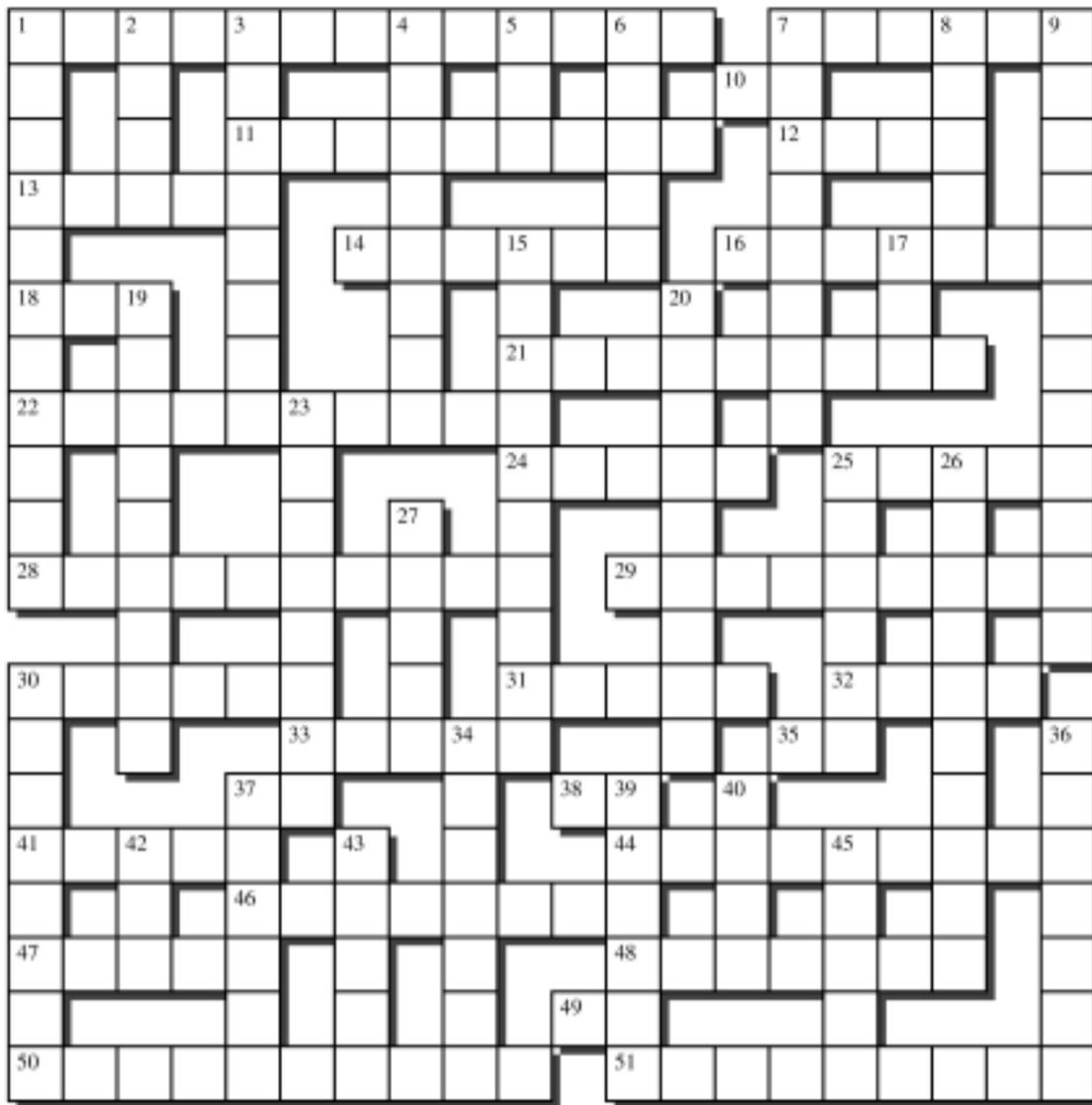
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A											3
B											2
C											2
D		●				■					2
E											1
F										■	1
G			●								4
H								●			1
I											1
J											3
	1	2	3	1	0	5	2	1	2	3	

CIRCLEGRAM



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

LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD



Across

- 1) Controllers (13)
- 7) Flights (6)
- 10) If (2)
- 11) Engineer (m) (9)
- 12) Nape (4)
- 13) Notebooks (5)
- 14) Cockpit (6)
- 16) Toy (7)
- 18) Be (subj.) (3)
- 21) They bought (9)
- 22) To interfere (10)
- 24) They (5)
- 25) He flies (5)
- 28) Student (10)
- 29) Hijacking (9)
- 30) Touch (screen) (6)
- 31) Ceiling (5)
- 32) Three (4)
- 33) Stage (5)
- 35) I (2)
- 37) Ace (2)
- 38) The (f) (2)
- 41) Fees (5)
- 44) Passengers (9)
- 46) Guest (f) (8)
- 47) You win (5)
- 48) Manager (7)
- 49) He gives (2)
- 50) To fly over (10)
- 51) Tyre (9)

Down

- 1) Fuel (11)
- 2) Nest (4)
- 3) Nightingale (8)
- 4) To threaten (8)
- 5) I smelled (3)
- 6) Inebriated (f) (5)
- 7) To link (8)
- 8) Key (5)
- 9) Hijacker (m) (12)
- 15) It increases (10)
- 17) I use (3)
- 19) Authentic (m) (9)
- 20) He makes the most of (9)
- 23) Fuses (8)
- 25) Wind (6)
- 26) To hand oneself in (10)
- 27) Wide (f) (5)
- 30) Witnesses (8)
- 34) Handgun (7)
- 36) Destination (7)
- 37) She attends (6)
- 39) They switch off (6)
- 40) To roast (4)
- 42) Without (3)
- 43) Warning (5)
- 45) Board (5)

QUIZ

Sipan is an island in the Adriatic Sea belonging to which country?

- 1. Italy 2. Croatia 3. Bosnia
- 4. Slovenia



Astana is the capital city of which country?

- 1. Moldova 2. Azerbaijan 3. Azkaban 4. Kazakhstan

Which river runs through Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic?

- 1. Elbe 2. Danube 3. Vlataba 4. Bobr

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ANSWERS

Quiz answers

Answer: Croatia
Sipan is one of the Croatian islands in Elafiti archipelago group, also known as 'Dubrovnik's islands', situated just off the coast of Dubrovnik.
Answer: Kazakhstan.
Of interest: Astana, now known as Nur-Sultan, became the capital in 1997. Formerly, the country's largest city, Almaty, was capital.

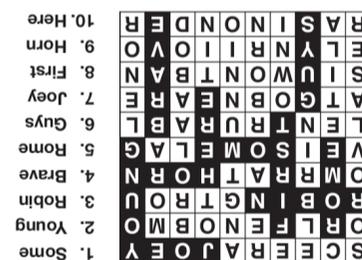
Circlegam

The letter represented by the question mark is A. Atlanta, Augusta, Jackson, all US state capitals.

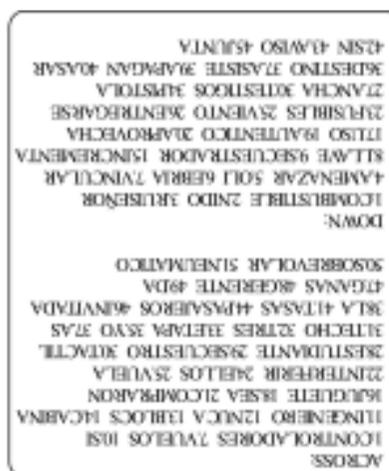
Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 6 Get away; 7 Pilot; 9 Canoe; 10 Primacy; 12 Cardinal; 14 Handmaidens; 16 Compact; 19 About; 21 Score; 22 Finding; Down: 1 Delay; 2 Pagoda; 3 Ray; 4 Dismal; 5 Concert; 8 Grenada; 11 Advance; 13 Malware; 15 Daphne; 16 Nobody; 17 Bound; 20 Hit.

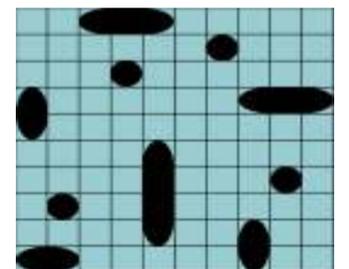
Wordpuzler solution



Language Crossword



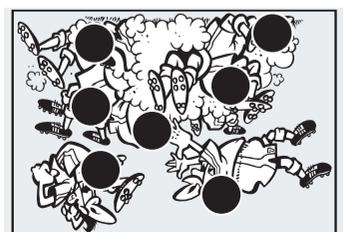
Battleships



Sudoku solution

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

The seven differences



Andalucía invests in a Roman emperor for city museum

Antoninus Pius. The Junta de Andalucía has paid 80,000 euros to ensure that the bust of the emperor linked to Roman Malaga stays in the region

IVÁN GELIBTER



Just over a month since the talks began, the Junta de Andalucía has acquired a bust of Antoninus Pius for display in the Museum of Malaga because of the emperor's close links with the city.

The purchase was announced this week by the president of the Junta de Andalucía Juanma Moreno, who said the regional government had paid 80,000 euros for it, which he considers a "very reasonable" investment.

Archaeologists and historians had raised the alarm when they spotted the bust for sale at Feriarte, the antiques fair in Madrid, in early December. For two years, it had formed part of the Ifergan Collection, in the gallery in Malaga's Calle Sebastian Souvirón, and only two months ago it was officially classified as a BIC (Item of Cultural Interest), which meant it could not be taken out of Spain.

It is an exceptional piece, as it is the only portrait of an emperor linked to Roman Malaga of which there is any record. It is also in a

good state of conservation. Sculpted in local marble in the 2nd century, it belongs to the High-Imperial period (138-161 AD), when Antoninus Pius took over the government.

Found near centre of Malaga

The bust was first found by chance in 1912 on the San Guillermo estate in the Huelin district, about three kilometres from the historic city centre. It first attracted attention in 1963, at the 8th National Archaeological Congress, which took place in Seville and Malaga, thanks to one of the great figures in Malaga archaeology, Simeón Giménez-Reyna.

Juanma Moreno stressed how valuable this piece of sculpture is to the history of Malaga and said he had been learning more about it in recent days. He also said that, for him personally, as he is a native of Malaga, the acquisition of the bust feels an "early present from the Three Kings".



The president of the Junta, Juanma Moreno, with the bust. **sur**

Forgotten, lost, stolen, recovered and sold: the story behind the bust of Antoninus Pius

I. G. / R. S.

MALAGA. The story of the bust of Antoninus Pius and its journey to the Museum of Malaga has had a happy ending, but it could have been a lot worse. The sculpture has suffered a series of adventures which make its acquisition even more important for the city.

The bust used to belong to the Bolins, a well-known local family, but in 2004 it was stolen while work was being carried out on their home. They reported the theft and an investi-

gation was carried out, but nothing more was ever found out about its possible whereabouts.

In what sounds like a scene from a film, the Bolins were watching a TV interview with Ricardo Arranz, the manager of the Villa Padierna Hotel near Marbella in 2010, after America's then First Lady, Michelle Obama, had stayed there on holiday. They were amazed to spot their bust of Antoninus Pius in the background of the shot.

They contacted the hotel and showed them the police report about the theft. The hotel had

bought the piece for 6,000 euros from an antique dealer in Seville and had all the documentation for it, but when Arranz found that it had been stolen, he returned it to its original owners. The Ifergan Collection bought it from them nine years later.

Despite all that has happened to it, the bust is in good condition. There are only eight images of Antoninus Pius in Spain whose origins can be confirmed, which is why the Junta de Andalucía feels it is so important that this one be protected and on display.

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