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NIÑO SALAS

Almond trees already in flower

The beautiful almond blossom has come early to the landscape of the province of Malaga this year - thanks to climate change. **P18**

INSIDE

Cercanías local train service picks back up on the Costa
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Spain puts expiry date on vaccine certificates for international arrivals

Passengers will have to show proof of a booster jab if the full course of a vaccine was completed over 270 days ago

From 1 February Spain will bring in new Covid-19 vaccination certificate rules, following EU guidelines, for travellers entering the country. Passengers' vaccination certificates will only be valid between 14 and 270 days after the final dose of a full course of a vaccine. If more than 270 days have passed the certificate must show

that a booster jab has been administered more recently. The change, which could affect some families planning to travel from the UK to Spain for the half-term holiday, comes as the Britain relaxes travel requirements. From 11 February the compulsory day-2 lateral flow test will be scrapped for vaccinated passengers arriving in the UK. **P6**

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Malaga city's first skyscrapers climb high

The Malaga of the tower blocks, the skyscrapers included in the Urban Plan a decade ago, is starting to materialise. The buildings which will change the city skyline forever, are heading towards the clouds without many local people realising just how high they are going to be. One of the two which the developer AQ Acentor is building on the site of the old Sunday market in Martiricos will be 20 metres higher than the tower of the cathedral. This company, which belongs to the German Aquila Capital fund, is behind the two projects which are currently at the most advanced stage. With a total investment of 255 million euros, these are now starting to make their mark on the landscape.

These two skyscrapers, located just north of the city centre, will have 29 floors above the ground floor. The one to the south will have commercial premises at street level and 252 apartments for sale, and the other will have a 315-room hotel from the 1st to 13th floors and 198 rental apartments from there to the 29th. Those on the top floor will be 111.53 metres above the ground.

How is a skyscraper built? More than 130 workers from the Avintia company are employed on the project in Martiricos, which has been named AQ Urban Sky. Iván Gómez, who is in charge of the works, says the secret behind these two enormous constructions is a type of 'self-climbing' formwork system: based on a vertical column, it rises by itself, driven by hydraulic and mechanical systems. "This makes it possible to lift large amounts of materials without needing a crane," he explained.

The structures for the different floors are anchored to this type of self-rising central core, so the column is always ahead of the floors. The workers are protected by black panels. "We bring the concrete through the central column via pipes and when the work is finished that will be where the lifts and the stairs are," said Gómez. It is the first time the type of system they are using in the north tower has been used in Spain. "We can't use it for the south tower, because its floor plan is Y-shaped, but the north tower is in the shape of a T, so it's possible there," say sources at AQ Acentor.

This construction method permits faster progress, rising by one floor every two weeks, and it makes the buildings extra rigid to protect against earthquakes. However, the two skyscrapers in Martiricos are also designed to withstand the strongest of winds. For this, models were made, a metre and a half high and equipped with 200 to 300 sensors, and were tested in a wind

tunnel. This showed the points at which the structure needed to be the most rigid so the wind did not pull it outwards.

In addition, with this method of working, the work on the lower floors can be completed while the self-climbing platform continues to be used for the higher ones. This

is why panels have already begun to be fitted to the outside of the lower floors of the south tower.

Schedule

The aim of AQ Acentor is to have the structure of both skyscrapers finished by the final quarter of this year, and for the apartments in the

south tower ready for occupation in the second half of 2023.

"About 60 per cent of the apartments have already been reserved," said Gómez, although no price has yet been set for the penthouses. "That's something we're still considering. With the pandemic it is difficult to get right, but they will

be on sale at the end of the year," he said.

For the moment, the most expensive apartment is on the 25th floor and has four bedrooms, a garage and storeroom, and costs over 600,000 euros. The two skyscrapers are being built over a two-storey car park with room

Urban planning. The skyline of the city is already undergoing a radical change with tower blocks over 20 storeys high in the Martiricos and La Princesa areas

JESÚS HINOJOSA



▲ **Martiricos.** With 29 floors above ground level, the AQ Urban Sky towers will be over 100 metres high.

MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



◀ **Central column.** The skyscraper in Martiricos is being built with a self-climbing formwork system which is driven by hydraulic and mechanical means. This is the first time this system has ever been used in Spain.

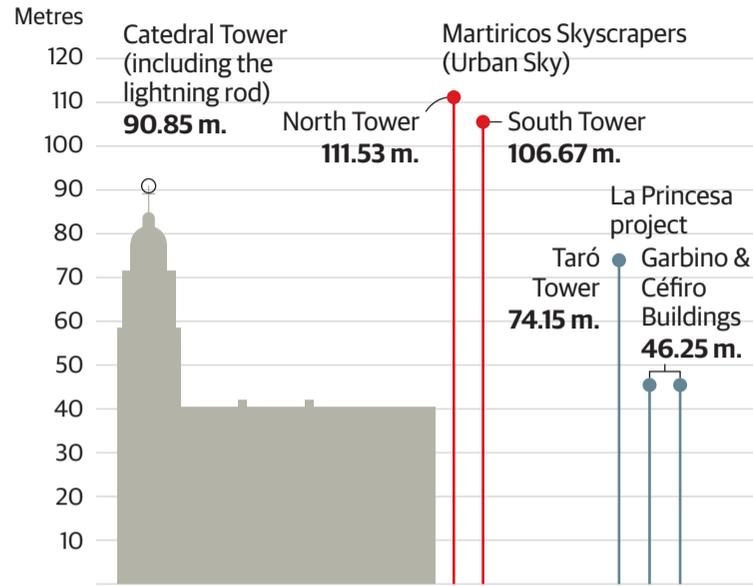
SUR



▶▶ **La Princesa.**
 The tallest block in the AQ Jacarena project, 74m high. **M. FERNÁNDEZ**



New highs on the skyline



for 535 vehicles.

Top international hotel chains have already expressed an interest in running the hotel in the north tower, and AQ Acentor is also planning to appoint a specialist firm to handle the rental properties.

However, it is in the AQ Jacarena project which the same fund is building in La Princesa, a district just west of the city centre, that renting takes on a more prominent role. In this case there are three buildings above four basement garages with room for 450 vehicles. They will have 349 apartments for long-term rent and those will start to be marketed this year. Two of the buildings will be 14 storeys high (46.25 metres) and the other will have 23 floors (74.15 metres). The most southerly block will house 110 apartments and will be finished by the end of this year, and the other two by the middle of next year and with 90 and 140 apartments respectively.

The skyline of the Cruz del Humilladero and Carretera de Cadiz areas will also be changed by the 23-story tower, which is being built by a more conventional system. "We're building the struc-

255

million euros are being invested by AQ Acentor for the skyscrapers the firm is building in Malaga.

799

apartments will be available in the blocks in Martiricos and Santa Rufina, of which 547 will be for long-term rent.

ture of the three blocks at the same time so we can finish them together, and the outsides will look similar, with white and grey finishes," said Elena Castro, who is managing this project which is costing more than 85 million euros in total.

And there are more to come. AQ Jacarena is a forerunner for Malaga's biggest skyscraper project yet, on the nearby Repsol land beside Avenida Juan XXIII, where there are plans for four buildings with 28, 30, 32 and 34 floors respectively.

Properties on sale for more than 3m euros in towers being built near western beach

J. HINOJOSA

MALAGA. As well as the projects in the Martiricos and La Princesa areas of Malaga, three other 20-storey tower blocks are also being built in the Torre del Río area, which is on the city's western coast, between La Térmica and the Nereo warehouse area.

The Metrovacesa company is building the two blocks at the ends and Sierra Blanca Real Estate is building the one in the centre.

During the next few months these will start to emerge and be visible above the underground car parks, the structures for which are already in place.

Metrovacesa says that its first tower, where the works are currently being carried out at ground level, will be completed by the summer of 2023 and work on the second block is due to start sometime next year.

Likewise, Sierra Blanca Real Estate says it expects to have reached the second floor of its block by March and for it to be fully completed by May of next year.

The two developers have designed these as luxury projects, and are offering apartments for sale for more than three million euros, although the penthouses could well be twice as expensive as that.

Sierra Blanca says it has already sold one apartment for 3.2 million euros. It has been purchased by a Dutch businessman.

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Renfe hires more train drivers and pledges to improve local services along the Costa

Last November, 32 daily services were cancelled between Malaga and Fuengirola but 14 will be reinstated from 1st February

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Four new drivers hired by the Spanish rail operator Renfe should allow commuters to see the Cercanías local rail service in Malaga province return to almost normal.

Cuts in November impacted the frequencies of trains, particularly on the busy Costa del Sol C1 line from Malaga to Fuengirola via the airport.

From 1 February it is expected that 14 services out of the 32 daily journeys on the C1 that were cancelled will resume normal operation, with a roughly 20-minute wait between each train, as opposed to the 40-minute wait commuters have recently endured.

"From 1 February, seven services have been incorporated in each direction on the C1 line and with this 85 per cent of services will be restored," said Javier Salas, central government representative in Malaga.

In a recent interview with SUR, José Ángel Ferrero, head of Renfe in Andalucía, said hiring new drivers and staff was essential.

The Cercanías service in Malaga lost a total of 34 trains per



There has been overcrowding at peak times since services were reduced in November last year. **ÑITO SALAS**

day in November 2021 and could only operate at 75 per cent of its usual timetable.

Faced with the impossibility of speeding up the training processes for the train drivers that would be necessary to maintain the 136 daily trains on the C-1 and C-2 lines in Malaga, Renfe chose to cancel 32 departures between Malaga and Fuengirola, 16 in each direction, and two on the Alora line, one in each direction.

Currently, 76 trains run on

Malaga has the least amount of Cercanías local train line for any major built-up area of Spain and services are the fullest

the C1 line and 26 on the C-2. Over the Christmas and New Year period many users complained that trains were overly full during peak periods meaning passengers couldn't comply

with social distancing measures.

Malaga has the shortest length of Cercanías local train line for any major built-up area in Spain, but the service is known for being the fullest and most profitable for Renfe.

Asturias, for example, has 369 kilometres of track, despite a population of one million, whereas Malaga province has only 69 kilometres for its 1.6 million people plus tourists. Valencia has 323km and Seville 198 km.

Experts warn province could face one of the driest years on record

November, December and January - usually the wettest months of the year locally - have been worryingly dry in Malaga and the Costa del Sol

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Unless spring turns out to be unusually wet, Malaga province is poised to endure one of the driest years on record and a tough summer.

The hydrological year begins in September and, statistically, November and December are the wettest months in Malaga province. According to national weather agency Aemet, from 1981 to 2010 the average amount of rain for November

and December was 100 litres per square metre. January averages 69 litres, February 60 litres and October 57 litres per square metre.

The director of Aemet in Malaga, José María Sánchez-Laulhé, said that the pattern of local rainfall is changing. "The rains from autumn to the last part of winter and early spring are displaced. It wasn't like that before." But the province may yet see downpours in February and March, he added.

In the last 30 years, the amount of rain falling in November has decreased. Between 1991-2020 it averaged 76 litres per square metre. The amount of rain falling in December remains steady but rainfall in March has increased to 65 litres



The large La Viñuela reservoir, in Axarquía, is only 16% full. **ÑITO SALAS**

per square metre.

Overall, Malaga province is getting less rain per year. The yearly historical average was 534 litres per square metre but now it is just 511 litres. Experts are unsure if this is a fluctuation or a new pattern emerging.

The impact on Andalucía's water reserves is however noticeable. La Viñuela reservoir is at just 16 per cent of its capacity. At the other end of the Malaga coastline, La Concepción, which supplies the western Costa del Sol, is at 41.4 per cent capacity.

IN BRIEF



Sardón and Salado. **SUR**

COSTA DEL SOL

Accessible destination award for Costa tourism

J. ALMELLONES. A top national body supporting people with disabilities - Predif- has given the Costa del Sol tourism board an award for work being carried out to make the area a 'smart destination'.

The award was presented to Francisco Salado, head of the Malaga provincial authority by Predif president, Francisco Sardón. "At Turismo Costa del Sol we are aware of the need to continue working to increase accessibility," said Salado.

MALAGA

Cruising trade fair to be held in September

P. MARTÍNEZ. Malaga will host the Seatrade Cruise Med event on 14 and 15 September. It will be the largest industry event of its kind in Europe this year.

The event will reinforce the port and Malaga city as a premier cruise destination, officials said. The announcement was made at the Fitur tourism fair in Madrid by the President of Puertos del Estado, Álvaro Rodríguez; director of Seatrade Cruise, Chiara Giorgi; and President of Medcruise, Figen Ayan.

MALAGA

Spain formally hands in bid for Expo 2027

J. HINOJOSA. The national government has formally presented Malaga as Spain's candidate city to host Expo 2027. A commission has been set up to oversee details of the bid for the event which would run in the summer of 2027. The US, Thailand, Argentina and Serbia are also submitting bids.

Malaga's theme for the expo is The Urban Era - towards the sustainable city. The Paris-based body that chooses venues should decide by late this year.



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Passengers coming into Malaga Airport will face Spain's updated Covid vaccination travel rules. S. SALAS (FILE PHOTO)

Spain introduces new Covid-19 vaccination certificate rules for international arrivals

Following revised EU rules, from 1 February, proof must be shown of a booster if the last vaccine was over 270 days ago

SUR

MALAGA. From next Tuesday, 1 February, Spain will tighten coronavirus vaccination certificate requirements for international tourist arrivals at its airports and ports, in line with EU guidelines.

In order to travel to Spain with a vaccination certificate, the document will be accepted as valid 14 days after the date of the last dose of the full course of vaccination, as long as no more than 270 days have elapsed since the date of administration of the last dose.

If more than 270 days have passed, the certificate must show the administration of a later booster vaccination with authorised jabs.

The British Embassy in Spain has warned people travelling from the UK to Spain to be aware of the

change.

Children under the age of 12 years old do not need to show proof of being fully vaccinated on entry to Spain and fully vaccinated children aged 12 to 15 can request an NHS Covid Pass letter for international travel, the UK government has said.

However families heading from the UK for upcoming school holidays could be caught out if they have children aged 12 to 15 who still have not had their complete doses.

UK decision to axe compulsory day 2 tests helps Spanish tourism

SUR

MALAGA. The UK government confirmed this week that the compulsory day-2 lateral flow test for Covid-19 that a vaccinated traveller needs to take after arrival in England will be scrapped from 4am on 11 February, just ahead of school half-term holidays. The same will also apply to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Tour operators from the UK and airlines have reported a surge in enquiries and the tourism industry on the Costa del Sol has said it is encouraged by the move. Rules for non vaccinated travellers to the UK remain unchanged.

UK authorities have also reminded people that everyone travelling, including children, should complete the Spanish government's health form and that Spain does not accept the UK's Covid recovery certificates.

Diagnostic tests (PCRs or lateral flows) are only accepted for travellers from the UK if the reason for travel to Spain falls into one of the categories listed by the Spanish government as essential, which includes Spanish-registered residents, EU citizens or people travelling with EU family members.

Spain travel: www.sanidad.gob.es/en/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov/spth.htm

UK to Spain: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/spain/entry-requirements



Darias on Wednesday. EP

SPAIN

Minister of Health rules out scrapping masks outdoors and reducing quarantines for now

SUR. Spain's Minister of Health, Carolina Darias, has ruled out - for the moment - a reduction in the minimum quarantine period that Covid-19 infected individuals must keep, currently set at seven days.

Shortening this period "is a proposal too soon," said the minister after a meeting of the Interterritorial Health Council, between her department and the regions on Wednesday. She revealed only one person had brought this idea to the table.

"We have to be aware of the moment in which we find ourselves. We will continue with the seven days of quarantine while the cumulative incidence rate is at high levels," said Darias.

Meanwhile, the Andalucía region is to ask the courts to permit the extension for a further two weeks of the obligation to show a Covid-19 certificate to access hospitality and healthcare establishments.



Protest in Malaga calls for more public healthcare

Local public healthcare campaigning group Marea Blanca was joined by 27 other groups in a march from the Plaza de la Constitución to the Andalusian government's local office in central Malaga last Saturday. The protest was to demand more staff and more funding from the region in order to put an end to what they said was the collapse of primary healthcare in Andalucía.

'One in five' who died Covid positive in Andalucía passed away due to another cause

ÁNGEL ESCALERA / SUR

MALAGA. Records of the Junta de Andalucía indicate that 2,136 people have lost their lives in Malaga province since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and 11,972 people have died in the Andalucía region. But have all the deaths been caused by coronavirus? Did those patients die from Covid or with the virus?

Sources suggest that up to 20 per cent of deaths were due to causes other than the virus al-

though the patients tested positive for Covid-19 at the time.

The Junta is now conducting a statistical study to differentiate between the two factors.

While numbers with Covid in hospitals in Andalucía continue to be high, the all-important figure of those in intensive care is low. There were 221 in intensive care in the region on Thursday. In early February last year that number had peaked at 735.

Local case numbers

The case rate per 100,000 residents in 14 days in Malaga province fell below 1000 to 995 on Thursday this week, the first time in a month it was so low.

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

UK names new Most Wanted fugitive thought to be in Marbella

Alex Male, aged 30, replaces Joshua Hendry who was arrested by police in San Pedro Alcántara last week

SUR IN ENGLISH

MARBELLA. The UK's National Crime Agency has added Alex Male, aged 29, to its Most Wanted list of a dozen fugitives on the run this week. Male is believed to be hiding out in Marbella. He is accused of money laundering and conspiring to acquire a firearm as part of his drug-dealing activity.

The new addition to the list comes after Spanish police arrested a 30-year-old British man on the Costa del Sol who is wanted for drug trafficking. He was spotted just hours after the United Kingdom and Spanish authorities launched a campaign appeal for the public's help. The arrested man is Joshua Hendry who was detained in San Pedro Alcántara when an off-duty police officer recognised him after seeing the NCA and CrimeStoppers footage from the campaign launch at the British Embassy in Madrid last week.

Hendry, formerly of Walton, Liverpool, was wanted by Humberside Police and he is alleged to have trafficked heroin and cocaine from Liverpool to Grimsby for onward distribution. Hendry has been taken into custody and will appear in court soon as part of extradition proceedings.

Tom Dowdall, NCA Deputy Director of International, said:



New appeal for Alex Male. NCA

"This is a rapid result and it's testimony to the power these appeals can have as well as the NCA's international reach.

"Whether it's using tip-offs from the public, sharing intelligence or deploying specialist capabilities, UK law enforcement and our Spanish partners are working as one to trace and arrest the other fugitives."

Authorities request that anyone with information relating to the remaining fugitives be channelled through CrimeStoppers, which has an anonymous and free telephone number in Spain - 900 926 111 - where calls can be answered in English or Spanish.

Traffic offences quadruple after speed limit changes

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

MARBELLA. A report into the town's Local Police unit operations in 2021 has revealed the number of road safety offences rose from 252 in 2020 to 1,157 in 2021, a four-fold increase.

Councillor for public safety, José Eduardo Díaz, presented the report together with chief of police, Javier Martín, who explained that the majority of the offences had come about due to "the lowering of speed limits."

The new speed limits came into force last May, with a reduction from 50 to 30 kilometres per hour on urban roads with only one lane in each direction, and it was from that date onwards that

the greatest increase in speeding offences was detected.

Although the number of traffic accidents rose from 1,534 to 1,946, there were no fatalities. However, there were 13 serious and 372 minor injuries.

Martín also highlighted that 20,764 fines were issued, 2,279 vehicles were taken off the road and 258 people were caught driving without a licence. Furthermore, 175 stolen vehicles, 187 which had been deregistered and 2,018 that did not have insurance, were also detected. The local police personnel is set to increase in Marbella this year with 11 officers having already joined and another 14 starting training.

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112 REPORTS

COSTA DEL SOL

Police seize 800 canisters of laughing gas

SUR. An operation led by officers from the Drug and Organised Crime Unit (UDYCO) in Fuengirola has busted a gang supplying nitrous oxide, known as laughing gas, to partygoers in Malaga province. Raids were made at an industrial warehouse on the La Ermita estate in Marbella, and another warehouse on the La Vega industrial estate in Mijas.

MIJAS

Missing man found shot dead in Chiclana

JC / AF. Malaga police are investigating after the body of a missing Mijas resident was found in Chiclana de la Frontera, in neighbouring Cadiz province. The victim, a middle-aged man, had been shot in the head and a few metres away his car was engulfed in flames. Officers are working on the theory it was a settling of scores killing.

ESTEPONA

Father faces murder investigation

JC / AF. The man who attacked the alleged stalker of his daughter in Estepona faces a murder investigation. He was released on bail because, initially, the police considered it a negligent homicide and that his intention was not to kill the victim. But the lawyer acting for the family of the deceased has said they can prove that the parent intended to kill the alleged stalker.

Estepona whale is buried in landfill site

The dead whale that washed up on the Rada beach in Estepona last week was finally removed to the Costa del Sol Environmental Complex landfill site in Casares on Tuesday.

The operation to remove the decomposing fin whale began when a crane was used to hoist the creature onto a special eight-wheel drive lorry. When the whale was buried in the landfill, it was covered with earth to prevent the strong smell of rotting from permeating the area.

The original plans to take the carcass out to sea had to be abandoned due to the difficult weather and sea conditions.



Troubled tow-truck firm 'wants to pay up' says town's mayor

Grufu SL has run up enormous debts which Fuengirola council has been forced to assume

IVÁN GELIBTER

FUENGIROLA. The council in Fuengirola has been forced to take on the debts of Grufu SL, the municipal car-towing company that owes 600,000 euros in unpaid social security payments. Or put another way, taxpayers in Fuengirola, who may have already paid steep fines to recover their impounded cars, may now have to pay Grufu's debts.

Grufu was contracted in 2006 as Fuengirola's vehicle towing, storage and immobilisation service. By 2017, it had racked up debts of 500,000 euros in unpaid social security payments. Fuengirola council was held jointly liable for the debt.

As the debts continued to mount, last year the council was declared solely liable for the debts and ordered to pay up. The mayor, Ana Mula, said this week that the company was "willing to pay", although she could not specify when.

It has also emerged that since 2017 Grufu also owes the council close to 100,000 in unpaid municipal taxes. However, Grufu will continue to manage the towing service until at least 2026 under the terms of the contract it signed in 2006. The council is now seeking to have that contract annulled.



One of the municipal tow-trucks. SUR

Proposal for a free bus pass gets the go-ahead

I. GELIBTER

FUENGIROLA. The town council of Fuengirola has approved in principle the creation of a free bus pass, the Tarjeta Municipal de Movilidad. The pass will allow free bus travel for residents of Fuengirola.

The Councillor for Mobility, Isabel González, presented the proposal for this new card which will cost three euros.

The proposal went ahead with votes in favour by all the political groups and the ab-

stention of IU.

Election commitment

"This is another step towards fulfilling the commitment we made to the people of Fuengirola in the last municipal elections, to make urban transport free. A firm commitment to improve mobility in our town, to make it more efficient, more sustainable with the environment and to encourage the use of public transport to the detriment of the private vehicle," explained the mayor.

Exclusive travel club opens an office on the Costa del Sol

PILAR MARTÍNEZ

MARBELLA. Thirdhome, a luxury property exchange service, has opened an office in Marbella. Its Spanish portfolio includes mansions that are, on average, worth

two million euros each.

Thirdhome is a travel club for owners of second homes who share a "mindset for luxury and exploration". Some 30 homes in the Marbella area are currently part of this exclusive club.



One of the luxury homes on the website. SUR

Wade Shealy, CEO of Thirdhome, said, "With the growing demand for luxury shared homes throughout the Europe, Middle East and Africa region (EMEA), the new Marbella office will serve as a base for both new members and existing partners, positioning ourselves, in turn, as the main private travel club in the world."

Colleague Ivo Haagen added, "While we are constantly expanding our extensive portfolio of luxury homes, our focus remains on quality and not on quantity. This is also reflected in the 2020 Conde Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards, which named Thirdhomes among the selected winners."

To be a partner or member of Thirdhome you have to meet a series of requirements, the main one being that the home is worth at least 450,000 euros. In addition, the properties must enjoy an exclusive interior design and have quality services. Before being admitted, each profile is carefully studied.

HERE AND THERE

MARBELLA

Parents keep pressure up for Las Chapas school

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS. Despite the announcement by the Andalusian government delegate, Patricia Navarro, that there is commitment to finishing Las Chapas school ready for the 2023-24 term, parents are still planning to go ahead with a protest today, 28 January, to keep the pressure up. The AMPA parents' association is sceptical the government can keep its word due to the tight time schedule to complete the works: 18 months that started on 7 January.

MARBELLA

Multi-organ donations up despite pandemic

J. DUEÑAS. The Costa del Sol hospital recorded a total of eight multi-organ donations in 2021, despite the pandemic. These donations made possible the extraction of ten kidneys, six livers and one heart, and the benefits for the recipients. In addition, twelve corneas and four osteotendinous tissues were also obtained.

Over the last 10 years, organ donations at this Marbella hospital have risen; from five in 2005 to 17 in 2017 and twelve in 2019.



The presentation of the DIL cheque to Afesol Salud Mental. SUR

COSTA DEL SOL

Suicide prevention walk raises 15,000 euros for local mental health charity

SUR IN ENGLISH. Organisers of the local branch of Darkness into Light, a global suicide and self-harm prevention and awareness campaign, have presented a cheque for 15,529 euros to their charity partner Afesol Salud Mental.

The funds were raised at last year's Darkness into Light (DIL) charity walk, in which more than 500 people took part.

Afesol is based in Benalmádena and has day centres in Marbella and San Pedro Alcántara, with another soon to open in Estepona.

"We are very proud to be associated with Afesol, who are doing exceptional work in the area of suicide prevention on the Costa del Sol," said DIL organiser Michael O'Halloran.

The Darkness into Light walk will take place this year on 7 May. Registration will be open from the end of February, said O'Halloran. Due to Covid, the walk will be done in smaller groups from various locations. "Last year we had 530 participants; let's make it a thousand this year," he added.

MIJAS

Forbes includes Mijas hotel in its list of Europe's most exciting openings in 2022

P. MARTÍNEZ. The luxurious La Zambra hotel in Mijas is the only Spanish property to be listed in Forbes magazine's top 10 list of exciting hotel openings in the world in 2022. The legendary Byblos has been closed since 2015 and its reopening as La Zambra, as part of The Unbound Collection by Hyatt, will create at least 200 new jobs.



La Zambra. SUR

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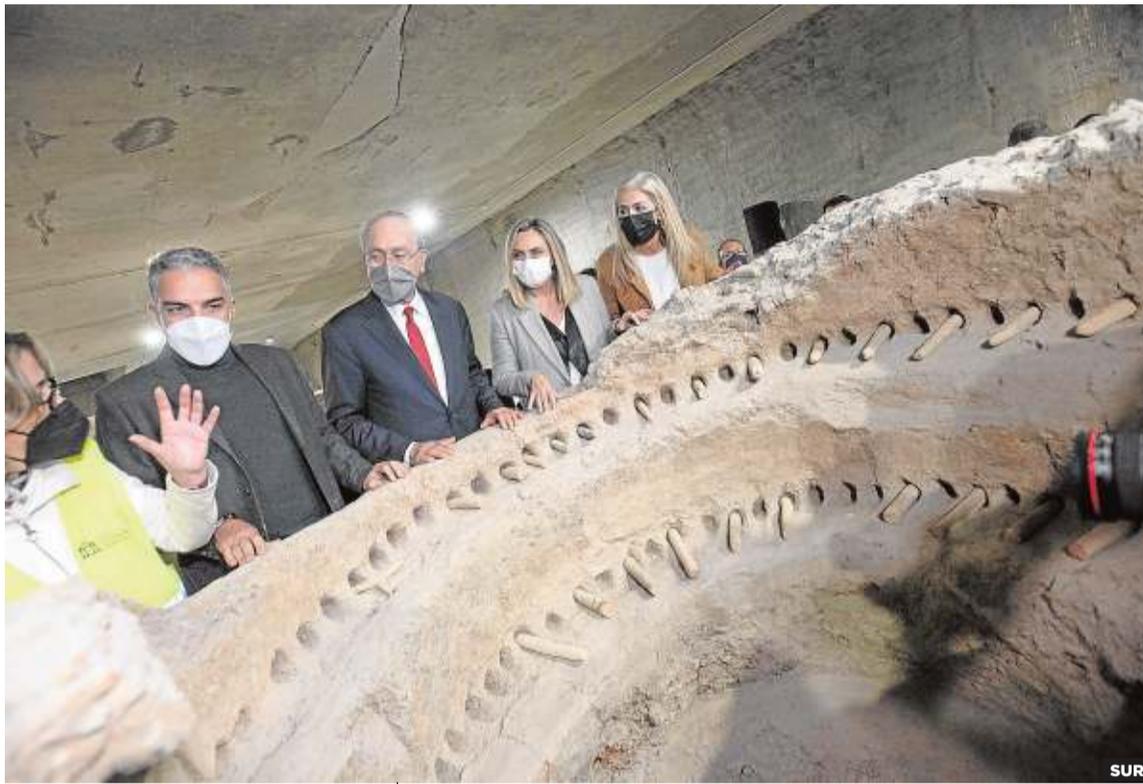


Carrefour Torremolinos
 C.C. Costasol Centro,
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Carrefour Valle del Guadalhorce
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HERE AND THERE



Archaeological remains on display in Metro station

Archaeological remains found near El Corté Inglés during the building of the metro, have been moved to the stop in Avenida de Andalucía that will connect the metro with the future station in the Alameda and the line that goes to the Palacio de Deportes. The tender has been put out for a visitors centre at the station which is expected to cost around 1.3 million euros.

Council fights sunken steamship owners over claim

Benalmádena Marina has been ordered to pay 300,000 euros to the Willow for the losses caused after the sinking

IVÁN GELIBTER

BENALMÁDENA. The historical steamship, the Willow, which has been half sunk in the marina since 2019, continues to be a headache for the port as the court partially upheld a claim by the owners, who demanded more than 13 million to cover losses.

The port management has announced that it will sue for proce-



The Willow steamship. ÑITO SALAS

dural fraud and false documentation as the owners of the ship, who owe about 90,000 for an outstanding debt with the port, are believed by the councillor in charge, Encar-

nación Cortés, to have used documents "without any legal validity".

The claim by the Willow's owners is based on an alleged rental contract with a third party worth millions of euros.

"This alleged contract was not produced during the lawsuit, only a document printed on a computer without any signature and, despite being called a lease contract, neither the payment of the deposit nor the payment of any amount to prove the actual existence of the contract was accredited," she argued. She also said, "We were not informed of its existence, and the person mentioned in the lease did not declare in court."

Although the port has been ordered to pay 300,000 euros, just 2% of the claim, it will be filing an appeal for dismissal of the lawsuit, stated the councillor.

MALAGA

Radical changes to the old N340 to turn it into an urban road

FRANCISCO JIMÉNEZ. The section of the old N-340 between the Azucarera bridge and the Churriana exit near Malaga Airport is going to undergo a profound transformation. This section will change to an urban road as an extension of Avenida Velázquez and will improve connectivity with industrial estates and commercial areas. There is no definitive project as yet but the first basic lines for its execution have been drawn up.



The road passing through the Villa Rosa industrial estate. ÑITO SALAS

BENALMÁDENA

Cudeca extends One in a Million campaign until end of February

TONY BRYANT. The Cudeca Foundation has announced that the Joan Hunt – One in a Million campaign has raised 225,000 euros since it began in October 2021. The hospice launched the initiative in association with Talk Radio Europe (TRE) to create and manage a paediatric palliative care unit, the first of its kind in Andalucía.

In an attempt to reach the target of one million euros, the cancer charity has said that the campaign will now continue until 28 February.

The new unit will include comprehensive care for children and adolescents and their families, who will be looked after by a team of expert doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, physiotherapists and music therapists. In addition to the in-patient unit, the money will support the training of a team of professionals to provide home care and day care for children suffering from a variety of life-limiting conditions.

Cudeca is appealing for donations and also for people to organise fundraising events to help reach the target. Donors who pledge more than 250 euros will have their name permanently displayed on a plaque in the new unit.

www.oneinamillion.es

MARBELLA

Triple A shelter to be renovated at a cost of 1.2 million euros

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS. The Triple A animal shelter in Marbella, which currently cares for around 500 animals - cats and dogs - will undergo a much-needed renovation costing 1.2 million euros and funded in part by Marbella town council.

The current facilities are "very old", said Clara Gómez, who has been volunteering with the charity for 15 years. "The fences are all rusty, the sanitation, the floors, everything is many years old and cannot even be cleaned properly."

Work is expected to take almost one year and in the meantime the animals will be moved to a specially adapted warehouse nearby. Over the course of the year, the charity may also need more volunteers to help the animals adapt to their changed surroundings.

Triple A is an officially registered, non-profit organisation, mostly run by volunteers dedicated to helping and caring for abandoned and abused animals, offering them dignified shelter while homes are sought for them. It was founded in 1992.

MALAGA

McArthurGlen retail outlet closes 2021 with over five million visitors

JUAN SOTO. The McArthurGlen Designer Outlet, the luxury brand centre located next to Plaza Mayor, has been growing steadily since it opened its doors. In 2021, the shopping centre received a total of 5.2 million visitors, an increase of 62% over the previous year.

Javier Mendizábal, head of the retail outlet said, "We have exceeded our most optimistic sales expectations, despite the global health and economic situation, which still continues to be very complicated."

McArthurGlen currently has 89 boutiques of prestigious brands and employs 630 staff.

MALAGA

Work on the old site of the Andalucía Cine is resumed

JESÚS HINOJOSA. After more than a year at a standstill, the work to build a hotel on the site of the Andalucía cinema, on Calle Victoria, has resumed. The project has been acquired by a group of investors, including a company owned by Barcelona football player Gerard Piqué. The previous company ran into difficulties which forced it to put the site up for sale.



Father Louis. SUR

MALAGA

Chaplain of St George's Church takes on bigger role in Spain

TONY BRYANT. Father Louis Durrant, the priest of St George's Church in Malaga, has recently been appointed area Dean of Southern Spain and Gibraltar, a role that will support the Bishop and Archdeacon of Gibraltar and all Anglican churches from Gibraltar to Almería. The new appointment will involve the interaction between the diocese and the local chaplaincies, offering support and encouragement to other priests, while also participating in the selection of new clergy.

Caminito del Rey visitor centre is finally set to open

ARDALES

After a four-year delay, the centre will open "in the coming weeks" featuring a large car park with space for around 200 cars and 17 coaches

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ

The Caminito del Rey visitor reception centre at one of Malaga province's most popular tourist attractions will open in a few weeks, some four years after its construction.

Sando Salzillo Integral Services and Mundo Management, who will operate the centre, will open it "in the coming weeks", according to Malaga Provincial Council who did not offer a firm date.

The building, located on the MA-5403 road at the access from Ardales, has a large car park with space for around 200 cars and 17 coaches. It has been idle since 2018 despite an investment of almost one million euros in it, including a new roundabout and



Archive photo of visitors reception centre. J. P.

lighting installed in 2019 at a cost of 150,000 euros.

Initially it was thought that the centre would be managed by Ardales town council. However, Sando Salzillo Integral Services and Mundo Management won a joint contract to manage it instead. The companies already had a contract for the maintenance of the building and they plan to increase the number of people employed at the facility.

It is hoped that the centre - and its car park - will reduce traffic around the tourist attraction.

Largely built of wood, the centre was designed by Luis Machuca, who also worked on the Caminito del Rey project.

It houses a customer service desk, a restaurant and outdoor terrace. It is powered by 144 solar panels and has two charging points for electric vehicles.

Teba begins general research project of the Castillo de la Estrella

The objective of the six-year project is to understand the historical evolution of the castle

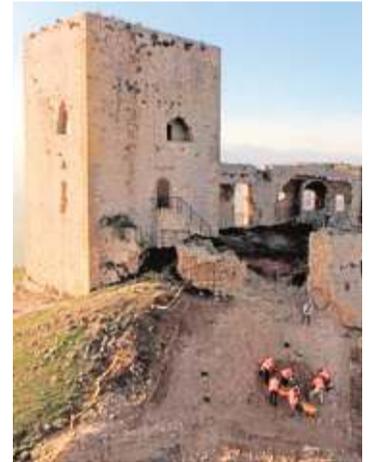
TONY BRYANT

TEBA. The University of Granada (UGR) has begun a six-year General Research Project of the Castillo de la Estrella in Teba, a plan financed by the town hall at a cost of 600,000 euros.

The Prinma research group from the UGR has begun archaeological excavations and the study of materials in the area with the aim of understanding the historical evolution of the castle, which occupies about 25,000 square metres of floor space.

Each year, four months of archaeological excavations will be carried out, followed by another four months of studying the materials in a laboratory located in the town hall.

The most recent finds are a floor of sandstone pebbles from



Archaeologists at the site. PRINMA

the 17th century, and more than 600 lead shot pellets from the Civil War were discovered in the fortress walls.

The Castillo de la Estrella was declared a Monument of Historical and Artistic Interest in 1931 and a Site of Cultural Interest (BIC) in 1949. In addition, it became the first monument in Malaga to form part of the Network of Great Castles and Tourist Palaces of Spain, in 2020.

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Miriam Medianero with her children Samuel and Miriam, in front of their house. E. CABEZAS

Demolition of Benajárfate houses will leave families homeless

BENAJÁRFATE

The houses were built without planning permission in 2004 and the owners have been given six months to knock them down

EUGENIO CABEZAS

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Two families, with three children between them, face being made homeless if an order to demolish their semi-detached houses in Benajárfate is acted upon.

Raúl Postigo, who is married to Miriam Medianero and their two school-age children, Miriam, 12 and Samuel, six, live next door to their aunt – Miriam's sister Cristina – and her six-year-old son Juan Antonio.

They built the semi-detached

houses in 2004 in the Los Puertas area of Benajárfate Alto on a plot of 13,000 square metres. In addition, they planted about 300 mango trees. There has been an order to demolish the homes in place since 2018.

Six months

"It is very unfair that 18 years later they tear down our houses when we are surrounded by hundreds of houses built without a licence," said Raúl who added that the local council is trying to help the family as much as possible.

The families were informed on 3 January that they have six months to demolish the houses and if they do not comply could be charged with "a crime of disobedience against judicial authority."

"In 2018 the town council paralysed a demolition order

because three children live in the houses, Social Services are helping us, we need the court to listen to our situation," said Raúl. Both families have been paying property tax for "years", he maintained.

"With the new Andalusian urban planning law, LISTA, we believe that the houses can be legalised," he added.

The Mayor of Vélez-Málaga, Antonio Moreno Ferrer announced on Tuesday that the town hall had asked the courts to halt the demolition proceedings, until 15 February.

"This is a sentence that has been dragging on since 2004," Moreno Ferrer said, before recalling that in 2018 a previous order to demolish the two properties was stopped "due to the vulnerable situation of the two families, who have three children in their care."

Commemorative post marks 85 years since 'La Desbandá'

NERJA

E. C. This February will mark 85 years since 'La Desbandá', one of the most tragic episodes of the Civil War in Malaga.

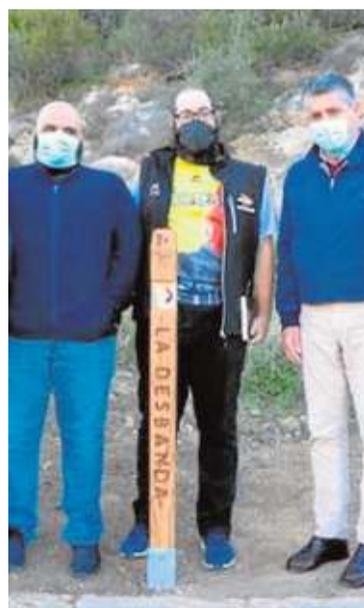
Thousands of families tried to escape to Almeria after Franco's troops captured Malaga city in 1937, and the horrors that ensued left many of them dead along the way.

In response to the request of the Asociación Sociocultural and Club Senderista 'La Desbandá', Nerja town hall has placed a commemo-

orative post to coincide with the anniversary. It has been installed at the exit of the bridge over the Barranco de Maro ravine in the Maro-Cueva de Nerja area.

This landmark is just one of a series that the group hopes to install along the route they follow during their annual commemorative walk.

The association will be organising a programme of events to remember the thousands of people who lost their lives in Malaga province while fleeing Franco's troops in February 1937.



Representatives with the post. SUR

Almuñécar bans motorhomes after complaints from residents and local businesses

ALMUÑÉCAR

P. G. T. Almuñécar town hall has banned the parking and camping of motorhomes on the town's roads. Mayor Trinidad Herrera has issued a statement to remind visitors of these regulations and to stop the collapse of the town's promenades and beaches at weekends.

The measures come following a series of complaints from beach businesses, opposition parties

and local residents, who called on the council to take urgent measures to regulate the problem.

According to the opposition socialist PSOE party in Almuñécar, there were about 47 motorhomes parked in La Herradura last weekend alone.

"We demand an end to this permissiveness that damages our tourist image and has a high environmental cost," said socialist party spokesperson Rocío Palacios.

Reacting to the complaints, Juan José Ruiz Joya, deputy mayor of La Herradura, said, "We are seeing a proliferation of caravans on La Herradura promenade. We have nothing against this kind of tourism, but we must regulate it so that it is not a nuisance for other residents."



Eduardo Recio with members of the Phoenix Club on Tuesday. SUR

International club makes donation to Red Cross after two years of limited activity due to Covid

TORRE DEL MAR

J. RHODES. The Phoenix Club in Torre del Mar on Tuesday presented a cheque for 3,000 euros to the Red Cross Vélez-

Malaga.

President of the local branch, Eduardo Recio, received the cheque during a presentation at the Vega Restaurant in Torre del Mar.

"After a break of two years due to Covid restrictions, members were finally able to make a donation of 3000 euros to La Cruz Roja," said vice-president Michael Stockdale.

Eduardo Recio said the donation would "go a long way to greatly help" those the Red Cross cares for locally.

Continued uncertainty over Torre del Mar pier four years after project launched

TORRE DEL MAR

E. C. The project to build a pier off Torre del Mar beach has not made any progress more than four years after it was first announced. The initiative is still awaiting the approval of the regional government and the ministry for ecological transition.

In November 2017 Vélez-Málaga town hall launched the idea of creating a fixed infrastructure next to the so-called

'espigón del Morro'; a stone breakwater located half way along Torre del Mar beach, near the El Copo area.

In a recent statement to SUR, deputy mayor and councillor for beaches, Jesús Pérez Atencia, said the project "is still going round in circles in the offices." He went on to say, "I really don't understand why it has been forgotten, when it would be so easy to tell us once and for all whether it can or cannot be done."

The pier would be similar to ones in coastal towns around the UK, but on a smaller scale. In recent months the regional government has raised some objections to the proposed project.

"We will continue to insist because we do not want this project to be forgotten," the councillor said.



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Fake Covid passport and false vaccine-record gang uncovered

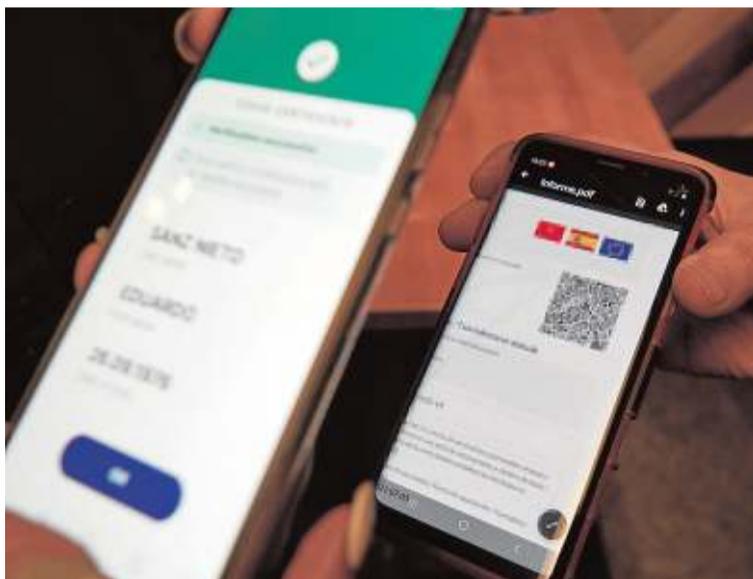
A criminal network is said to have offered fake PCR tests for 50 euros, forged coronavirus passports for 200 euros or registration in the health system database for 1,000 euros

MELCHOR SÁIZ-PARDO

MADRID. National Police have said they have dismantled the first known network in Spain to issue fake Covid passports. The police coup, which has so far led to six arrests in Madrid and one in Barcelona, uncovered a Europe-wide criminal network that not only allegedly issued fake documents but also could arrange for a healthcare worker to fraudulently enter data into Spain's vaccination registry. At least 1,600 false entries have reportedly already been made.

Popular urban-pop singer Omar Montes is among the people investigated for using the illegal services. Other people accused include known criminals such as La Reina de la Coca and El Moli.

The network advertised their services in instant messaging chat groups for anti-vaxxers. They offered fake PCR tests for



Not all Covid-19 passports maybe genuine. EP (FILE PHOTO)

50 euros, forged Covid passports for 200 euros or more and, for those who could afford to spend 1,000 euros, registration directly in the health system. The investigation began in January when the Health Ministry became

The gang is thought to have used corrupt or coerced health-service personnel to enter false information into the system.

aware of the adverts.

The investigation, which is ongoing, has identified the network's supposed leaders in France and Spain. Those arrested face charges of document falsification and crimes against public health; charges that the hundreds of people who obtained false immunisation documentation throughout Spain could also face shortly.

The gang is thought to have used corrupt, or coerced, health-service personnel to enter false information into the system.

Employment in Spain recovers pre-Covid level

In Malaga province, a rise in the number looking for work has ironically seen the unemployment rate nudge up slightly in a year

J. M. CAMARERO / A. J. LÓPEZ

MADRID/MALAGA. The Spanish economy has clawed back to the same number in work in 2021 that there was at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. This is according to the quarterly Active Population Survey (the EPA) to the end of December - seen as the most reliable data on Spain's job market.

Some 840,000 people got jobs during 2021, the EPA said, and there were 20,184,900 working, the highest figure since 2008.

In 2021, the number of people out of work dropped by 615,900, meaning Spain had 3,103,800 out of work at the end of last year. This is the equivalent to a 13.3% unemployment rate - a drop of 2.8 points in a year and also the lowest since



The jobless rate is now 13.3%. EFE

2008.

The EPA data has also shown the job market in Malaga province improving to pre-Covid levels. There were 15,000 more in work locally than a year ago.

More available to work

However an increase here in the numbers available to work (the so-called active population) means unemployment has gone up slightly in a year from 19.32% to 19.79%.

Spain drops to 34th in the annual ranking of the world's least corrupt countries

MELCHOR SÁIZ-PARDO

MADRID. Spain's position in a ranking of the world's least to most corrupt countries has worsened in the last twelve months. The country's position in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index dropped by two to 34th out of 180 countries ranked, with 61 out of 100 points scored (one point 'worse' than last year).

The index focuses on perception of unfair play in the public sector and Spain is at the same level as Lithuania and just below Portugal (63 points), Qatar (63) and Chile (67). It is a long way off Denmark which with 88 out of 100 is the least corrupt country, according to the list. The difference of one place for Spain isn't seen as statistically significant, however. Britain was 11th (78 points), Ireland 13th (74) and Germany 10th.

THE EURO ZONE
MARK NAYLER

A new corruption



In Transparency International (TI)'s latest Corruption Perceptions Index, released this week, Spain dropped two places, from 32nd to 34th, and lost one point with a rating of 61 (0 being riddled with corruption and 100 being not at all corrupt). The report also identified two inextricably linked global trends over the last couple of years, the stalling of efforts to combat corruption and the erosion of democracy and civil liberties; worsening the situation is Covid, which according to TI "has been used in many countries as an excuse to curtail basic freedoms and side-step important checks and balances".

This might be interpreted as a warning to Spain, a country in which some remarkably unconstitutional actions have been taken by a prime minister who says he always has the "Constitution in hand". Socialist leader Pedro Sánchez has repeatedly made that claim in negotiations with Catalan separatists, but perhaps that's the only time he consults this hallowed document.

Clearly, it wasn't on his desk in the early months of 2020, when Sánchez imposed a nationwide lockdown under the "State of Alarm", one of three states of exception defined in the 1978 Constitution. Spain's Constitutional Court has since ruled that decision illegal, arguing that nothing as drastic as a blanket suspension of fundamental freedoms is permitted by the State of Alarm.

This is not an example of the kind of political corruption

that we're accustomed to in Spain. Here, corruption usually takes the form of bribery, backhanders and kickbacks, private use of public funds or the crazed use of institutional credit cards - indeed, pretty much any type of fraud you can think of.

But the imposition of lockdown, either in full knowledge of its illegality or without even bothering to analyse its legal status, is a different kind of corruption - what might be called constitutional corruption. The latest TI report warns that in countries where power is exercised away from normal checks and balances (which in Spain's case are supposedly provided by parliamentary protocol, the opposition and the Constitution), corruption can flourish unhindered. Corruption, says the report, "enables human rights abuses... [D]emocracy declines and authoritarianism takes its place". It's a vicious circle.

Spain is no Syria or South Sudan (the world's two most corrupt countries, with scores of 13 and 11 respectively), but it remains puzzling that none of its opposition parties seized on the Constitutional Court's damning lockdown verdict. What this means is that Spain's government behaved unconstitutionally and survived. To put it another way: Spain's government illegally confined the entire population to their homes for over two months and got away with it. If that doesn't create a fecund environment for complacency, corruption and authoritarianism, nothing will.

Prime Minister commits to being a 'loyal partner' of Nato in face of Ukraine crisis

SUR

MADRID. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has said that he is ready to accept any reprisals from Russia in the event that Vladimir Putin orders an attack on Ukraine that forces measures against Russia by Nato - of which Spain is a member. He said that Spain is a "loyal partner" of the

defence alliance and would show solidarity with countries under threat. Ukraine is not in Nato.

Sánchez has been criticised by the leading opposition party, the PP, for not discussing the impending international crisis with that party's leader, Pablo Casado. Until Casado called Sánchez this week, he and the PM had not spoken for eight months. Casado offered support for Spain's role in any Nato action.

Sánchez has agreed to send fighters to Bulgaria and two naval vessels to the Black Sea for Nato exercises. The junior partners in his coalition government - left-wing Unidas Podemos - have questioned the need for military activity by Nato.



The drugs had a street value of £24,400. ROYAL GIBRALTAR POLICE

Jail sentence for local man who was spotted importing cannabis

GIBRALTAR

D.B. A local man has been sentenced to 12 months in jail after pleading guilty to importing cannabis with a street value of £24,400. Police have named the man as 23-year-old Jamie Fa, of Mons Calpe.

This case dates back to April 2020, when RGP officers saw a small boat piloted by Fa approach the Spanish breakwater and then head towards Western Beach. A bag containing cannabis was then thrown from the boat to another

man on the beach, who left the area on a motorcycle. He was later arrested, after a police pursuit.

During the subsequent investigation the boat, named Churre, was located in the Small Boats Marina, and CCTV footage showed the suspect leaving the marina with two other men on board, prior to the incident.

Sergeant Gerry Martínez of the RGP Drugs Squad says the case highlights the need for extensive investigation, irrespective of the quantity of drugs concerned.

Non-scheduled flights at Gibraltar Airport reach record numbers

D. BARTLETT In the past four years the number of non-scheduled flights using Gibraltar International Airport has risen to record levels. These include light General Aviation aircraft, business and corporate charters and medium to large private aircraft operated by their owners.

Announcing the figures earlier this week, the Minister for Commercial Aviation, Vijay Daryanani, explained that 2019 saw a 5.2 per cent increase in this type of service compared with 2018, from 381 to 401, and that despite the pandemic in 2020 which made travel so difficult, the numbers of these flights only dropped by 2.5 per cent to 391, while last year there was a rise of 19.9 per cent, to 469, compared with 2020.

He also explained that non-scheduled services provide an important contribution to the local economy, the Finance Centre and Gibraltar PLC in general, and said that he would continue to work to see the trend continue.

IN BRIEF



The memorial in Gibraltar. SUR

REMEMBRANCE

Holocaust Day marked by Gibraltar

D.B. Gibraltar marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January with a broadcast of the presentation Learning From Auschwitz by local TV station GBC. Local people were invited to light a candle and place it in a window at 9pm to stand against prejudice and hatred. Normally, members of the government and community gather in Commonwealth Park to mark the day, but due to the pandemic this was not possible.

HEALTH

Chief minister back to work after Covid-19

D.B. Chief minister Fabian Picardo returns to work at No. 6 Convent Place today, Friday 28 January, after isolating at home because he tested positive for Covid-19 after being in contact with a relative who was then discovered to have the virus. He said he was asymptomatic throughout, and returns to the office after negative tests on days six and seven, in line with public health advice.

COMPETITION

'Battle of the sexes' chess this week

D.B. The 'Battle of the Sexes' chess tournament is taking place at the Garrison Library in Gibraltar this week, with ten men and ten women competing in ten rounds and 100 games. The tournament began on Monday and will continue until 3 February. The winning team will receive £75,000 in prize money, and the other team £25,000. For twenty years, this has become a major world event and is keenly followed by chess enthusiasts.

IMCW EUROPE

The challenges for recovery for tourism businesses: modernisation and technology

In 2022, companies need to address key issues for which expert advice from IMCW Europe is essential

MÁLAGA

SUR. After almost two years of pandemic, the tourism sector is starting to get back on its feet. According to Exceltur's calculations, 90% of the pre-pandemic activity is expected to be recovered this year. In Andalusia, this sector accounts for 13% of the GDP, with 32 million visitors generating 23,000 million euros.

However, in order to make this recovery effective, companies need to make an effort to adapt to new market situations.

To this end, the new Decree-Law 6/2021 for the renovation and modernisation of hotels in our region offers a great opportunity with which 2,000 million euros of investment is expected

to be obtained, generating 7,000 jobs.

As José de la Maza, director of IMCW Europe, explains: «We are seeing a strong interest among our clients in taking advantage of these circumstances and repositioning and making their hotels bigger and more competitive.»

The European subsidiary of the British multinational IMC Worldwide specialises in consultancy in the fields of tourism and hospitality, infrastructure and public-private partnerships. As tourism and hotel consultants, IMCW Europe has developed projects for Barceló, Playa Senator, Roc Hotels, Holiday World, Grupo Moraval or B Bou Hotels, among many others, as well as independent hotels and institutional investors.

In order to contribute to the aforementioned recovery of companies in the sector, IMC Europe has extensive experience and a staff of 18 professionals in Málaga that make up the largest tourism and hospitality consul-



tancy team in Andalusia, and one of the largest in Spain.

They also have the support of their London headquarters and offices in 10 countries, with specialists in data analysis, environment, economic evaluation and financing and communication, among other fields.

«Our experience in Malaga and

the Costa del Sol with different types of projects, operators and investors positions us as the benchmark firm for the analysis and development of any type of tourism project.» says de la Maza.

The company has accumulated numerous success stories, such as its contribution to the successful entry of an internatio-

nal tourist flat operator into the Spanish market, or the support provided to a well-known hotel chain in its growth and expansion process.

As de la Maza explains, the key to this contribution of excellence lies in customisation. «We don't produce textbook solutions, we interpret each situation and generate tailor-made solutions for each client, ensuring that they are implementable and not merely theoretical.» he says.

This, together with the continuous support and the availability of a friendly and highly qualified team, capable of working in different languages and geographical locations, with international vision and experience, have made IMC Europe a reference in today's tourism and hotel sector. «We also have a powerful network of contacts at a national and international level that allows us to complete the service we provide to our clients on different fronts in order to tackle multidisciplinary projects,» the director emphasizes.

MORE INFORMATION

Email: josedelamaza@imcworldwide.com
Telephone: +34639906348



The pandemic has changed the way people shop: more use of cards and contactless methods

The official advice to avoid using cash to stop the virus spreading, and the ease of the other methods has led to 40 per cent of payments now being cash-free

JUAN SOTO

MALAGA. Covid has changed the way people shop and pay for their purchases in Malaga province. Since the pandemic officially began in March last year, the use of credit and debit cards has increased considerably and these are now used instead of cash in four out of every ten transactions.

The official recommendations not to use money in order to avoid physical contact with other people, combined with the increase in online shopping and the convenience of new methods of payment, have increased the use of cards, mobile phones or a contactless system by 17 per cent, according to sources at different banks.

Although the use of cards for payments was clearly increasing before the pandemic, Covid has speeded up the process.

According to a study carried out by GFK for Visa, consumers in Spain have increased their use of the contactless payment methods by 45 per cent and reduced their cash transactions by about the same amount since the pandemic began. Also, the Back to Business 2021 report, which was drawn up globally, concludes that this form of payment will remain the same or increase in the coming years.



Contactless payments have become much more common in Malaga. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ

On the other hand, only 16 per cent of people who took part in the survey said they would prefer to use the traditional methods of payment that they used before the pandemic.

Different studies carried out for Mastercard have shown similar results. They conclude that the majority of people (75 per cent) will continue to use this technology when the health crisis is over, because it is easier and more hygienic. They also consider that it is a form of payment which has been embraced by shops and companies, because 83 per cent of busi-

nesses in Spain now accept payments with mobile phone or contactless card. Of these, 94 per cent say they use them on a daily basis.

Lower costs for businesses

Although the increase is general among all businesses, the food and restaurant sectors have noticed it most. The Malaga Comercio association points out that the maximum amount that can be paid in cash is 1,000 euros, so the increase has been especially noticeable for small payments such as those for purchases in supermarkets, small shops and restau-

rants.

To give an example, one of the biggest chains of food stores in Malaga says this type of payment has increased from 30 per cent in 2019 to 40 per cent in 2021, which is 33 per cent in barely a year.

Meanwhile in the hospitality and catering sector, payments by card have grown the most. According to the Mahos association, the ratio before the pandemic used to be 60/40 (more payments in cash) but now that has changed and the figure is 40/60 (more payments using a credit or debit card).

High charges make shops reluctant to accept Bizum

J. SOTO

MALAGA. Bizum, the new form of mobile payment which enables people to send and receive money in real time with no need for bank details, is popular with individuals but not with shops because businesses who offer this facility to their customers have to pay such high commission rates. In some cases, these can be as much as two euros per transaction.

At present, only about 500 businesses in Spain accept this form of payment, although its use has increased considerably between individuals during the pandemic and the company says the growth has been steady over recent months.

Professionals in the sector recognise that this change has also come about because the banks have reduced the commission they charge for using credit card machines. Before the European Union fixed the commission rates by law, many businesses were reluctant to accept payment by card because of the cost involved for them. Nowadays, however, it is often possible to buy a simple loaf of bread and pay by card. As the old saying goes, every cloud has a silver lining.

IN BRIEF

ANDALUCÍA

New grants for owners of shops and sellers of crafts

J. SOTO. The Junta de Andalucía has launched a programme of grants to help owners of smaller businesses and crafts workshops. Almost one million euros has been set aside - partly supported by EU funds - to help these types of operations in Malaga province.

If the amount needed is under 6,000 euros, the full amount will be paid up front, otherwise it is half at the start and half on completion. Projects should fit into one of two streams: those designed to improve the use of new technology, with special emphasis on encouraging online sales or ecom-



Grants are available for smaller shops. SALVADOR SALAS

merce. Here the maximum help is 6,000 euros or 12,000 if there are more than one premises.

The second stream is aimed at modernising to attract new customers, with grants between 15,000 and 26,250 euros. This could include refurbishment or new furniture. To apply, limited

companies, self-employed or workshops should be registered correctly as retailers (or equivalent if selling crafts). The period to apply ends on 1 March. www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/economia-conocimientoempresas-y-universidad/servicios/procedimientos.html.

SPAIN

Ministers open to 'tweaks' to 'autónomo' quota plan

L. PALACIOS. The national government has said it is open to modifying the proposed new contribution system for the self-employed after criticism from unions representing 'autónomos'.

According to union ATA, under the new system half of all autónomos would see their monthly social-security contributions rise by 20 per cent, while the other half will see only a slight reduction in their contributions of five per cent.

Ministers in Madrid maintain two thirds of autónomos will pay less under the planned new system, which would be launched gradually between now and 2031.

ANDALUCÍA

Junta head calls for more say on Brussels funds

H. BARBOTA. The president of Andalucía, Juanma Moreno, has been in Brussels this week and has complained to the EU over the way European funds are being allocated to his region by the Spanish central government.

Moreno claims Madrid isn't being transparent or fair between regions. He said half of the EU funds for Spain were due to be directly administered by regional governments but in reality it will only be a third. Moreno also said there had been no debate with regions on how to spend the money.

The regional president was discussing the issue of rural depopulation with Brussels as well.



THE SPECTRUM IFA GROUP

2022. WILL THIS BE THE YEAR OF NORMALITY?

MARBELLA

Jeremy Ferguson. So, here we are. The start of another year, and like everyone out there I will be wondering what this one beholds. Will the dreaded Covid and its continuing variants become less of an influence on our daily routines? Is travel going to be easier again? Will life get back to some sense of normality?

One thing I have learnt from the last couple of years is how important technology has become in most of our daily lives. So many of my clients' only contact with their grandchildren back in the UK has recently been via video calls on mobile phones or laptops. I know quite a few people who have not yet physically met new family members, but the blessing really has been the ability to at least see them and speak with them, albeit over the internet.

House viewings can now be done virtually, there are apps on your phone to click for food, click for taxis, click to transfer money, click for your shopping, and on the list

goes. Many people are now working from home and rarely going to a workplace. All of this has meant the pain of the Covid lockdowns and ongoing travel restrictions has been somewhat eased, but is there a cost for all of these advances in getting things done?

On one hand I am a big fan, working with clients with all of the technology available is so much easier nowadays. Technology has also freed up time for people by reducing time spent on things many of us didn't like doing. Access to information, ease of sending money to people, not having to go to the bank all of the time, not having to go out and shop as much as you did, buying presents for people online, it's all great. Or is it?

As a result of all of the technology and with many people working from home and going out less, there is an ever growing lack of personal face-to-face contact. Gone are the days of your local shop owner knowing how you and the family are, the bank manager being able to sort a mortgage out



Jeremy Ferguson. SUR

for you quickly, the man from the Prudential coming to the house to collect your insurance premiums, meeting your future wife at an after-work drinks evening, and the list goes on and on.

Even though life has become a lot easier, I believe many people and businesses are missing the point that human interaction has always been a basic necessity of a life. Trying to sort a problem out

with your bank through chat lines and phone calls to helplines halfway around the world is a great example of when you need someone to talk to, they just aren't there. With social contact comes so many benefits, both mental and physical. Maybe we are all forgetting how weak our immune systems will eventually become if we have less and less human contact. How difficult will social gatherings become when people have become little more than hermits?

I firmly believe in the value of face-to-face contact, particularly when it comes to things in life as important as discussing your finances, so rather than just looking online for solutions and advice regarding your life's savings, how about a good old fashioned face-to-face talk to discuss things?

I can meet with you in the comfort of your own home or at our offices in San Pedro, so please get in touch if this is of interest, and let's hope 2022 is the year things get back to normal.

THE SPECTRUM IFA GROUP

T. 951 566 122 | 670 216 229
jeremy.ferguson@spectrum-ifa.com
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Almonds in flower in different parts of the province. On the left, bees pollinate the blooms in advance of the season. **ÑITO SALAS**

The almond tree is the closest, most immediate indicator of climate change we can all observe

For plants this year the winter cold is practically over.

"It has barely lasted 15 days, and all the metabolic processes that leads to the formation of the fruit are conditioned by this factor," said Salvo.

"We have to follow up and note the characteristics of these almonds, from a human consumption and industrial production point of view, but also how they affect rodent and reptile feeding, which is also of great interest for biodiversity."

The researcher will be making a collection of the early fruits in order to analyse their chemical content, as well as the leaves, to check the protocols followed by the plant under these climate change conditions.

"There is an absolute and total change in the schedule, to the extent that flowering is brought forward because of the warmer climate, while leaf production is linked to the length of the day and night; we can find a large discrepancy between flower production, fruit formation and the emergence of leaves of an important size to shade and protect the almonds when they fall. It is a whole protocol that was very well ordered within nature."

Climate change brings forward the flowering of almond trees in Malaga

The species is one of the best indicators of global warming in the province, which has consequences for the environment and agricultural activities

IGNACIO LILLO



MALAGA. Almond trees have started to bloom earlier in winter. This year, around 10 January, trees in Los Montes de Malaga were in full bloom but even in late December the buds were starting open, said Enrique Salvo, a botanist and professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of Malaga (UMA), who is studying the phenomenon and its ecological and economic impacts.

"Each year we are seeing that almond trees bloom earlier than

was normal before.

Thirty years ago they bloomed around Valentine's Day in mid-February and it has been getting earlier and earlier," said Salvo. The areas that are budding earliest are in the Guadalhorce and Guadalmedina valleys.

The flowering is closely linked to daylight hours and the winter solstice, when the tree's biological clock triggers this phase.

"For there to be a normal development of the female and male parts of the plant there

must be an accumulation of hours of cold, first, and heat, later," Salvo said.

"The almond tree is the closest, most immediate indicator of climate change that we can all observe. Citizen science can play a key role in monitoring and detecting anomalies that may occur," he added.

But the early blooms can lead to problems. There are not enough pollinators (insects, in particular beetles) about in mid-winter which the trees need to produce nuts, explained the expert.

Pesticides

Farmers should use fewer pesticides to avoid killing off the beetle population, Salvo said,

"We must draw the attention of farmers to this, who are using excessive amounts of pesticides and insecticides.

The almond tree is not only useful for humans but to the entire ecosystem."



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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR90-day tourist
restriction

I write regarding the Schengen Treaty restriction that limits a tourist stay to 90 days in 180. This severely affects the tourist industry as motorhomers, who like to stay in Spain for the winter, are not always prepared to make the long journey south if they have to return within the 90-day ruling.

Add to that, the reluctance in buying or long-term renting a property if you are only able to live in it for three months at a time ... the market diminishes. The UK allows European tourists to stay for up to 180 days in a year, and these can be consecutive days.

When people are asked to help reduce carbon emissions, the 90-day limitation would appear to have the opposite effect. Many tourists (and I am one of them) will make two journeys in a year to visit their holiday home. Twice the fuel consumption, twice the pollution! Multiply that a few thousand times!

The pandemic has affected people's lives dramatically and we know how swiftly Covid and its variants can spread. Should we be travelling more frequently across borders? Surely, it would be better for those who wish to visit Spain, to make the journey once - and then to stay put?

Add this to the critical effect this 90-day restriction has had on the tourist market and, surely, it would make more economic and environmental sense to forge a reciprocal agreement with the UK and allow tourists to visit for up to 180 days consecutively?

Already, inroads have been made to change the present restriction - we need to keep up the pressure and not let the initial impetus die.

ANN CUTTING

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Testing times

The sepulchral silence was suddenly broken by a very odd sound indeed - half whinny, half snort such as one might expect of a horse with a mild personality disorder. Even more alarmingly, the purveyor of said noise was me. It was a sort of reflex action I think, the result of having been taken by surprise with a precision double-pronged attack.

That's the thing about PCR Covid tests, nobody tells you much more than it's "a little bit uncomfortable". If only somebody had let me know that they take a swab from both nostrils, I wouldn't have relaxed after the first sortie and, consequently, would have avoided my Red-Rum-doing-an-impression-of-Scooby-Doo noise. Anyway, the young nurse batted not an eyelid, leading me to conclude that she'd witnessed far more bizarre plaintive whelps, though it's hard to imagine how.

It was quite the day out actually, going to the airport for the test. I hadn't caught a train for

over two years and it was comforting to see that those little emergency hammers for breaking glass were still present in the carriages, sitting inside their glass cases with instructions to break said glass case with the hammer in case of emergency.

Some things had changed though. First, it was impossible to buy a ticket from the machine with actual money, although other payment options were myriad: credit card, debit card, birthday card, tokens, QR codes, plus various other bizarre possibilities which made my head spin with their complexity. I wafted my ten euro note around in the vicinity of the machine for longer than was good for my dignity while a couple of station employees looked on, chuckling heartily. Eventually, though, I succumbed to the relentless march of technology and got my debit card out, releasing a couple of long-suffering moths into the wild into the bargain.

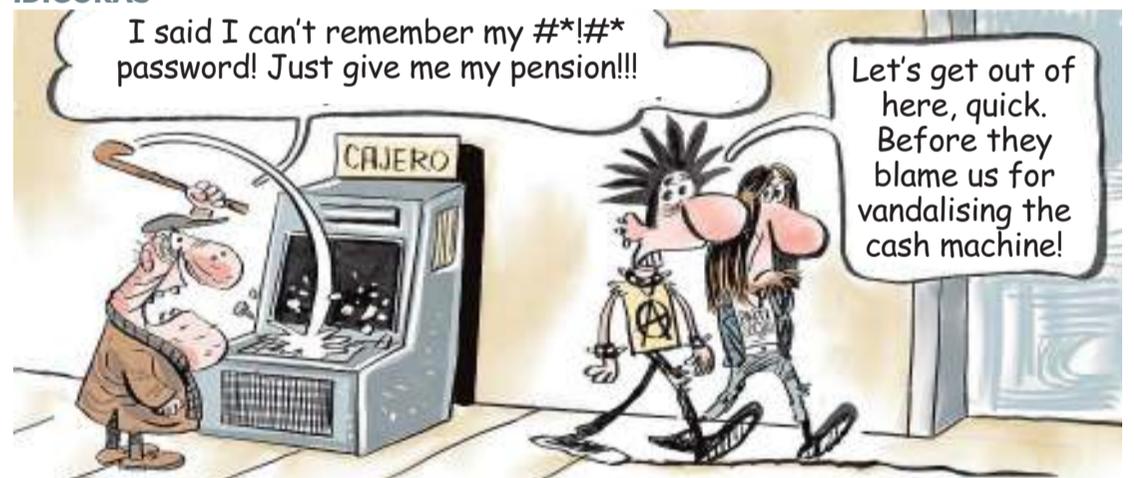
Disappointingly, the ticket it-

self isn't inserted into a slot anymore in order to open the platform access gate. You sort of scan it. I think they call this form of doing things 'contactless' which must be the most unimaginative word ever invented. They really should have called it 'floatypay' or something, but it's too late now. I'll miss putting my ticket in the slot and watching it appear half a yard in front of me in a fraction of a nano second while trying to get four bags of groceries through the automatic door before it closes rather too quickly and crushes my farm fresh eggs or, indeed, any tinned items present owing to its vice-like strength.

After the PCR test - which proved negative, in case you were on the edge of your seat - I caught the train back to Malaga and, my oh my, it was simply heaving with humanity.

I couldn't help but contemplate how ironic it would be to fall victim to the virus on the way home from a negative test.

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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IGNACIO LILLO

The elderly and ATMs

It's the same scene, nearly every time. You go to the bank in the morning and it would be unusual not to find an elderly person battling with the cash machine. And it breaks your heart. If you have a kind face and look trustworthy, you are likely to end up helping them to pay bills and deal with other household financial bureaucracy, and I am delighted to do that, to help our elderly neighbours, but it shouldn't be this way, especially for their security.

The awful way the banks in general

treat pensioners has even reached the ears of the government, which has given them a month to do something about it. I hope that won't mean sending them a digital tutorial on how to use the bank's app on a mobile phone, although it wouldn't surprise me.

It is very unfair that in order to safeguard profits, by cutting back on staff and opening hours and introducing more automation, the service they are providing to their oldest clients is so poor; clients who, with their low income and sav-

ings from a lifetime of work, made it possible for these banks to grow; and who continue to have their meagre pensions paid into them.

If an elderly person lives in a small village, they are completely lost because they are suffering double discrimination: their lack of digital expertise and the lack of bank branches. For them, it means that taking money out and carrying out everyday transactions becomes a real odyssey.

In reality, when you talk to them, you realise that all they want is to be able to deal with people, with employees who carry out their transactions as they have done all their lives, because most don't understand how to do it themselves in front of an unforgiving screen. And it is logical and legitimate, because when they opened their bank accounts they did so with a person, someone with time, a

friend, who was there at the most important moments of their lives: when they took out a mortgage for their home, a loan for their car, a credit to pay for the little one's first Communion celebration... but that person took early retirement, years ago.

The banks, who always win, cannot go on doing so at the cost of their elderly clients. It really cannot cost that much, the way salaries are, to have an assistant specifically for them from 8am to 3pm, Mondays to Fridays.

As someone correctly said, that person could even be beside the cash machines, to advise those who need help. And surely, it wouldn't be too expensive as well to create a type of mobile 'banking bus' for people who live in the villages. With measures like these, the banks might not make quite as much, but at least it would be more ethical.



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Pizarra Museum, a connection with a well-known artist

Cultural tourism. The American artist Gino Hollander donated many of the items on display in this museum, which is in the Cortijo Casablanca

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ



American artist Gino Hollander (1924-2015) came to Spain in 1962. Fascinated by the culture of his new home, he began to acquire antiques and historical items from all over the country and also from North Africa, and these now account for nearly 80 per cent of the collection at the museum in Pizarra, the village where he set up home in 1968.

Hollander's personal inquisitiveness has ended up becoming one of the great cultural attractions of the Guadalhorce Valley: a museum in the Cortijo Casablanca, a farmhouse dating back to Moorish times which is also a rural hotel and restaurant. "We have over 6,000 archaeological and ethnographic items, paintings, sculptures and furniture here," explains Diego Manceras, the director of the museum.

The permanent exhibition is divided between two large rooms. One of them is the Gino Hollander room and it contains archaeological pieces from different historical periods, ethnographic material and tools which were once used by workers in the countryside. This room is home to one of the most important pieces in the museum: a 'bifaz' (hand axe) which comes from Nairobi, in Kenya, and is

approximately one million years old, according to Hollander's documentation. The documents show that it was a personal gift from British paleoanthropologist Louis Leakey.

"This piece may be from the Olorgesailie archaeological site in Kenya, which was excavated by Leakey in the 1940s," says Manceras.

The archaeological collection, which is one of the largest, ranges from Prehistory to the Middle Ages, passing through the times of the Iberians, Romans, Visigoths, Mozarabs and Muslims.

As well as items reflecting world history, the display focuses especially on the Guadalhorce Valley and its villages. There are medical utensils, ceramics, coins and lead seals, among other items.

Of special importance are the 'Palmela points', funerary items which have come from the excavations carried out in the municipality at the Castillejos de Quintana and La Ermita archaeological sites.

Furniture

The second room in the permanent exhibition is named after the late Agustín Clavijo, who was a professor at Malaga university. It contains an extensive display



The exterior of the museum, in the Cortijo Casablanca in Pizarra. M. P.



The Gino Hollander exhibition room. M. P.

of furniture, most of which was collected by Hollander. With benches, trunks and chests, it recreates different traditional settings such as a sacristy, a studio, a kitchen and a bedroom. The exhibition is completed by

a selection of Hollander's sculptures and paintings from the abstract expressionist era.

Although the Cortijo Casablanca in which the museum is situated is from the 19th century, its origins date back to the

THE PIZARRA MUSEUM

► **Where.** Cortijo Casablanca. Carretera A-7054 Km. 22 (The old Pizarra-Cártama Estación road).

► **When.** On Mondays and from Wednesdays to Sundays 9am to 2pm and 3pm to 6pm. The museum is closed on Tuesdays.

► **Prices.** Entry costs 3 euros for adults and 2 euros for children. For groups of more than 10 people, the price is 2 euros per person. Every Wednesday, entry is free.

► **Information and reservations.** 951512061 and museopizarra@gmail.com

15th, says Diego Manceras. After starting as a Moorish farmhouse, it was given to Cristóbal de Mosquera by the Catholic Monarchs for his help during the taking of Malaga.

For more than 300 years it passed between several owners and in 1917 it was bought by the Condes de Puerto Hermoso as a cattle farm. In 1985 Pizarra council purchased it, and after being restored, it was inaugurated as a museum in January 1995.

Before this, the painter created the Hollander Museum in his own home in Pizarra, known as the Cortijo de Yeguas. Later, in 1988, he gave his collection to the town hall and returned to the USA, where he died in 2015. A large part of his legacy still remains here in the Guadalhorce Valley.

Years after the museum was created, a hotel and restaurant were also opened at the Cortijo Casablanca. "We have also created a room for temporary exhibitions at the museum, to boost local culture and give a voice to artists from Pizarra," says Manceras, who also points out that the property is very close to one of the routes on the Great Trail of Malaga. "We are one kilometre from Pizarra, and there are lots of activities that people can do here, it's a fantastic place to be," he says.

Death of former model upsets Marbella expat community

MARBELLA

T. BRYANT. The sudden death of the popular Renee Da Costa Menzenes, has saddened the expat community of Marbella.

Renee, who died in her sleep earlier this month, was a member of Age Concern and The American Club of Marbella.

Born on 8 August, 1931 in Portugal, the former Chanel model appeared in a film with Peter Sellers, before retiring to Marbella with her third husband. "Renee was a well-known character. Marbella will miss her," an Age Concern spokesperson said. A memorial service at Victor's beach will be held later in the year.



Renee Da Costa Menzenes. SUR

Opticians group donates funds to the ONCE Foundation for guide dogs

MADRID

SUR. Specsavers Ópticas has donated 7,730.47€ to the ONCE Foundation for Guide Dogs (FOPG), which will be used to

continue the work being done by this charity to provide help for the blind. The optical group has been fundraising for FOPG since March 2020.

Jorge Martínez de Lizarduy Araico, of Specsavers Ópticas, said, "We are passionate about protecting vision and offering the best care for customers with visual deficiencies, so our collaboration with FOPG has been the perfect way to give back and ensure those people with vision loss in Spain get the help and resources they need."

FUENGIROLA REVISITED: PART 1
PATRICK H. MEEHAN

Setting the stage



On 4 February 2022 the municipality of Fuengirola will be 180 years old. This series reviews the rich history of the location, from prehistory to the founding of the modern municipality

For thousands of years, people have chosen the location of Fuengirola as an ideal place to live, defend, develop and prosper. A spectacular history has been played on this stage, and this is the story of why the actors chose this ideal and strategic location.

The story begins hundreds of millions of years ago when opposing tectonic plates pushed into existence a range of mountains that included the Sierra de Mijas. Sea levels rose to the tops of the Sierra and fell again until it was a land bridge to Africa that was refilled over the last five million years.

A lower, three-kilometre plain had separated our location from the sea until twelve to ten thousand years ago at the end of the last ice age. The melted ice caused water levels to rise by a hundred metres to approximately today's shoreline, forming the bay that is now Fuengirola. The submerged plain in front of the beach provided the optimum depth for light and oxygen to grow marine plants, thus creating a perfect fish breeding ground.

Between these mountains and the shoreline, an area of flat land was fed by millions of years of mountain waste, creating rich soil ready for agriculture. From gaps in the mountains five rivers carried

fresh water so that human, animal and plant life could flourish. Beside the main river entrance, a steep hill would prove ideal for building fortifications close to a headland with visibility of the entire coast from Nerja to Gibraltar.

In a world that would value warmth, water, food, travel, trade and protection, this location was paradise, an ideal location for the Garden of Eden. Situated halfway between two other ideal locations at Marbella and Malaga, it was ready to control or serve trade and travellers between them.

We will never know who first occupied this bay and surrounding hills as populations moved between weather extremes in the north or south.

It will have provided an ideal location for hunter gatherers who became settled pastoralists from eight thousand years ago; we can only speculate.

The stage was set and as the actors emerged it was clear, at least since the first age of shipbuilding, that this location would be inhabited by those who could defend it. The sea brings fresh actors, they may be friends or enemies, traders or invaders, the curtain of history lifts and a great drama begins.

i Patrick H. Meehan is a 20-year resident of Fuengirola and author of Fuengirola Revisited, a unique book that tells the story of the location through the ages. Feedback can be sent to info@fuengirolarevisited.com For more information visit www.fuengirolarevisited.com or follow @fuengirolarevisited on Facebook.

The Infanta Cristina and Iñaki Urdangarin decide to part ways

The sister of King Felipe and her husband had lived apart from the Royal Family after he was accused and later jailed in a corruption case

S. RODRÍGUEZ

MADRID. The Infanta Cristina, sister of King Felipe, and her husband Iñaki Urdangarin have decided to "interrupt their matrimonial relationship", the royal couple said via a press release published by news agency Efe, after it came to light that the ex-Duke of Palma was seeing another woman.

The Infanta still lives in Geneva, in the house that she moved into in 2020, and will continue working for the Aga Khan Foundation.



The Infanta Cristina and her husband, Iñaki Urdangarin. EFE

Urdangarin, who was photographed holding hands with co-worker Ainhoa Armentia, has been working at a Basque law firm for the last ten months, after being granted 'tercer grado' release while serving the rest of a five-

year-ten-month prison sentence. Urdangarin was found guilty and jailed over fraud, embezzlement, perversion of justice, influence peddling and other fiscal crimes in 2018. He was also fined over 500,000 euros.



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DENISE BUSH

GARDENING

The Gymea lily

For lovers of large, spectacular plants that will bring gasps of admiration, the Gymea lily (*Doryanthes excelsa*) is a dream come true.

Native to the eastern coast of Australia, the Gymea lily (also called giant lily or flame lily) forms large rosettes of sword-like leaves up to one metre long. From the base of the

clump arise leafy flowering stems two to four metres high, each topped by a compact cluster of tubular, red and white flowers.

The height of the flowering stem makes it difficult to see the blooms from the ground so a good location would be near a balcony or first floor terrace where

the flowerhead can be seen from above.

The Gymea lily is not drought resistant and will need regular watering in the summer. During dry seasons, the thick, underground stem is pulled deeper into the soil so planting in a container is not advisable unless it is very deep.

The soil should be rich with plenty of organic material and free-draining.

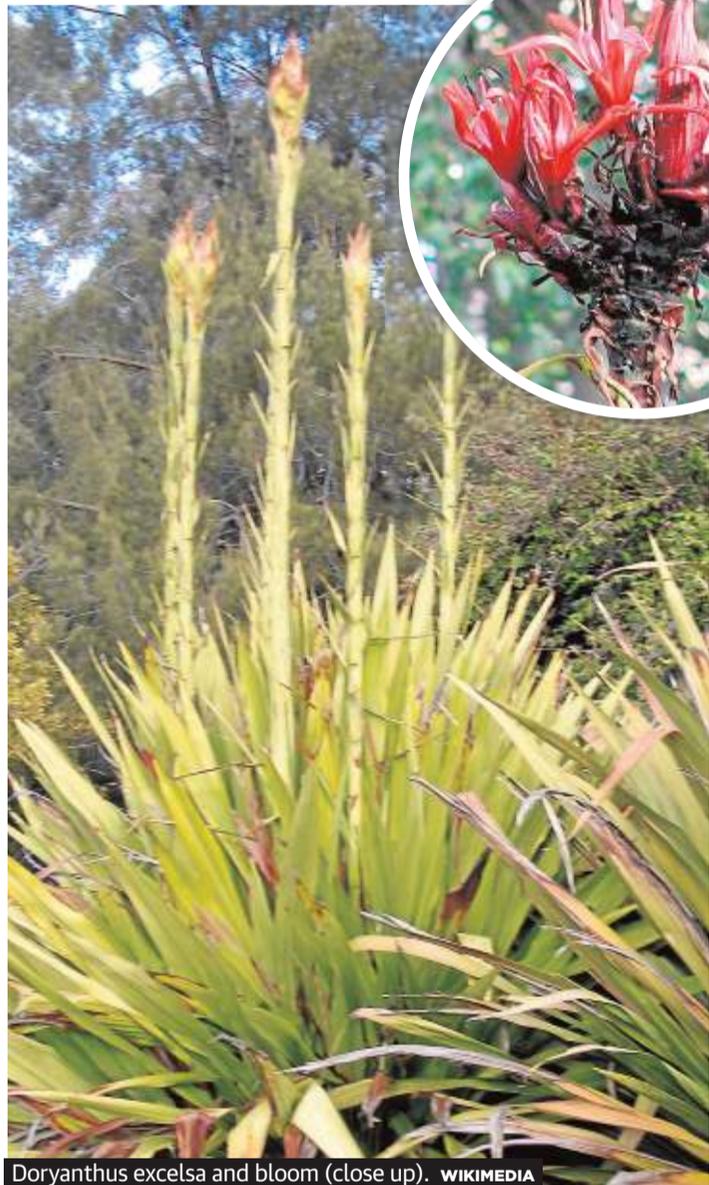
The lily is classed as a succulent, half-hardy perennial and will withstand short periods of frosts, but if the frosts come late, it may kill the flower buds which form in early spring.

Propagation can be carried out by sowing the seeds that form in woody capsules after flowering, however the resulting plants may take between eight and thirteen years to flower. It can also be propagated by division, by removing root suckers or the little bulblets that form at the base.

The Gymea lily is resistant to bushfires and after being raised by fire will bloom profusely.

The genus *Doryanthes* has just two species, *D. excelsa* and *D. palmeri*. The latter, commonly called the giant spear lily, is the largest with leaves up to three metres long. The flower stalk, which will grow to up to four metres high, usually droops over with the weight of the terminal flower heads.

The Greek doratos means spear and anthos flower while the specific epithet *excelsa* comes from Latin meaning high or lofty.



Doryanthes excelsa and bloom (close up). WIKIMEDIA

READERS' PHOTOS



ANNIE PENNINGTON

The tree house-leek

"I just love it when a burst of yellow appears," says Annie Pennington. This photo is of the conical flower head of an *Aeonium arboarium*, the tree house-leek.

Fifty-one days until spring

Another welcome burst of colour has appeared in Alison García's garden with these daffodils starting to bloom. With just fifty-one days left until spring officially begins (20 March), the traditional trumpet daffodils are some of the earliest 'spring flowers' to bloom, often providing lovely colour as early as January. Many other varieties will not bloom until March or even April.



ALISON GARCÍA

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

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

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

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WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

28 JANUARY 1930

The end of Primo de Rivera's dictatorial rule

The dictator, who had governed the country since 1923, resigned after losing the support of King Alfonso XIII and the military

Shortly before 9pm on Tuesday 28 January 1930, Miguel Primo de Rivera, the prime minister who had enforced dictatorial rule over Spain since 1923, was forced to resign after alienating his supporters, who, at the time, included the Spanish monarchy and the military.

With his health deteriorating and the economic boom ending, the dictator offered his resignation to King Alfonso XIII, who had distanced himself from the regime due to its failure to solve any of the country's mounting problems.

Miguel Primo de Rivera y Orbaneja was born in Jerez de la Frontera in 1870.

He led Spain during the country's Restoration era, a period that began in December 1874 after a coup ended the First Spanish Republic and restored the monarchy of Alfonso XII.

Primo de Rivera had held several high-ranking positions during his early military career, which blossomed between 1909 and 1923, although by this time, he had become increasingly disheartened by the internal problems of the Spanish government.

He was convinced that it was the politicians who had ruined the country and he believed he could restore the nation by governing without them.

Historians like Hugh Thomas depict him as an incompetent ruler who lacked political ideals because he made enemies of potential allies.

His conduct is said to have discredited the monarchy and also heightened the social tensions that eventually led to the



Primo de Rivera meeting with King Alfonso XIII in Madrid in 1923. **SUR**

Spanish Civil War in 1936.

His dictatorship was destined to fail when he lost the respect of the military, who had never unanimously backed his rise to power, but had tolerated his rule.

Understanding that his days could well be numbered, the dictator asked military leaders

if he still had their support, but their cold reception, along with his recognition that the king no longer backed him, persuaded him to resign.

He retired to Paris, where he died of diabetes six weeks later.

By this time, Spain had fallen into economic and political

chaos, and although the king had appointed one of Primo de Rivera's opponents, this government quickly failed.

Attempts were made to restore the legitimacy of the king, but he had discredited himself by supporting the regime of Primo de Rivera, and was exiled in April 1931.

Bilingual crossword inside back page

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Dictador	Dictator
Dimitir	To resign
Restauración	Restoration
Salud	Health
Deteriorar	To deteriorate
Fracasar	To fail
Dimisión	Resignation
Solucionar	To solve
Desanimado	Disheartened
Político	Politician
Creer	To believe
Historiador	Historian
Enemigo	Enemy
Aliado	Ally
Reconocimiento	Recognition
Por unanimidad	Unanimously
Respeto	Respect

Young fundraiser smashes target with Concha climb

ASH MAER

MARBELLA. A British youngster is celebrating after raising €2,100 euros by climbing to the peak of Marbella's La Concha mountain last Saturday.

Aurèlie Dias completed the challenge in aid of family friend Sarah who suffers from rheumatoid ar-

thritis - raising more than double her intended target of €1,000.

The 11-year-old, who lives in Benahavis, climbed Marbella's iconic mountain with dad Christian Dias and friend Robert Braine.

The funds will be used to help Sarah, who is in constant pain and unable to get free medical help in South Africa.



Aurèlie with her dad and friend near the top of the mountain. **SUR**



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Winter arrives, the first snow falls and although many of us in Andalucía are lucky enough to have the Sierra Nevada ski resort within easy reach, for those considering a skiing holiday there are also other options available without leaving Spain. In recent years skiing has become increasingly popular in this country and, although it is a sport which requires skill, some level of fitness and good equipment, it is still something that absolute beginners can enjoy.

Skiing is much more than a winter sport. It is the perfect excuse to head for the mountains with the family, friends, as a couple or even on your own. Because skiing goes beyond testing your muscles, your resistance to the cold and how good you are at getting up early. When you go skiing you also get to enjoy après-ski with good music, relax in a spa, enjoy the local cuisine or even play cards in an apartment with friends. Have I convinced you? Good, then let's look at the most important thing now: how to enjoy the snow even when you are a beginner.

Where to ski

It doesn't matter whether this is your first time in the snow or whether you are already an expert skier, the choice of ski station will make or break your winter getaway. The quality of the snow and the condition of the infrastructure are determining factors for practising this sport. Wherever you decide to go, a resort with a large, well-cared-for area for beginners and a good ski school are essential if you are new at this sport. Luckily, in Spain there are some to suit all tastes and levels.

The Pyrenees in Aragón can boast some of the best ski resorts for beginners, such as Formigal-Panticosa and Candanchú. The first has the most skiable kilometres and the most modern facilities on this side of the mountain range. The second, although it is smaller, has a long tradition behind it and can also boast a large area for beginners.

The Catalan Pyrenees is another good option: Baqueira Beret has a good reputation as a resort that caters for inexperienced skiers and, as it is on the north face of the mountain, the quality of snow is guaranteed to be excellent during the entire season.

At the other geographical extreme, and closer to home, Spain also has the Sierra Nevada in Granada province, which is the most southerly ski resort in Europe. This is the favourite of many skiers because of the won-



Beautiful mountain scenery at the Baqueira Beret resort in the Catalan Pyrenees. SUR



The easier slopes in Sierra Nevada are favourites with beginners. SUR

White slopes and blue skies

Fun in the snow. Skiing is not often associated with 'sunny Spain' but the excellent resorts are suitable for experts and beginners alike

► Skiers in Formigal in the Pyrenees in the region of Aragón. SUR



derful climate and excellent snow, and it has no reason to envy bigger winter sports destinations. Its Borreguiles area is perfect for those who are new to skiing.

Equipment

The vast majority of sports require some type of technical and specific equipment, and skiing is no exception. Skis (or a snowboard), boots and helmet are essential, and luckily they can be rented at the ski station. Renting is convenient and also a great advantage when choosing the most suitable skis for someone at your level before taking the definitive step of buying your own equipment.

In these shops at the foot of the slopes you can also buy, or rent in many cases, other types of accessories that you will need, such as gloves, hats, sunglasses and even jackets and trousers.

This means there is no reason why you can't have a fantastic day skiing. However, we would recommend that you pack thermal and breathable clothing in your suitcase.

Lessons with an instructor

Not everyone is lucky enough to have an expert skier in the family or group of friends, so if you are really interested in making progress in this entertaining and demanding sport, it is important that you book some lessons when you get to your chosen resort.

Whether they are in groups or individual, some lessons before launching yourself down the piste are always useful. They will help you to improve your posture, learn how to fall without hurting yourself, pick up speed and overcome your fear of steep slopes (even if they are ones that are only for beginners). After two or three lessons you should be able to go down the blue runs easily and safely. And for people who do have a little experience, a few lessons will be good for perfecting your style and correcting bad habits.

Enjoy your skiing

So, the time has come to have fun. To have a good time skiing down the slopes and enjoying the gorgeous scenery. Because, as others will confirm, skiing is one of the greatest, most fun and fulfilling sports in existence.

So, now you know: go ahead and put on your skis this winter because the green, blue, red and black runs are waiting to help you see and experience the mountains in a completely different and, especially, extremely enjoyable way.

MARTA AGUILERA



◀ A statue of Juliet stands in the courtyard of the house that supposedly appeared in Shakespeare's work. **REUTERS**

courtyard. Don't forget to leave your message of love behind the statue; you never know, it might come true.

Continuing along the Via Capello you come to the Piazza delle Erbe, the heart of the city which leads to numerous imperceptible streets. In the square there is a souvenir market and plenty of restaurants to regain your strength after a morning spent walking. Here, you can also see the Virgin of Verona fountain and the column of St Mark, at the top of which there is a sculpture of a lion, the symbol of the Republic of Venice.

To the north is the Palazzo del Comune, the Torre dei Lamberti, the Casa dei Giudici and the Casa Mazzanti. To the west, the Palazzo Maffei, adorned with statues of Greek gods. To the south, the Casa dei Mercanti and the present Bank of Verona.

If you take the Via dalla Costa from the Piazza delle Erbe, you will come to the Piazza dei Signori, also known as 'Piazza Dante' because there is a statue of the father of the Italian language, Dante Alighiere, there. And if you carry on down Corso Anastasia, you will see the Santa Anastasia church, which was built in 1290 and can be visited free of charge.

To end the day, why not watch the sun set from the Ponte Petra bridge over the Adigio river, with its fascinating view over the city. The surrounding area is a bohemian district with small bars where you can have a bite to eat before returning to your hotel in the moonlight.

Verona, the city of love

Famous. The house which is number 23 in Via Capello is the one described by Shakespeare as the home of the Capulets, with the balcony on which Juliet used to wait for her beloved Romeo every night

**ELENA
MARTÍN**

It is normally Paris that comes to mind when someone mentions the City of Love, but it was in Verona that the most famous love story in literature was based, Romeo and Juliet. It is also the city that thousands of lovers visit each year to get married or celebrate their relationship as they stroll through the streets where one of Shakespeare's best-known plays was set. It is also popular for Valentine's Day which is, of course, next month.

The Roman amphitheatre, situated in the bustling Piazza Bra, is one of the first monuments that visitors see when they come to Verona. In this square you can see the ancient walls, the Palazzo della Gran Guardia and the 19th century Palazzo Barbieri. The square connects with the Liston, a wide cobbled street much frequented by the Veronese, from where you can get to the Mazzini shopping street which is a must for those who love to shop.

Very close to here, at number 23 Via Cappello, is the supposed

home of the Capulets, the house where, according to the story, Juliet used to live.

Even today you can go up onto the famous balcony, where, as described by Shakespeare, the young woman used to wait for her beloved Romeo every night.

Today, this is very popular with newlyweds and is somewhere that lovers flock to and make their wishes, after taking the traditional photo, touching the breast of the statue of Juliet at one end of the



Newlyweds embrace on Juliet's balcony. **REUTERS**



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◀ Dragon Bridge.

This powerful symbol guards an Andalusian town. **A. S.**

Güell in Barcelona. Crossing the Dragon Bridge in Alcalá de Guadaíra might become a seasonal custom for bringing good fortune into the New Year...

Idea 3.

Come across Doñana lynx

The Dragon is just one of the twelve Chinese zodiac animals. Each year is dedicated to either a domesticated or a wild animal. 2022 is the year of the Tiger resting in the water element, or rather the Water Tiger. The tiger in general represents the masculine principle in nature and is king of all the animals.

To find a tiger in Andalucía is not easy, but it is possible to come across its 'brother' - the Iberian lynx that inhabits the park of Doñana, surrounded with much water. If lynxes, which survived in Yorkshire until the sixth century, were known as Britain's little lions, in Huelva province the lynx is sometimes compared to a little tiger. In keeping with the Chinese tiger, the local lynx has incited a sense of both awe and admiration for its prowess, ferocity, and beauty.

Idea 4.

Eat some lucky food

"Happy Chinese New Year!" has been quite often proclaimed in Marbella. Among others, Casino Marbella used to organise a colourful celebration. It appears this year the epicentre of Chinese New Year will be in Sotogrande.

The newly opened restaurant Fresco in Puerto de Sotogrande is organising a special banquet to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The special menu offers seafood and meat in accordance with the Chinese tradition.

"Although we are celebrating the Chinese New Year for the first time, we already intend to make it an annual tradition. We are aware that certain dishes are eaten during the Chinese New Year, for their symbolic meaning. Our chef, Guillermo Collado, is preparing a special menu. Chinese New Year is also known as Spring Festival, so Chinese spring rolls will be served on the table. Besides a seafood dish we will offer guests different types of meat - chicken, beef and lamb. Not only do the dishes themselves matter, but also the preparation, and ways of serving and eating mean a lot. So we will try to pay attention to every detail on our banquet," the restaurant manager, Javier Novelles, told SUR in English.

Probably though, lucky food in any Chinese restaurant on the Costa del Sol or at a special New Year's banquet would be a good Chinese start to 2022.

Four ways to celebrate the Chinese New Year in Andalucía

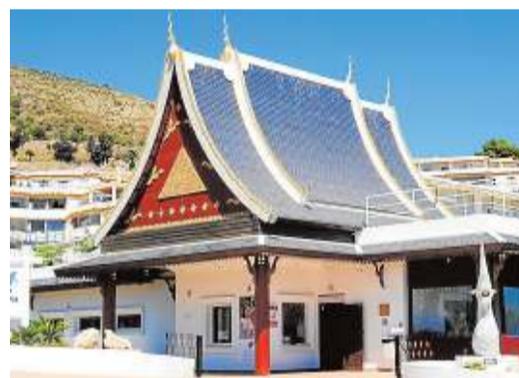
Year of the Tiger. This coming 1st February the Chinese will be celebrating the start of their new year. One of these Oriental-themed visits may well help you get off on the right foot

ALEKK M. SAANDERS

▶ Butterfly Park.

The butterfly is a popular image in Oriental culture.

SUR



▶ Good fortune.

Good Chinese food and traditions can be found the length of the Costa. **SUR**



The Chinese New Year has no fixed date because it always depends on a moon. This year's Lunar New Year begins on 1 February. There are plenty of traditions and superstitions to follow, all aimed at making sure the year ahead is lucky and prosperous. We suggest four ideas to mark the occasion, or rather to highlight this New Year's Day with a Chinese touch, and possibly make the Year 2022 luckier.

Idea 1. Visit the Butterfly Park

In China, the butterfly has been a popular symbol for many centuries. The insect is called 'hu tieh' in the Mandarin language and translates as 'seventy years'. Therefore this beautiful insect symbolises eternal love and companionship. The Costa del Sol is famous

for its huge concentration of butterflies. The Mariposario de Benalmádena is considered the largest and most spectacular butterfly park in Europe. Additionally, last December, in the fifth edition of the Remarkable Venue Awards it was voted the best attraction in Spain. The park boasts more than 1,500 species of butterfly, housed inside an exotic-looking building with a spectacular Asian-style entrance. Who knows - maybe a visit to the pagoda building of the Mariposario and communication with butterflies will be rewarded later with more love, even eternal...

A hotel in the Malaga neighbourhood of Soho, named after the butterfly, has a Chinese entrance. Although the Mariposa hotel is French styled and with art deco elements, its main door is 'guarded' by two life-size warriors from the

Terracotta Army that was constructed to accompany the tomb of China's First Emperor as an afterlife guard. Passing between two Chinese warriors may well give you more self-confidence for the next year...

Idea 2.

Walk across the Dragon Bridge

Dragons are powerful and benevolent symbols in Chinese culture. They are associated with imperial power, good fortune, and enhancing a pioneering spirit. So it is no surprise that in China dragons are looked upon with affection - in legends, festivals, astrology, art and even names. In Andalucía the dragon guards a bridge.

If you head towards Seville, to the small town of Alcalá de Guadaíra, you will find a very unusual bridge called Puente del Dragón

(the Dragon Bridge). It is 123 metres long and connects two banks of the Guadaíra River. The bridge indeed emulates a dragon that 'emerges' from the Castle Hill at the foot of one of the largest Almodad fortresses in Europe. The dragon is considered the guardian of the castle and the defender of the town. It means that the Andalusian dragon is akin to the Chinese one, and not evil, dangerous, or fire-breathing, as it is depicted in most European stories.

The Andalusian dragon is mosaic-decorated in the trencadís technique - cemented-together tile shards and broken chinaware. The Dragon Bridge was created by José Luis Manzanares and was apparently inspired by the famous architect Antonio Gaudí and in particular by his dragon that decorates one of the fountains in Park

EXHIBITIONS

Studio 33 Art Gallery

LA CALA DE MIJAS. Until 14 February. Centro Cultural de La Cala. The collective exhibition entitled 'Ilusiones' includes 37 works by the Studio 33 art gallery.

José M Jiménez

MIJAS. Until 20 February. Casa Museo.

Mijas film buff turned photographer José M Jiménez is exhibiting a collection of his photographs entitled El Paraíso Perdido.



José Jiménez, Mijas Pueblo

Massimo Cedrini

MARBELLA. Until 31 January. Excellence Art Gallery.

Italian artist Massimo Cedrini is exhibiting a collection entitled Amort Un Solo Planeta (Love Is The Essence Of Life, Humans, Animals, Just One Planet.) The objective of these paintings is to highlight the mistreatment of Mother Nature and includes around twenty works which have a big emotional impact.

Fitness and wellness exhibition for Triple A

MARBELLA. 29, 30 January. Palacia de Congresos.

Health, wellness, sport and nutrition companies will be exhibiting their products and services as well as live classes and performances, guest speakers, fitness influencers, sport celebrities, food and drink sections, a kids zone, a dedicated sport section containing a grassed pitch, two gyms and games, plus a social media section. Tickets: 3€ for children (6-16), 5€ for adults and 12€ for a family of four. Under 6s free. Proceeds to Triple A.

Espejito, Espejito

Challenging the canons of Chinese art



Seven Chinese artists will participate in the exhibition in Malaga. SUR

A new exhibition of oriental art aims to deepen the Ransonian School of creative freedom

TONY BRYANT

MALAGA. The Jorge Rando Museum in Malaga is currently hosting an exhibition of works by contemporary Chinese painters titled Huelas de Oriente – Footprints of the East.

The exhibition is an ode to creative freedom and to the power of the language of art and how it becomes an inflexible vehicle to connect human beings.

Seven Chinese painters are participating in the exhibition and their works aim to deepen the Rando ideology of free expression and creative freedom, a movement that

challenges the canons that govern traditional Chinese painting - as the European avant-garde did at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The exhibition is the result of Jorge Rando's visit to China in 2019 and his meetings with the great contemporary masters of Chinese painting, such as Xu Rengdon, author of the iconic mural of the Chinese Wall in the People's Parliament.

Born in Malaga in 1941, Rando is considered one of the most internationally recognised Spanish artists and a main exponent of Neo-expressionism in Spain.

The exhibition, which is free, can be viewed Monday to Friday between 10am until 2pm, and from 4pm to 8pm. Saturday, from 10am until 2pm.

www.museojorgerando.org

MARBELLA. Until 15 March. Reiner's Contemporary Art, CC Camoján Corner.

The exhibition Espejito, Espejito by Sali Muller.

Let's Get Metaphysical

MARBELLA. Until 24 March. Galería Yusto Giner, C/Madera.

A collective exhibition by artists Ana

Barriga, Taylor Mckimens, Magda Kirk, José Lerma, Kristof Santy and Jake Clark.

Toy exhibition

ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE. Until 28 February. El Museo Andaluz de la Educación, C/ Ermita.

Over 150 toys and dolls are on display all from the 1950s up to about

2000. The exhibition includes bicycles, Scalextric and Game Boy consoles.

Our Art

FUENGIROLA. The Swedish church, Svenska Kyrkan.

Crossing Codes. Until 4 February. A solo exhibition by the award-winning artist from The Royal Society of Sculptors London, Nok (Chutima Kerdpitak). Based in Mijas Costa, the artist uses mixed-media, sculptures and installations. She is the founder of Uncooked Culture worldwide artists community.

Outsider's Echoes. From 6 until 19 February. International exhibition showcasing art from Uncooked Culture, over 35 artists based in 14 different countries and some local artists. Uncooked Culture has carried out its barrier-breaking art initiatives, promoting outsider, self-taught and schooled artists

Centre Pompidou

MALAGA. Muelle Uno.

<https://centrepompidou-malaga.eu/>

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.

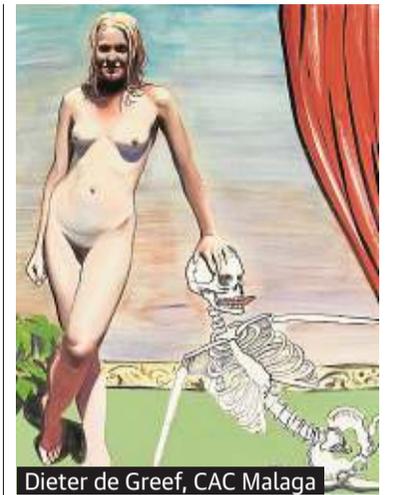


Toy exhibition, Alhaurín d l Torre

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

MALAGA.

Uncertainty's Grace. Until 30 January, 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



Dieter de Greef, CAC Málaga

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.

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

Antonio Rojas. Cuando La Memoria Se Resiste a Abandonar el Puerto is the title of this exhibition commissioned by Fernando Francés. It includes paintings in various formats and mediums which cover more than thirty years of this artist's life.

100 Years of the Foreign Legion

MALAGA. Until 15 February. Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, Plaza de la Constitución.

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.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

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

Paul Strand. Until 6 March 2022. The exhibition includes over one hundred photos taken by the legendary New York photographer. It is the first time that the Thyssen Museum Malaga has had an exhibition solely dedicated to photography. The past collections of the Thyssen museum: www.carmen-thyssenmalaga.org

28TH, 29TH AND 30TH OF JANUARY, 2022

RetroMálaga

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Friday 28th: from 4 pm to 9 pm
Saturday 29th: from 10 am to 9 pm
Sunday 30th: from 10 am to 8 pm

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With the collaboration of: Museo Anticarrilístico

Logos: FCM, FYCMA, Museo Anticarrilístico

EXHIBITIONS

Miguel Retamero

MALAGA. Until 1 March. *La Casa Amarilla, C/Santos.* Ronda artist Miguel Retamero is holding his first exhibition in Malaga at the Casa Amarilla. It is entitled *Skin Deep* and reflects the superficial layers that people adopt to protect themselves from how others may perceive them.



Miguel Retamero, Malaga

Caridad, Cincuentenario, Arte y Devoción

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 28 January. *Sala de Exposiciones del Convento de San Francisco.*

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the rescue and blessing of the Virgen de la Caridad, more than 40, young Andalusian artists will be exhibiting their works inspired by the images of the brotherhood.

Estrella Carabel Ferreiro

ALMUÑÉCAR. Until 30 January. *Sala de Exposiciones Rowland Fade, Casa de Cultura.* Las Memorias del Alma is the title of

this exhibition by Galician artist Estrella Carabel Ferreiro.

Bernado Ocano

EL MORCHE. Until 10 February. *Bio Beach Club restaurant, Paseo Marítimo.*

Figurative Art in Harmony Abstract is an exhibition by Venezuelan artist and architect, Bernardo Ocano

MUSIC AND DANCE

La Cochera Cabaret

MALAGA. Avda de los Guindos. **28 January, 8pm.** Dani Botillo. **30 January, 8pm.** Noches de swing. Tickets: www.lacocheraentradas.com/

Clarence Jazz Club

TORREMOLINOS. Calle Danza Invisible, 8. **28 January, 10pm.** Walt Weiskopf European Quartet. **29 January, 10pm.** Swing for Five El Jazz en El Cine. info@clarencejazzclub.com

Ventana Abierta Jazz Club

NERJA. Hotel Plaza Cavana, C/Granada. **4 February, 8pm.** The Daniel Amat Trío plays Latin Jazz. **18 February, 8pm.** Félix Rossi Trío. www.ventana-abierta.es

Salon Varietés

FUENGIROLA. 7.30pm daily, 7pm Sunday. *The Salon Varietés Theatre, Calle Emancipación.* **Tribute to Michael Bublé.** 4, 5 February. Bringing you all the favourite hits from the Canadian king of swing, such as *Just haven't met you yet*, *Home and Sway*. Tickets: boxoffice@salon-varietestheatre.com or call: 952474542

The Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

Chamber Music cycle. *In the auditorium of the Museo Picasso Málaga, 8pm.*

1 February. Violin and piano duet with Jesús Reina and Josu de Solau. More information: www.orquestafilarmonicademalaga.com Twitter: @filarmonimalaga or Facebook: www.facebook.com/Filarmonica-Malaga.

Piano recital

LA HERRADURA. 29 January, 7pm. *Auditorio Diego Martínez, Centro Cívico.*

La Herradura Clásica is the name of the concert by pianist Rodrigo López Rueda. He will be playing music by composers Beethoven, Chopin, Robert and Clara Schumann, Cécile Chaminade and Manuel de Falla. Tickets 10€ from Librería Páramo (La Herradura) or from the box office.

Lavin! Band

ALMUÑÉCAR. 30 January, 12.30pm. *Auditorium of the Casa de Cultura.* Greatest Swing hits. aytoalmuncar.prensa@gmail.com

La Posada

MALAGA. *Vincci Posada del Patio, Pasillo de Sta Isabel.* **28 January, 8pm.** Señor Blues. www.tallerblues.es

Robbie Williams tribute

MARBELLA. 26 January, 9pm. *Da Bruno Sul Mare Ristorante.* Ollie Hughes will entertain diners with hits by Robbie Williams. Book-

ings: 952903318 / 637535383

Museo Carmen Thyssen concerts

MALAGA. *Patio de las Columnas, Museo Carmen Thyssen.* **29 January.** Cecilia Blanes, Marta Chica, Paula Sedeño and Laura Ramírez of the Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra, have created the Carmen Thyssen Quartet. They will be playing pieces by composers Chapí, Borodin, Bretón, Mendelssohn, J.C. Arriaga, Tchaikovsky, Turina and Ravel. Tickets: www.carmenthysssenmalaga.org/

The Rob Sas Band

COSTA DEL SOL. *Various venues.* **29 January, 9pm, Benalmádena.** Bar los Motos.

Michael Kevin Jones in concert

MARBELLA. 29 January, 6pm. *Las Mariposas.* The first in the Hauskonzert series, a concert with cellist Michael Kevin Jones accompanied by Monica Forrester Becko on the harpsichord. With music from composers such as Bach and Vivaldi. Tickets: reservas@musicaconencanto.org or call: 654013232 Covid vaccination certificates and masks are mandatory.

Zensational

ESTEPONA. 11 February, 8pm. *Centro Cultural Padre Manuel.* 10€. **MIJAS.** 12 February, 8pm. *Teatro Las Lagunas.* Pianist Herman Rijks starts with mystical harmonies and 'ZEN' cadences which are later followed by saxophone, cello, congas and a choir.



Dani Botillo, La Cochera Cabaret

Soul, Gospel, Tango and Cuban music and songs. Tickets: www.ZENsacional.com

FLAMENCO

Tango and flamenco by candlelight

NERJA. 28 January, 8pm. *Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja.* 15€. Fernando Egozcú presents his new tango and flamenco show entitled *AméricaLatida* together with violinist Thomas Potiron and dancer Cristina Vega. Tickets: www.mientrada.net

THEATRE AND OPERA

Salon Varietés

FUENGIROLA. 7.30pm daily, 7pm Sunday. *The Salon Varietés Theatre, Calle Emancipación.* **A View from the Bridge.** Until 30 January. A drama written by Arthur Miller, set in 1950's Brooklyn New York. Directed by Anthony Fitzpatrick, starring Owain Griffiths and

Salón Varietés Theatre returns to Victorian era for night of nostalgia

The Majestic Music Hall will offer a mixture of popular pub songs, comedy sketches and cabaret

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. The Salón Varietés Theatre will be transformed into a Victorian era saloon bar for its latest production, a show that will feature what is regarded as one of the only truly British popular entertainment forms.

The Majestic Music Hall is a show full of the traditional variety performance style of entertainment that was born in London during the 1840s and flourished until the outbreak of WWI.

The music hall became a popular form of entertainment and featured a variety of performers, including singers, dancers, comedians, jugglers, acrobats and other speciality acts.

The shows would include classic London bar room



The Olde Tyme Company will offer a night of nostalgic cabaret. SUR

songs like *Down at the Old Bull and Bush*, *Don't Dilly Dally*, and *Any Old Iron*, along with suggestive comedy and riotous dance routines.

Presented by the Olde Tyme Company, the show at the Salón Varietés, which has been billed as "A collaborative creation of scintillating song and showmanship", will offer a mixture of popular music hall songs, along with comedy sketches and cabaret in the

style of the old-fashioned tap-room shows of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The show will be held from Wednesday 9 until Sunday 13 February. Performances begin at 7.30pm (7pm on Sunday).

Tickets cost 15 euros and are available from www.salon-varietestheatre.com or by phoning the box office (952474542) between 11am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday.



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Peter Oliver. Tickets from salonvarietes.com or on 952 474542

The Barber of Seville

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 19 February, 8pm. Teatro del Carmen.

The Teatro Lírico d'Andaluz presents the opera The Barber of Seville in four acts. Tickets (15€) on sale from 31 January: 667389530 or email: cultura@velezmalaga.es

LECTURES AND TALKS

National Museum lecture series

GIBRALTAR. Monthly at John Mackintosh Hall.

17 February, 7pm. Professor Clive Finlayson: From the Pillars of Hercules to Jebel Tarik: Gibraltar from 800 BCE to 1462 CE.

FIESTAS AND FERIAS

Fiestas Patronales

BENAGALBÓN. 2 - 6 February.

In honour of the Virgen de la Candalaria and San José. Processions, live music, children's activities, cycle race etc. www.rincondelavictoria.es

MORE IDEAS

Making musical instruments

MÁLAGA. 29 January from 10am. El Otro Museo, Museo Picasso.

Learn to make musical instruments from re-cycled materials and how to play them. Free. Register: erodriguez@fundacionsgae.org

MálagaJam

MÁLAGA. 28-30 January. El Polo Nacional de Contenidos Digitales del

Ayuntamiento de Málaga, Tabacalera. The annual videogame marathon MálagaJam has become the official venue for Global Game Jam. Teams of international players play videogames for 48 hours, based on a common theme. Prizes for different category winners. Register: www.malagajam.com

Retro Auto & Moto Málaga

MÁLAGA. 28, 29, 30 January. Palacio de Ferias y Congresos de Málaga. The Retro Auto & Moto Málaga 2022 show will include classic two, three and four wheeled vehicles from all over Europe. Many classic vehicles will be for sale and there will be stands selling all associated products and tools, accessories and parts. The event opens at 4pm Friday and is open 10am - 9pm Saturday and 10am - 8pm Sunday. Email: info@eventos-motor.com

Family English Cemetery Days

MÁLAGA. Saturdays, 10am-2pm. Avda de Pries, 1.

Book a family visit to the English Cemetery and they will provide a route to follow to discover some fascinating Malaga history, and games to play along the way - all in both English and Spanish. Reservations: www.cementerioinglesmalaga.org/en under the "visits" tab. Language, history and art teachers can contact us via the web about this and other activities we can provide.

Paseos por Málaga

MÁLAGA. From 11am-12.30pm. 10€ per person.



Cuarteto Carmen Thyssen, Málaga

The tours are accompanied by singing and guitar music. Lunch or dinner and a flamenco show can also be arranged. Contact Paco Roji: 687607526.

29 January. Barrio de La Trinidad. **5 February.** Barrio de Huelin. Chiquito de la Calzá and others.

Spanish Galleon

MÁLAGA. Until 30 January. Muelle 2. The replica Spanish galleon, the Nao Victoria, is extending its stay at the port until the end of the month. Adults and children can board the vessel and explore the decks and discover what it was like inside an authentic Spanish Galleon.

Short story competition

GIBRALTAR. Closing date 4 March.

Entry forms and conditions: www.culture.gi or by contacting Gibraltar Cultural Services Events Dept: 20067236 or email: info@cul-

ture.gi

Gibraltar Chess Festival

GIBRALTAR. Until 3 February. Garrison Library.

The Battle of the Sexes 2022 is an International chess festival with tournaments during the day and a full programme of evening events including lectures from world class chess writers and journalists. The novelty blitz pirs evening offers the opportunity of partnering a world-class player such as Nigel Short. More info: https://www.gibchess.com/

Lux Mundi

TORRE DEL MAR. Mon and Wed 10am-1pm, Fridays, 11am - 1pm. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, Avda Moscatel.

Taizé Prayer. 28 January 7.45pm. San Andrés church. Taizé prayer is a monthly invitation to join in prayer. Send an email to be included in them: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org.

Coach trip to Osuna. 24 February. Various departure points. Tickets 29€ visitors or 25€ for Lux Mundi card holders. Bookings: 952543334 or email: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org

O. V. FILMS

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

Yelmo Cines, Plaza Mayor

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

King Richard: 19.10 (Tues). **Belfast:** 13.05, 15.10 (Sun); 19.45 (Tues).

Nightmare Alley: 12.55 (Sun); 18.55 (Tues); 21.25 (every day except Tues, Wed).

Spider Man No Way Home: 13.30 (Tues).

West Side Story: 12.40 (Tues). **Opera from the MET: Rigoletto:** 18:55 (Sat).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

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

Belfast: 20.20 (Tues) **Nightmare Alley:** 9.05 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MÁLAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902220922

Belfast: 12.40 (Sun); 19.25 (Tues). **Spider man No Way Home:** 13.00 (Sun).

Nightmare Alley: 12.00 (Sun); 19.10 (Tues)

King Richard: 12.45 (Sun); 19.20 (Tues).

Spider Man No Way Home: 13.00 (Sun).

West Side Story: 12.25 (Sun)

Cinesur Miramar

FUENGIROLA. Avda de la Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.

King Richard: 17.00

Belfast: 16.50

Nightmare Alley: 11.45, 20.00

Scream: 22.50.

Spider Man No Way Home: 18.00, 22.50

Canta 2: 12.10, 17.45

Cinesur Ingenio

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

Scream: 19.00 (Tues).

Nightmare Alley: 19.00 (Tues).

Belfast: 17.30 (Tues).

Spider Man No Way Home: 17.00 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).

King Richard: 18.55 (Tues)

Cine Albéniz

MÁLAGA. C/ Alcazaba, 4. Tel:

902360295. www.cinealbeniz.com.

Prisoners of the Ghostland: 22.00.

Dutch-Belgian duo bring high energy guitar to La Herradura

Tijs Groen and Vincent Van Sant Foort will be performing at the town's Teatro Diego Martínez tonight

JENNIE RHODES

LA HERRADURA. Dutch-Belgian duo Tijs Groen and Vincent Van Sant Foort will be performing at La Herradura's Centro Cívico, also known as Teatro Diego Martínez, tonight, 28 January at 8.30pm.

The pair bring their own individual styles and their combined high energy guitar playing to the town that Tijs has called home for almost a decade.

They describe their music as a mix of blues, rock, gypsy jazz and even throw in some Cuban rhythms for good measure.

Tijs, 36, is a well-known face on the Costa del Sol, having played in bars, concert venues and arguably his favourite place; the great



Vincent and Tijs will bring high energy guitar to La Herradura. sur

outdoors, for a number of years, on his own as well as with other well-known artists including Mama Paula.

Vincent, 26, has made a name for himself in his native Belgium with the rock band Boskat and met Tijs while the Dutch musician was there about three years ago.

Vincent recently decided to come to La Herradura for

an extended stay and the two have got together again to collaborate.

Tijs and Vincent have already played in Ronda, Tarifa and Almeria and now are performing in their own 'adopted' town.

The concert starts at 8.30pm. Tickets (10€) from Librería Páramo, La Herradura and at the box office one hour before the concert.

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I'm sneezing - is it Omicron or an allergy?

The hay fever season has started early, leading to confusion

SOLANGE VÁZQUEZ



Right now, we're all going crazy with tissues and antigen tests. A sneeze - let alone several in a row - sets off alarm bells, and not only ours but those of everyone around us. If you don't believe it, try this experiment: go 'Achoo' in an enclosed space with other people around, and you will see immediately that people give you accusing looks, move away, look uncomfortable and adjust their masks for a better fit. They (we) are afraid of catching Covid, of course.

What is happening is that the first allergies are starting to appear as some plants are flowering early, and the symptoms are similar to those caused by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus (sore throat, sneezing) which is predominant right now. So every sneeze and cough makes people worry!

The Cupressaceae, of which the cypress is best-known, began its pollination in December and reaches its maximum levels between now and February. Many people are allergic to it: at present, four out of every ten cases of pollen allergy are due to this type of tree and bush, according to the online pharmacy Dosfarma. It says that this type of allergy has increased by 30 per cent in the last few years, mainly due to the fact that they have been planted for decoration in many places, especially in big cities.

So, at this time of the year we are in their 'kingdom' and also, to a certain extent, that of pine and birch trees, and people who suffer from these allergies are already very aware of that fact. So what's the problem? Many of them, amid this psychosis of "have I got Covid or not?" have no idea whether they are suffering from hay fever or

if these are early signs of the virus, which is currently at its peak (it is hoped that by May or June this sixth wave of Covid will have passed).

Pedro Gamboa, an allergist at Igualatorio Médico Quirúrgico (IMQ), and Amanda Dutruc, a pharmacist at Dosfarma, give us some clues here on how to distinguish Omicron from allergies which occur at this time of year.

Fever

This is the main difference. "There is never fever with an allergy," stressed Pedro Gamboa. Although some sufferers say they notice a rise in temperature at certain times - they say they feel hot - this expert insists that that is not a fever, as indicated by a thermometer. So, if you have a fever, it isn't because of an allergy. It could be Omicron, or maybe a cold. However, it doesn't work like that the other way round: no fever doesn't mean no Covid; although it is a common symptom, some people who test positive for the virus never have a temperature.

Nasal secretions

Although in both cases there may be a blocked or runny nose, the nasal secretions due to Omicron and those from an allergy are different. Those from an allergy are generally more liquid, abundant and clear.

Sneezing

"Common symptoms of an allergy are an itchy nose, eyes, ears and even the roof of the mouth. That doesn't happen with Covid," said Gamboa. In both cases, people sneeze, but allergic sneezing is usually as the result of an uncontrollable tickle that we cannot ignore.

Duration

"As we have seen, the Omicron symptoms last between two and four days, or maybe a week at most, while allergy symptoms can go on for several weeks, while the pollina-

REMOVING DOUBTS

Rapid tests

Antihistamine or test Quick result
"If you take an antihistamine and you feel better, there is no doubt: it is an allergy," said Pedro Gamboa. The other easy way to be sure is to take an antigen or a PCR test, of course.

Improvements Pay attention

Both experts say that if you have confusing symptoms but you feel better when it rains, when you wear a mask or spend time indoors, it is most likely an allergy, because in those circumstances the pollen doesn't us 'attack' as much. The symptoms of Omicron will not be affected by those variables.

No psychosis No stigma

Gamboa advises people with allergies to be sure to take suitable medication this year to prevent suspicious looks, stress and doubts (ours and those of others).

CONDITIONING FACTORS

Open window syndrome and masks

As it is not 'usual' for pollination to take place in the winter, so we don't associate sneezing and itchy eyes with an allergy. Even for those of us who have suffered from allergies all our lives, the symptoms at this time of year still come as a surprise. Also, thanks to the pandemic, this year we are more exposed to pollen even when indoors, due to what has been called 'open window syndrome'. The need to keep rooms ventilated because of Covid is exposing people who are allergic to more pollen, and they take it home because it sticks to their clothes and hair. And when they take their mask off... "Achoo!"

tion lasts," said Amanda Dutruc. If you have symptoms that you're not sure about for more than a week, it is almost certainly due to an allergy.

General effects

"An allergy doesn't make you tired or cause pain... no general feeling of being unwell," said Gamboa. Omicron, however, does. In fact, that is one of the principal symptoms.

"Also the symptoms of Omicron diminish as the days pass, while those of an allergy tend not to," added Dutruc.



ILLUSTRATION LAURA RICO

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

WAS DRY JANUARY A BUST? ARE YOU STRUGGLING TO GIVE UP THE BOOZE?

COSTA DEL SOL

The festive season is a distant memory, and Dry January has come and gone. Did you keep on track with a New Year's resolution to cut back on the booze, or was an alcohol-free January a complete bust, and you barely made it out of the starting gates before you just needed to have that drink?

Millions of people worldwide struggle with problems related to alcohol use. If you often drink more, or for longer than you planned to; have tried to cut back (or stop) and found you couldn't; drink to deal with feelings and emotions; or if your drinking is interfering with your life - responsibilities, relationships, finances, or health - then you could have a problem with alcohol.

There is a solution, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - a 12-Step fellowship support group that has helped people all over the world

with their problem drinking. If the consequences of your alcohol use are getting too much, if you are ready to stop drinking, or want support to help you try, then don't wait until it gets any worse.

You may feel that life without alcohol will be unbearable, no fun at all or dull beyond words - this isn't true. Here, members of AA talk about how their lives have not only got better but improved beyond their wildest dreams.

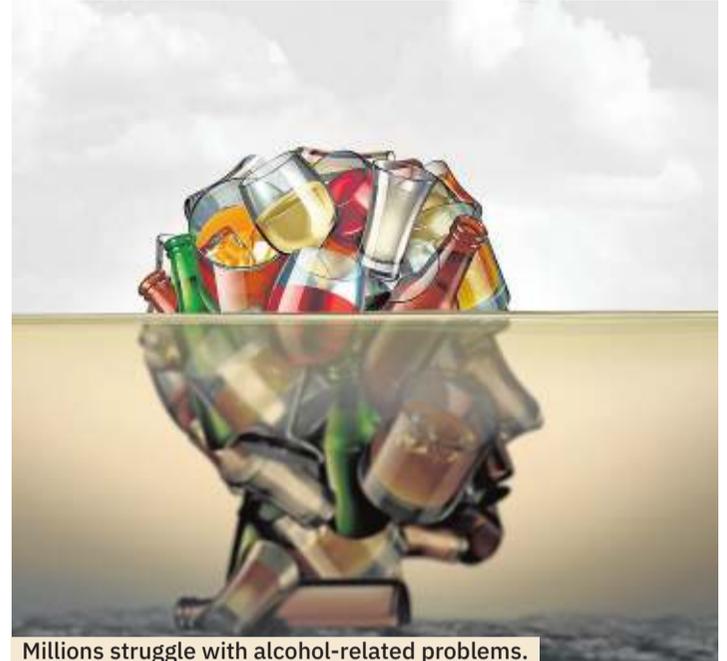
"My name is Claire, and I am 38 years old. When I came to AA, I thought I had lost everything, my family, friends, jobs, house, along with my dignity and self-worth. My mind was completely broken. The obsession and compulsion to drink had completely taken over and I couldn't stop. I didn't know who I was anymore. I didn't know what else to do but to end my life, the alcoholic in me had completely taken control.

"With the help of the wonder-

ful people that I met in AA I began to feel safe and loved. I was given support and guidance and I stopped feeling so vulnerable. Two years on and my life is so completely different. I have a successful business, I'm getting married, and I have a house that's paid for. The biggest thing though, for me, was reconnecting with my family. Every day is a blessing and I no longer fear life."

"I'm Louis and I have been sober for nearly 15 years. I lost both my parents to alcoholism and swore it wouldn't happen to me. Then what started as binge drinking in my teens turned into a way to manage my stress and anxiety. Before I knew it, I realised I had a serious drinking problem, and I was humiliated and angry.

"I went along to my first meeting with a friend who thought they had a problem. I was only going for support but whilst I was there, I was identifying with everything



Millions struggle with alcohol-related problems.

that was being said. Since that first meeting I haven't looked back. I found a bunch of people who were willing to love me and care for me until I could love myself.

"Today I am a caring and loving person, with an amazing family which I adore, six children, most of whom have never seen me drink. The life I have here in Spain is a gift."

There are meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, with friendly people who will understand, held daily

throughout the Costa del Sol. Meetings are free to attend, and anyone who thinks they may have a problem with alcohol is welcome.

MORE INFORMATION

English-speaking AA helpline.
+34 600 379 110

Website. www.aacostadel-sol.com

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Watery maturing

ANDREW J. LINN



‘Saw those idiots again, dropping bottles into the sea,’ was a fisherman’s comment in the bar. ‘Hope it doesn’t frighten the fish’.

Most wineries are searching for novel ways of promoting their products, and what better than being able to put on the label ‘Matured at 100 metres’?

Spain’s Raúl Pérez was a pioneer when in 2003 he dropped Albariños from Rías Baixas into a watery cellar. No-one really knows what effect the underwater ageing of wine really does. Anecdotal evidence indicates that wines age quicker underwater, but is the wine better?

It all started when wine salvaged from shipwrecks proved to be surprisingly good. The maturing process involves zero oxygen and gentle tidal movement, both of which appear to be positive. Seawater is not essential. Australian winemakers use tanks filled with fresh water. But will consumers pay for such wines? Bodega Mira’s underwater Cabernet Sauvignon cost 450 euros (yes, 450) more than its land-matured equivalent and sold out almost immediately.

Spain’s Vina Maris, matured underwater for 16 months in French oak, sells for 70 euros.

But you really do have to wonder who buys the stuff. And if they buy it do they ever drink it or just keep the bottle to show off?

Why not just buy an inflatable swimming pool and chuck in a few bottles for a year, using seawater to increase authenticity? Your friends will think you are mad, so let them taste the underwater wine against the same wine matured on dry land. Will they be convinced? Frankly I doubt it. Nor has any blind tasting ever been organised. Funny that.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Com Tu 2018

No apologies for nominating another fabulous wine from one of Spain’s most enigmatic regions. This Priorato from Montsant is made by Clos Mogador, founded by Rene Barbier, and is typical of these amazing Garnacha-based wines. Very fruity and fresh, this 14.5° example is one of the best. Only 3,000 bottles made. Around 30 euros.



Manchego cheese D. O. SUR

Manchego cheese is in short supply due to high demand and lack of farmers

A victim of its own success, there aren't enough producers to keep up with demand for this Spanish cheese

J. M. L.

CIUDAD REAL. Manchego cheese with ‘dominación de origen’ (designation of origin) is experiencing a “dangerous success”. On the one hand, stocks of this product are running out due to the high demand in supermarkets and stores and the increase in exports, but on the other hand, there are fewer and fewer farmers dedicated to its production. The generational replacement is not taking effect in this sector, despite the fact that it is a profitable product.

The forty-seven cheese factories that produce Manchego cheese under its appellation of origin are selling out of their stock and even have waiting lists

of customers.

According to the president of the Denominación de Origen Queso Manchego, Antonio Martínez, “The large distribution chains have introduced these cheeses to the national and European markets, incorporating them onto their shelves. But, as it is an item with such a limited production, this means that in the end there is not enough of it.”

Authentic

Not all cheese produced in Castilla-La Mancha is authentic Manchego cheese. The milk must come from Manchego sheep, a breed that has been

Not all cheese produced in Castilla-La Mancha is classed as authentic Manchego cheese

kept pure for centuries.

There are two types of Manchego sheep, white and black, but the quality of the milk is the same. Once turned into cheese, it must mature for at least thirty days if pasteurised milk has been used, and sixty days for the other types.

The milk must also be totally free of medicinal products that may affect the production, ripening and preservation of the cheese. That is not all; the temperature must not exceed 10 degrees Celsius during the journey from the farm to the cheese factory nor in the factory itself.

These are the strict requirements established by the Denominación de Origen Queso Manchego, a product rich in calcium and protein, which concentrates all the nutritional properties of milk and contains vitamins A, D and E, essential in metabolic processes such as bone growth, tissue preservation and calcium absorption.

Spain's men's and women's finish ninth in World Rugby Sevens Series

South Africa's men took first place, while the United States' women picked up gold at the event held in Malaga

P. L. ALONSO / S. CONAGHAN

MALAGA. Spain's men and women rugby 7s teams did not perform well in the World Rugby Seven Series, which was held in Malaga. The added pressure of being hosts for the first time seems to have got to the Lions and Lionesses.

The men's team were shocked to lose 19-14 against USA in their opening game, who have in their ranks one of the world's best 7s player in Perry Baker. The Lions were subsequently thrashed 40-12 by eventual finalists Argentina, before cruising past Jamaica 38-7 to make it to the ninth-place play-offs.

There, the Spaniards thrashed Japan 31-10; they enjoyed another close, 31-10 win against Scotland and finally and convincingly defeating Wales 34-5 to seal their place as the best of the rest and pick up an important eight point that count towards their Sevens Series championship tally.

The Lionesses also finished the weekend in ninth place, though because the women's tournament had fewer teams, Spain only picked up four points for their efforts.

The hosts got off to a rocky start as they faced a strong Ireland side that scored two tries within the opening five minutes, before the match ended 21-5 to the Irish. Spain would improve on their performance by beating Belgium in a thrilling 26-19, as Ingrid Algar's final-minute try was enough to give the hosts the win.

However, the Lionesses would be steamrolled 20-0 against Australia, confirming their place in the ninth-place play-offs. Spain were given a bye for their match with Fiji, as the nation hadn't travelled to the tournament, therefore facing-off against Belgium once again. The hosts didn't disappoint and made two wins on the bounce against the Belgians, defeating them 17-5.

South Africa's men made it four consecutive World Series wins on the trot, beating the Argentians 24-17 thanks to a last-gasp try and subsequent conversion; while USA convincingly beat Russia 35-10 in the women's final, though they enjoyed a more comfortable road to victory, as the Russians failed to score in the second-half. England's men also picked up bronze, with Wales and Scotland ending behind Spain; while England women's team finished seventh.



South Africa's men and USA's women celebrate winning their World Series titles in Malaga. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Spain score a try in their game against Belgium. MIGUE FERNÁNDEZ



Daniel shows support for Australia. s. c.



Madison came from the USA. S. CONAGHAN



Dauids scores a try for South Africa in the men's final. M. FERNÁNDEZ

International fans come together in Malaga to watch their nations play

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. The early-morning crowd on Friday, 21 January, might have been small, with not even a quarter of the seats occupied by fans, but even then, the atmosphere was upbeat. England's women were facing-off against France, with the Belgians in the stand shouting in support of their Francophone cousins.

The arrival of schoolchildren from the local Claro Campoamor school really transformed the atmosphere, as the youngsters created a buzz that was hard to ignore. By then the crowd at the stadium had grown, with fans coming from far afield and also closer to home, making it feel like a true melting pot of different peoples and cultures.

Madison had travelled across the Atlantic to watch the United States play. "I've come all the way from Maine. I've just graduated from college and decided to come and watch the rugby 7s here. I became a fan after watching it at the last Olympic cycle," she explained. "Then I used to cover the women's team in a podcast for WiSP Sports."



Vincent Parsons

Daniel sits in the stands with a vibrant Australia jumper on. He comes from Barcelona and spent time Down Under. "I was living in Brisbane for two years, and that's where I fell in love with rugby 7s," he said. "I was already a rugby fan before and in that area of the world, the sport is a big part of their culture." Daniel had made the trip from his native Barcelona all the way to Malaga.

Among the crowd were people who were more than just rugby 7s fans. A lot were also cheering on their children, with some parents trekking across the globe.

Vincent Parsons and his wife Evelyn came from Ireland with their daughter Beibhinn, who was recently named Irish Rugby Writers Player of the Year. "I'm here to watch my daughter play. She scored the first try in the opening match!" Vicent said excitedly. "We try and see her whenever we can, but some of the tournaments are too far away, and travelling is a bit of a nuisance now."

Paul and his wife Karen also made the effort to support their son, Nathan Lawson, who represents Australia. "We've come from Sydney, Australia to see our son play," said Paul, decked out, along with his wife, in their nation's famous yellow colours. "We didn't have any real trouble coming over, only that it was a long trip."

Malaga CF decide to sack head coach after 5-0 thrashing by Ibiza

The announcement came on the Monday after Saturday's game at La Rosaleda; José Alberto was replaced by Natxo González on Thursday

B. GUTIÉRREZ/ A. GÓNGORA

MALAGA. José Alberto López is no longer at Malaga. Nearly eight months after he was announced as head coach at the club, and following 26 games in charge of the Andalusian side (with nine wins, seven draws and ten defeats to his name), he has been let go after failing to achieve both his objectives and those of the club. He has been replaced by Natxo González, after an agreement was reached on Thursday.

The initial positivity surrounding José Alberto's signing quickly simmered away as the team couldn't quite find the consistency needed to compete in the Spanish second division. Many fans identified key areas where the Asturian manager lacked, as they noticed that the ups and downs were too drastic, especially with the team's performances away from home.

The club did not have a managerial switch in their plans, but the month of December was not good, though it did coincide with there being a lot of players out through injury or illness.

Things seemingly improved for the team after winning their first away game against Alcorcón, but the performance was unconvincing. The Blue and Whites put on a brave face when they drew 2-2 with Sporting Gijón at La



José Alberto looks down as his side was thrashed 5-0 by Ibiza. He was sacked on Monday. **MARIANO POZO**

The sacking of Malaga's head coach came after a 5-0 thrashing by Ibiza at La Rosaleda. The Blue and Whites never found consistency under José Alberto, winning nine games, drawing seven and losing ten

Rosaleda, but the worst was yet to come.

The 5-0 defeat against Ibiza last weekend, at home, was the straw that broke the camel's back. Criticism was pouring in from all sides, and sporting director Manolo Gaspar had no other choice.

Replaced in days

No replacement had been named by the club in the days after José Alberto's sacking, and Juan Francisco Funes Arjona took over as interim head coach. Funes, who was at the helm of Malaga's B team,

took charge from Monday until the club found a replacement on Thursday.

With the transfer window open for only a few more days, Malaga had to add a new head coach to their wishlist. Currently, they're looking for players to reinforce the weaker points of the current squad, namely in attack and in the full-back positions, and their choice of head coach was crucial for the remainder of the season.

The sacking of José Alberto will have been a difficult decision for Gaspar, who was the man that

Ibiza stun Malaga and bring the party to La Rosaleda

Malaga were on the receiving end of a 5-0 thrashing by Ibiza on Saturday at La Rosaleda, in what was the Blue and Whites' worst performance of the season as they failed to react after conceding.

Malaga had performed well in the first half, but the visitors were the ones to open the scoring. In the second half, the embarrassment began. Ibiza's second, third, fourth and fifth goals all came in the latter 45 minutes and the fans were fed up, calling once again for José Alberto to resign and even sarcastically applauding the visitors' fifth goal.

Malaga continued trying to get at least one goal back, but despite making more offensive changes, they couldn't score. In the end, another disastrous display ended José Alberto's eight-month spell at the club, as he was sacked on Monday.

vouched for the now ex-head coach after Sergio Pellicer's departure at the end of last season.

With José Alberto's arrival, Malaga insisted that the type of football he was bringing was attractive, offensive-minded and brave, as well as taking advantage of the energy and desire of younger players (Malaga have the third youngest squad in the league).

The Andalusians' project now falls in the hands of Natxo González. He has experience in the Spanish second division, managing 132 games for four clubs and guiding Zaragoza to the play-offs in 2018.

That goal is hard for Malaga to achieve now, though, as they sit seven points off promotion.

Antonio Benítez, Malaga Football Club legend, dies

He led the team to historic wins against Real Madrid and Atlético de Madrid

SERGIO CORTÉS

MALAGA. Antonio Benítez, "a true legend" of Malaga CF, died on Sunday 23 January, aged 79, from a longstanding respiratory illness.

Antonio Fernández Benítez was born in Alicante in 1942, but he moved to Malaga to become a legend of the La Rosaleda club and their "best coach in history". He was the only coach to lead Malaga in the Third, Second B, Second and First Divisions.

"I could have played four or five more years, even with a wheelchair. I wasn't very fast and I wasn't very strong, but I always knew how to position myself. I sensed where the ball was going to go, even if it was on the goalkeeper's kick, and I was ready there," Benítez said.

He said his illness "bored" him because it meant he could not leave his home.

His first match in Malaga was at the El Chorro Hydroelectric and he was known as 'El alicantino'. His career in the senior category included a spell with Atlético Andalucía (in the 1959-60 season), Atlético Malagueño (between 1960 and 1964) and Malaga (until 1976). He made it



Benítez in his playing days. **MCF**

to the first team and never left. He played 12 seasons with 222 games (106 in the First Division and 83 in the Second Division) to become their second oldest player.



Antonio Benítez led Malaga to historic wins in his time at the club. **MCF**

Benítez became coach to Atlético Malagueño as soon as he retired in 1976 and remained there until 1980.

He joined Malaga CF in 1980 leading them to the First Divi-

sion with historic promotions and wins against Real Madrid (6-2) and Atlético de Madrid (5-1). He retired from the club in 1994 but continued as an advisor.



Simeone and his love for Atleti

At most clubs, we'd be writing about how the fans had protested and the coach had reached the end of the road



The Spanish newspapers had declared that it was 'rock bottom' for Atletico Madrid last week.

The club lost to Athletic Bilbao in the Spanish Super Cup, were knocked out of the Copa del Rey, and ninth-placed Valencia could have closed the gap to one point.

Going into half time, Atleti were two-nil down. The natural reaction is for the stadium to turn on the manager, the white handkerchiefs to come out, and the directors to panic after the game.

But this isn't any club: this is Atletico Madrid; the coach is the longest serving at a top-level European club.

Diego Simeone is reportedly the highest-paid manager in football; last weekend he showed why he's valued so highly and has a unique connection with bosses and supporters.

As Valencia scored in the final minute of the first half, his name was chanted rather than taken in vain. He took decisive action, introducing striker Ángel Correa in place of a defender. That didn't work; so 12 minutes later he sent on young Matheus Cunha, who has been struggling to justify his 33-million-euro price tag.

There was a buzz of uncertainty, as record signing João Félix was the player withdrawn. Had Simeone finally lost the plot?

Clearly not. Within minutes, Cunha gave the Champions a life-



Diego Simeone celebrates Atletico Madrid's win against Valencia. EFE

line. With two seconds remaining of the 90 minutes, Correa equalised. Atletico allowed Valencia to restart the game and found the third and winning goal less than a minute later.

Simeone went wild. The stadium erupted with excitement. The players hadn't celebrated like this since winning the title last May. Atletico had rediscovered the soul of the club.

Simeone's job was safe. Truthfully, his job was never in danger, but even the great man had learned a lesson.

"Maybe the coach doesn't clearly individualise which players can transmit what we saw in the second half. He must identify those who can do that." This was a humble admission that he's

been getting things wrong recently, his tactics were stale, and he was selecting his teams based on reputations and price tags.

He's found his focus again. From so called 'rock-bottom' they've hung onto fourth spot, still ahead of Barcelona and their Champions League opponents Manchester United need to be very afraid.

As other clubs search for an identity and manager to reflect what they are all about; Atletico Madrid are the envy of all clubs. Only Jürgen Klopp and Pep Guardiola are such an integral part of the club's fabric. When other top jobs become available Simeone's name is never linked. He is Atletico Madrid and Atleti is the man they call "Cholo."



Malaga striker Torralvo fights for the ball. NITO SALAS

Malaga women's cup run comes to an end

The Blue and Whites ended their five-month, unbeaten run as they were knocked out by Rayo Vallecano at La Rosaleda on Wednesday

MARINA RIVAS

MALAGA. Malaga's women team were knocked out of the Copa de la Reina on Wednesday evening, losing 2-0 at La Rosaleda to first division side Rayo Vallecano. The hosts put on a brave display of football but their five-month, unbeaten run came to an end.

Malaga, who were the only third-tier team left in the competition, did very well to hold their own. The Blue and Whites were impeccable in defence in the opening half, keeping a clean sheet despite their opponents many attempts at breaking the deadlock. Rayo, whose game

plan was clearly to score as soon as possible, had five clear chances on goal. But they either hit or skimmed the woodwork, or were saved miraculously off the line by defender Silvia Mérida or by goalkeeper María Arribas, who also proved to be instrumental in Malaga's previous cup tie.

Malaga decided to be more daring in the second half, as they felt they could score. However, that left the backline worse off, and playing against a top side means that it can take advantage of the smallest of chances.

And that's exactly what Rayo did. They opened the scoring with half an hour to go, and Malaga's motivation wasn't affected, as there was more than enough time to pull one back. But the visitors would double their lead just three minutes later, effectively ending the game, knocking Malaga out and ending their unbeaten run.

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Fuengirola Potros, the only Andalusian team in Spain's American football elite

As the club get ready to celebrate their tenth anniversary in February, there's hope for the team going into the future

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. The Fuengirola Potros are an American football team based on, as the name suggests, the Costa del Sol, and who play in Spain's top tier. Next month, the club will be celebrating their tenth anniversary at their first home game of the 2022 season.

The Potros were founded in 2011, initially as a side from Coín, though it would take another year for the club to gather enough players and budget to kick-start their journey. They are the only professional American football team in Malaga province, and since moving to Fuengirola for the 2013-14 season, their growth has led them to be the most important side in the region.

Despite some turbulence in their initial years, the Potros managed to win the Andalusian League in 2016, 2017 and 2018, before making the big step up to the Serie A in the National American Football League (LNFA), the sport's highest level in Spain, thanks to a restructure of the divisions by the Spanish governing body.

After three full seasons among Spain's elite, the Potros have managed to survive and maintain their place in the division. The Fuengirola club are now eager to improve during the 2022 season.

They got off to a bad start, however, with a defeat to the Murcia Cobras in their season opener.



The Fuengirola Potros in action during their season-opening defeat against the Murcia Cobras. SUR

Head coach Nacho Ponce admitted that it wasn't the result they wanted. "We know which areas we need to improve to become a better team. I'm optimistic because this bump in the road happened early in the season," he said.

Once the team gets over that bump, the Potros' director of football operations, Jeremy Meyer, is confident that they can do more.

"It's only the first game of the season and we have no plans to sound the alarm just yet," he said. "We have added new players and drawn up new plays that the team

A stepping stone to the United States

One of the club's players, Vito Moriana, was recently signed by an American football college team, a clear indicator that team members can make the jump across the pond. Meyer hopes that Vito's story is just the beginning for others at the Potros. "I believe that being a pathway for players to play in the US is a strong pos-

sibility in the future. They can also make the NFL International Pathway program," he explained.

The club has also just signed Mexican defensive back Gerhard Ruiz from Mexican team Leones Anáhuac. "He's a very talented defensive back, with plenty of experience at all levels in Mexico despite being 26," said Ponce. Ruiz will join the team and will make his debut on 6 February against Osos Rivas, in Fuengirola.

POTROS NEXT GAMES

► 6 February, 12pm
Polideportivo Elola
Rivas Osos

► 13 February, 12pm
Polideportivo Elola
Gijón Mariners

► 27 February 12pm
Campo de Rugby El Cantizal
Las Rozas Black Demons

needs time to practise."

This year their objectives remain the same. "From the club's point of view, we always want to win and to make it to the playoffs," Meyer said.

Meyer's job as director of football is an important one, though the spotlight isn't often cast on the figure. "My role is to ensure that the head coach and his staff can concentrate on coaching and working with the players on a day-to-day basis," he explained. "Any other distractions around that, I take on."

Impatient to start

Born in Norway, Meyer had roles in USA Football and the US National football team before his time at the club, which began a few months ago. "I was impatient to start a new chapter in my career. The club and their vision are in perfect harmony with my ambition, and I can't wait to go to the stadium for the first time" he said.

"When I met and figured out how talented the players and staff are here, I was determined to build, alongside them, something great."

As for the club's future, Meyer believes in making it bigger and better. "We are growing and improving every day. We need to get the team out to a wider audience. I spent two years here before I found out the area had a team," he said. "Increasing the team's exposure is of high priority to me and the club."

Rafael Nadal shows what he's made of

The tennis player reaches his seventh Australian Open semi-finals after surviving against Shapovalov and faced Italian Berrettini this Friday

ENRIC GARDINER

MADRID. Rafael Nadal overcame the thorn in his side that is the Australian Open quarter-finals. The tennis player has fallen in that round of the tournament up

to seven times in his career, more than any other Grand Slam. However, the game against Shapovalov was no walk in the park and it was the Spaniard's biggest test since arriving in Australia.

Both men played out an intense, five-set match in which the young Canadian managed to claw back two sets after Nadal won the first couple. But the Majorcan managed to escape and unearth a well-earned victory (6-3, 6-4, 4-6, 3-6 and 6-3).

This result now leaves him just two wins away from picking up his 21st Grand Slam title and it



Nadal hits a return shot during his game against Shapovalov. AFP

would allow him to become the most decorated tennis player ever.

Close to an upset

Shapovalov was very close to causing an upset. The Israeli-born Canadian has a heartwarming backstory with Nadal, as he was

his ballboy in the 2008 Canada Masters before going on to defeat him nine years later in the same tournament. Now he will play his first ever Australian Open quarter-finals. But a lot of time has passed since that win.

After feeling very sick for a few

days, Nadal said, "I don't know if I'll have recovered in time for the semi-finals, I have a few days ahead, but I'm no longer 21 years old. I'm very happy for where I am, I think I'll be able to recover. I'm playing well and it's possible that I can rest tomorrow [Wednesday] and train on Thursday. I didn't even know if I could play again a few months ago, and now look at where I am."

The Spaniard's opponent will be Italian Matteo Berrettini, who defeated Gael Monfils (6-4, 6-4, 3-6 and 6-2) to make it to his third Australian Open semi-finals. It will also be the second time both tennis players meet after the semi-final played in New York in 2019, which Nadal won.

The match is due to be played at 2.30pm Australia time, which is early on Friday morning in Spain.

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Railway Station	902240202
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Tourist Office	951926020

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Taxi Service	952774488
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Town Hall	952761100
Foreign Residents Dept.	952768760

MIJAS

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Town Hall Las Lagunas	952473125
Taxi	952478288
Tourism Office	952589034
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NERJA

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Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Aidastella	01/02	Arrecife	Cartagena	10.00	19.30
Amadea	14-15/02	Cadiz	Almeria	12.00	21.00
Aidastella	23/02	Arrecife	Cartagena	10.00	19.30



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Belgium	Avda Ricardo Soriano 20-3C, Marbella	951516019	Austria	Alameda de Col�n 26, Malaga	646060972
Denmark	Calle C�rdoba 6 404, Malaga	952211797	Finland	Calle C�rdoba, 6, Malaga	952212435
Norway	Avda Los Boliches, 60, Edf Rosenkranz, Fuengirola	952667955	Saudi Arabia	Mauricio M. Pareto 2 bloque Sur 2�, Malaga	952310358
Canada	C/Cervantes, Edif. Horizonte, Malaga	952223346	Greece	Dr Manuel Perez Bryan, Malaga	95225689
Germany	Mauricio Moro Pareto 2, Malaga	952363591	Iceland	Calle Mar�n Garc�a, Malaga	952661200
Sweden	Calle C�rdoba 6, 5th floor, Malaga	952604383	Philippines	C/Marqu�s de Larios 4, 2�, Malaga	952771850
Ireland	Avda. Los Boliches, Fuengirola	952475108	Hungary	Av. de Vel�squez, (Crce aeropuerto) Malaga	952236966

THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
What seems a disadvantage might soon appear to be a golden opportunity that's too good to miss. You won't look back.



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
Are you ready to collaborate with another on an idea that might take your life to a new level? If so, the chemistry between you can make it a success.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
A dynamic Mars/Jupiter tie helps fuel your appetite for the new, and might encourage you to step out of your comfort zone big-time.



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Had enough of something? The New Moon in your sector of transformation could inspire you to deal with it. This can be a week to remember. You'll realize nothing is impossible.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
There could be a touch of chaos on the cards as the New Moon stirs things up, and can find you spontaneously grasping an opportunity that appears out of the blue.



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
If you've stuck to the tried and trusted, the New Moon in Aquarius can be an opportunity to experiment with cutting-edge ideas that may save you time and money.



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
Something can click into place that enables you to tread a new path, and you'll be so pleased about this. Energy levels may be high, and this could give you the stamina to get a move on.



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
The New Moon aligns with Uranus and may see you setting off on a new adventure that instantly captivates you. It might disrupt your current schedule, but to you it will be worth it.



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Next week, as Mercury pushes ahead, if there's something you've been waiting impatiently to happen, you may see action soon.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
The New Moon could coincide with an encounter that can take you by surprise. Its angle with Uranus may create sparks, and an attraction that didn't seem possible might occur.

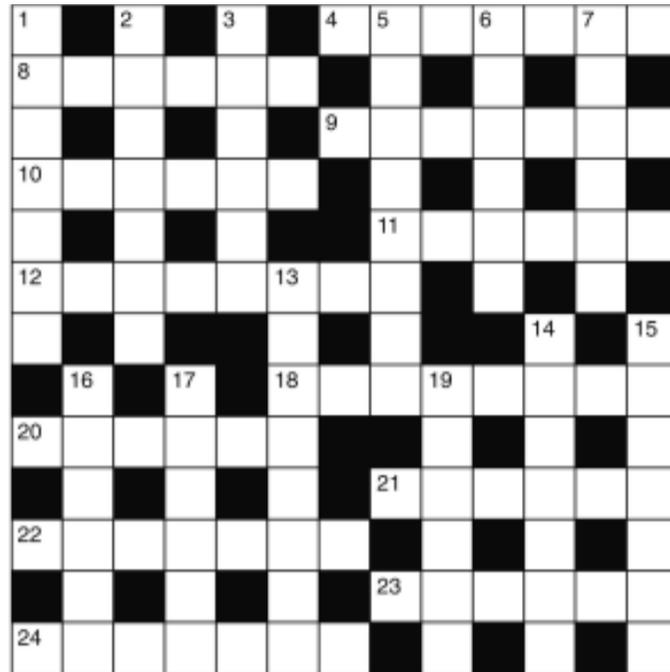


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
Next week begins with a touch of chaos that gives rise to a great opportunity. It may not seem like it at first, but if it has potential, enquire further.



Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
Thoughtful Mercury turns direct next week, so if you've had to put projects on the back burner, these can now be dusted off. Want to collaborate on a project? It may be a real winner.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11498



Across

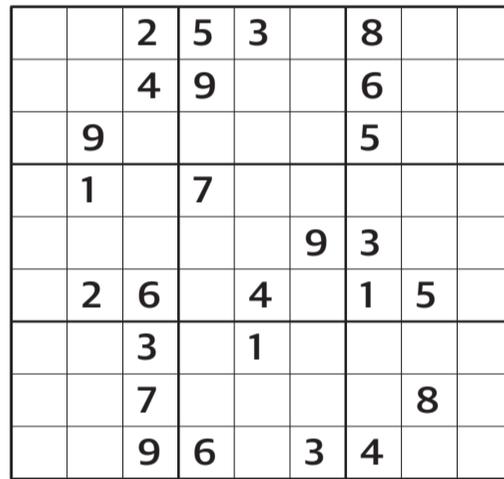
- 4 Stresses what may be grave to the French (7)
- 8 Charged for being drunk (6)
- 9 It's lace variety that can be stretched (7)
- 10 Disney broadcasting as a composer (6)
- 11 His particular interest is catching (6)
- 12 Discharged a certain amount of current gas (8)
- 18 Takes a rest, fuddled by old wines (4,4)
- 20 Hilda upset by a bloomer (6)
- 21 Man on the board rejected by the French (6)
- 22 No stay-at-home, he has arranged to stir out (7)
- 23 Films southern watering places (6)
- 24 This cuts timber from the far west (7)

Down

- 1 Fish and beer, woman! (7)
- 2 Part of the theatre where people go to the pictures! (7)
- 3 Support a proposition for a short time (6)
- 5 Fall caused by a slip at the end of the mountain pass (8)
- 6 Often signals officer is kept inside (6)
- 7 Closely followed description of formal dress (6)
- 13 Everybody on the voyage completely nonplussed (3,2,3)
- 14 No top on ruined bridge (7)
- 15 Prose isn't upside down (7)
- 16 Work party (6)
- 17 Produce of Bordeaux is unusually clear before the last of the port is added (6)
- 19 Quick description of ill-tempered puppy (6)

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



THE WORDPUZZLER



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

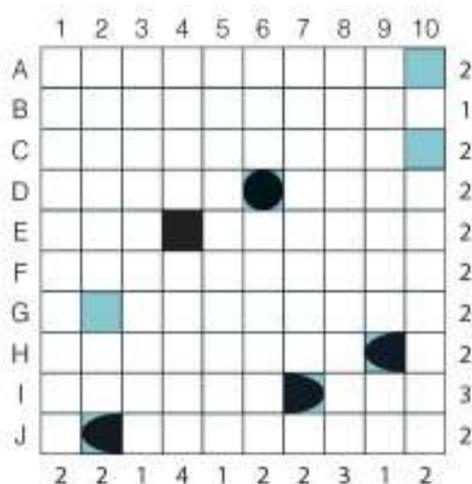
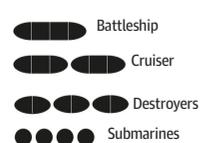
- 1. Unit of length
- 2. Tub
- 3. Attack
- 4. Horse-drawn cart
- 5. Poet
- 6. Plait
- 7. Winged creature
- 8. Difficult
- 9. Carrying salver
- 10. Neat

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES

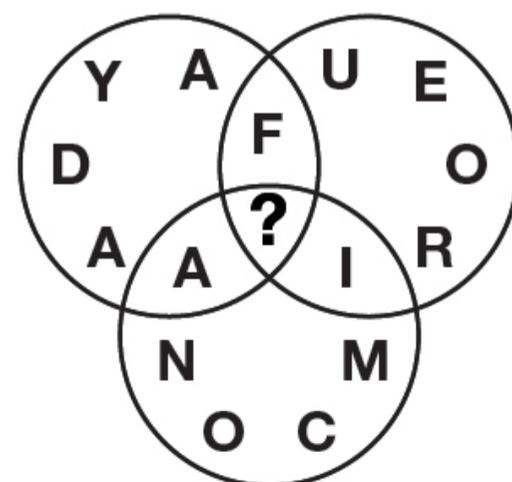


BATTLESHIPS

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.



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?

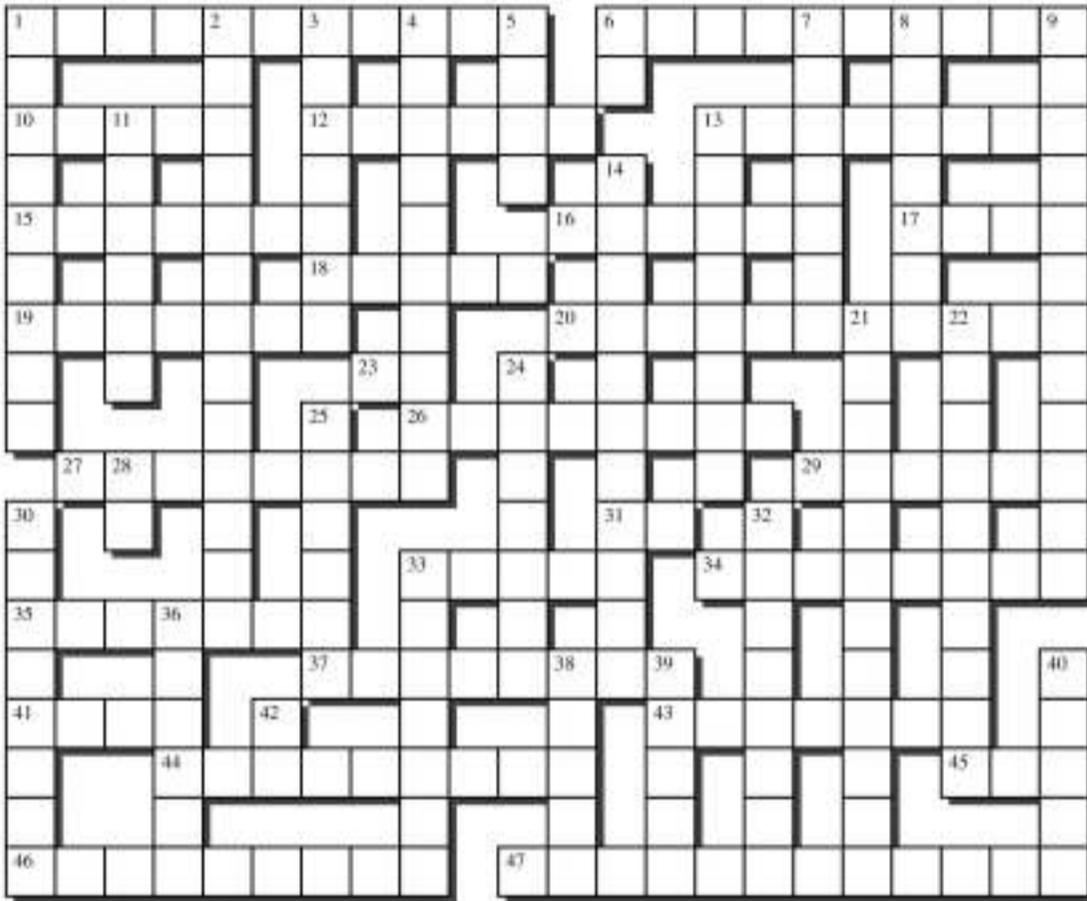
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LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD



Across

- 1) Prosperity (11)
- 6) To solve (10)
- 10) Work (5)
- 12) Tailor (6)
- 13) Enemies (8)
- 15) Shoulder strap (7)
- 16) Lawn (6)
- 17) Island (4)
- 18) Wheat (5)
- 19) Quoting (7)
- 20) Historian (11)
- 23) It goes (2)
- 26) Diverted (f) (8)
- 27) Ashtray (8)
- 29) I repeated (6)
- 31) To go (2)
- 33) Coffin (5)
- 34) Resignation (8)
- 35) Allies (7)
- 37) Supporting (8)
- 41) I open (4)
- 43) Cold meat (7)
- 44) To convince (9)
- 45) She laughs (3)
- 46) Reception (9)
- 47) To discredit (12)

Down

- 1) Politicians (9)
- 2) Unanimously (3,10) (13)
- 3) Respect (7)
- 4) Disheartened (m) (10)
- 5) I'll give (4)
- 6) Her (2)
- 7) Creator (7)
- 8) Office (7)
- 9) Restoration (12)
- 11) Cheap (m) (6)
- 13) Tied (score) (m) (8)
- 14) Legitimacy (11)
- 21) Inferiority (12)
- 22) To deteriorate (10)
- 24) Slave (f) (7)
- 25) Jealous (f) (6)
- 28) The (m) (2)
- 30) To fail (8)
- 32) Dictator (8)
- 33) They decorate (7)
- 36) Last night (6)
- 38) North (5)
- 39) He occupies (5)
- 40) To believe (5)
- 42) In (2)

QUIZ

When Walt Disney was a child, what character was he in a school play?

- 1. Aladdin 2. Peter Pan
- 3. Robin Hood 4. The dwarf Grumpy



The code in The Matrix comes from what food recipes?

- 1. Indian 2. Chinese stir fry
- 3. Thai 4. Japanese sushi

Meat Loaf played which character in The Rocky Horror Picture Show?

- 1. Henry 2. Chuck 3. Eddie 4. Al

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ANSWERS

Quiz answers

Answer: Peter Pan
Of interest: The decision to make an animated version of Peter Pan stems from Walt's own childhood as he once played Peter in a school play. His brother Roy used a rope to hoist him up over the stage to make it look like he was flying.
Answer: Japanese sushi.
Of interest: A production designer scanned symbols from his wife's sushi cookbooks, then manipulated them to create the iconic "code".
Answer: Eddie
Of interest: In late 1973, Meat Loaf was cast in the original LA Roxy cast of The Rocky Horror Show, playing the parts of Eddie and Dr. Everett Scott.

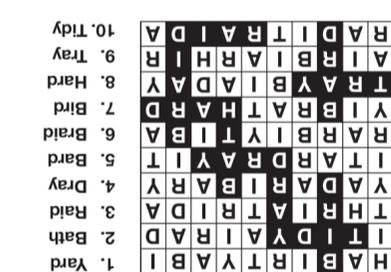
Circlegram

The letter represented by the question mark is R. Faraday, Fourier, Marconi, all famous physicists.

Cryptic Crossword

Solutions: Across: 4 Accents; 8 Loaded; 9 Elastic; 10 Walton; 11 Angier; 12 Fredamp; 18 Lies down; 20 Doh!; 21 Caber; 22 Tourist; 23 Spools; 24 Freestaw. Down: 1 Aweiler; 2 Gallery; 3 Second; 5 Collapse; 6 Ensign; 7 Tailed; 13 All at sea; 14 Portnoy; 15 Inverse; 16 Labour; 17 Claret; 19 Snappy.

Wordpuzler solution

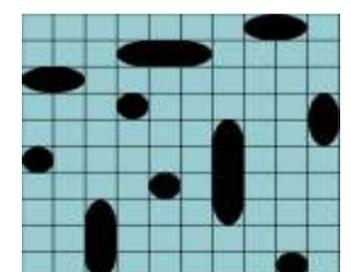


Language Crossword

ACROSS:
 1. PROSBERIDAD 6. SOLUCIONAR 10. LABOR
 12. SASTRE 13. ENIGMAS 17. TANTE
 18. ESCRIBI 17. ISLA 18. TROO 19. CTANDO
 20. HISTORIADOR 21. VVA 26. DESVADA
 27. CENCERO 28. BERTI SUR 30. VALD
 31. DISION 35. AINDOS 37. AVAND
 41. BNO 43. CHACINA 44. CONVENOR 45. BIE
 46. RECHION 47. DESACRERTAR

DOWN:
 1. POLTICOS 2. PORUNANIDAD 3. RESPTO
 4. RESANANDO 5. DARE 6. SU 7. CREADOR
 8. ORCINA 9. RESERVACION 11. BARRIO
 13. BANDO 14. ECTIENDAD
 15. FERRODAD 22. FERROBAR
 23. ESCI. VVA 24. CLOSA 25. EL 30. RUCASAR
 32. DNDOR 33. DORVAN 36. NCHIE
 38. NORTE 39. CUA 40. CREER 42. EN

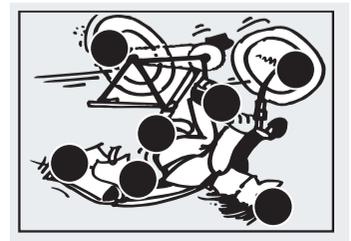
Battleships



Sudoku solution

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

The seven differences



The Andalusian football club born on a Scottish poet's birthday

Sevilla Football Club was founded by a group of British expats - mainly Scots - and young Spaniards in a café on Burns Night on 25 January 1890

Team.
One of the earliest photographs of Sevilla Fútbol Club. **SUR**



1890

Sevilla Football Club was officially registered in 1905, however an article in The Dundee Courier in 1890 proved the team was founded much earlier

ALEK M. SAANDERS



Robert Burns.

The poet's birthday was celebrated by Scots in Seville in the late 19th century. **SUR**

First mention.

The article written about the founding of the club in the Dundee Courier in 1890. **SUR**

The Dundee Courier

No. 11448. (ESTABLISHED 1843) MONDAY, MARCH 17, 1890. PRICE ONE HALFPENNY.

FIRST FOOTBALL MATCH IN SPAIN.

[FROM A SEVILLE CORRESPONDENT.]

Some six weeks ago a few enthusiastic young residents of British origin met in one of the cafés for the purpose of considering a proposal that we should start an Athletic Association, the want of exercise being greatly felt by the majority of us, who are chiefly engaged in mercantile pursuits. After a deal of talk and a limited consumption of small beer, the "Club de 'Football' de Sevilla" was duly formed and officers were elected. It was

Robert Burns' birthday is special for Andalusian football. Spain's first official football club, and the most prominent club of Andalucía - Sevilla FC - was founded in a café on Burns Night on 25 January 1890.

A few weeks later, the Scottish newspaper The Dundee Courier & Argus published news of the birth of the Andalusian club, with two Scots in key positions - captain and president.

At the end of the 19th century Seville had a large British expatriate population due to industrial and commercial collaboration. Burns Night was marked in the city and the celebration 132 years ago went down in the history books. After a lively conversation over beer, an enthusiastic group

of Brits, mainly Scots, along with other young men of Spanish origin, formed the first Spanish football club.

Newspaper report

The Dundee Courier & Argus published the following on 17 March 1890: "Some six weeks ago a few enthusiastic young residents of British origin met in one of the cafés for the purpose of considering a proposal that we should start an Athletic Association, the want of exercise being greatly felt by the majority of us, who are chiefly engaged in mercantile pursuits. After a deal of talk and a limited consumption of small beer, the 'Club de Football de Sevilla' was duly formed and office bearers elected."

This page from the Scottish

newspaper was discovered by researchers from the history department at Sevilla FC only ten years ago. The article, found in the British Library's newspaper archive, was a treasure for the history of Spanish football. It describes in detail how the club in Seville was founded and, more importantly, how it happened 15 years earlier than it had been previously thought.

Officially the club Sevilla was registered on 14 October 1905. But now, that the Scottish newspaper proclaimed the birth of Sevilla FC on 25 January 1890, it is considered one of the oldest football clubs in Europe and the oldest one in Spain. (Recreativo de Huelva, founded one month and two days earlier, on 23 December 1889, was established as

a 'recreational' club).

The Sevilla team was roughly half Spanish and half British. It was composed of owners or managers of manufacturing companies based in the Andalusian capital. Scot Hugh MacColl was elected the club's first captain.

The Scottish captain

Hugh was born in Glasgow in 1861. In the UK he was educated as a marine engineer. By 1890, Hugh MacColl had moved to Seville to work as the technical manager of Portilla White foundry. He spent six years in Spain, before returning to the UK where he became chairman of Sunderland Burns Club.

Incidentally, in Spain, Hugh changed his name to Hugo and kept it for the rest of his life. Hugo MacColl died on 31 August, 1915,

during a holiday in Glasgow, but it is not known where he was buried. In 2007, Sevilla FC visited Glasgow, as a tribute to the club's first captain.

One of MacColl's partners in the Portilla White foundry in Seville, was elected the club's first secretary. Isaias White junior was the son of an English entrepreneur who founded the aforementioned company, one of the major foundries in Spain, in the late 19th century. The house at Calle Bailén where Isaias lived in Seville still exists and is considered the first home of Sevilla FC.

It is believed it was White who came up with an idea to celebrate the foundation of the club by playing a match against the Huelva Recreation Club, to invite them to play a football match in Seville. That letter was published by the Spanish newspaper La Provincia. The Huelva club accepted the invitation and the match took place on 8 March 1890, becoming the first official match ever played in Spain.

Sevilla FC won that historic game 2-0, with the first goal in an official match in Spanish football history scored by the Sevilla player Ritson. It appears that later the match was highlighted in the London newspaper The Field.

The Scottish president

The club's first president was also Scottish. Edward Farquharson Johnston was born in Newmill, Elgin, on 14 October 1854. Edward began his studies at Weston House, a prestigious educational establishment in his hometown (where he was to meet Alexander Graham Bell). Edward F. Johnston completed his academic education at Mill Hill, a famous English public school near London. He began his professional career by joining the London shipping company of Messrs Robert McAndrew & Co, who were directly related to his family on his mother's side.

Johnston was sent to Seville as a representative of the McAndrews shipping company in the early 1870s. The company had established an important trade line between Seville and Scotland via the port of Dundee, where they shipped tonnes of bitter oranges for the manufacture of marmalade.

In 1879, Johnston married Mary Crombie and the couple had three children, all born in Seville. The first son, Gilbert, died in infancy. Their second son, Edward John, died in the trenches in France during World War I. The third son, James, joined his father in business.

On 23 January 1879, Johnston was appointed British vice-consul in Seville until his retirement on 5 October 1906. From the outset, he became a prominent figure in the social and economic life of Seville, though he gained more fame as founding president of Sevilla FC. It appears that Edward Johnston returned to Britain and died in London on 24 June 1924.



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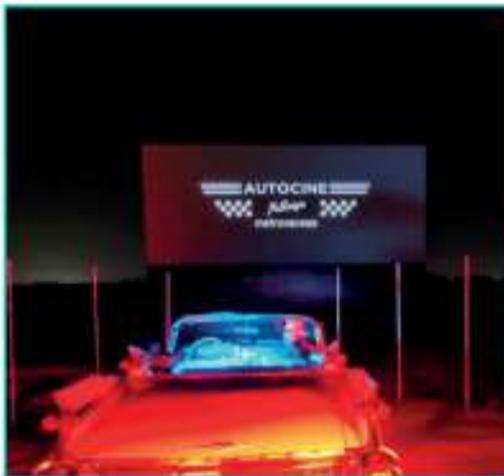


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