



'We have to welcome the British with open arms this summer,' says tourism boss



Carlos Alcaraz celebrates his win in Madrid. **AFP**

Teenage superstar set to shape the future of Spanish tennis

Carlos Alcaraz. The 19-year-old saw off Nadal, Djokovic and Zverev as he charged to victory in the Madrid Open. **P42**

The summer season promises a return to 2019 UK visitor figures on the Costa del Sol

The tourism industry must make sure British visitors to the Costa del Sol this year go home with fond memories. This is the mes-

sage delivered this week by Manuel Butler, director of the Spanish Tourism Office in London, in an interview with SUR. Butler says that the numbers of UK visitors to Spain this year are expected to be similar to the levels seen in 2019, before the industry was interrupted by Covid. "Everything is focused on Malaga Airport and the Costa del Sol." **P6**

INSIDE

Sales of rapid Covid tests double at local chemists

A rise in coronavirus contagion is under way and many positive results are not being reported **P2**

Free suicide prevention national support line launches

The government is funding the 024 number, which can answer in different languages **P18**

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Sales of rapid Covid tests have almost doubled in Malaga in two weeks

The rise in positive cases of coronavirus has increased demand for these tests which can be bought from pharmacies

ÁNGEL ESCALERA



MALAGA. Coronavirus continues to move freely among us, facilitated by the removal of restrictions. The number of Covid cases has increased considerably in the past two weeks, as GPs and emergency doctors consulted by SUR have confirmed.

One indication of this new rise in positive cases is that sales of antigen tests have doubled in Malaga since the end of April, according to sources we contacted at Bidafarma, which delivers medical supplies to local chemists.

One of the reasons for the increase in the number of infections is that masks are no longer compulsory in indoor settings and, in addition, people in general are less cautious now because they think the pandemic is over. In fact, they are mistaken: the Omicron variant is still predominant and it remains highly contagious.

"In the last two weeks sales of antigen tests have almost doubled. We know of people who have gone to the chemist to buy several of these products because they want to test the whole family; they suspect they have all caught the virus," said the sources at Bidafarma.

The Official College of Pharmacists in Malaga has also confirmed that there have been many more requests for these tests recently because of the rise



A chemist holds up a Covid antigen test which people can carry out at home. **SUR**

in positive cases.

There has been a steady stream of people buying these tests to find out whether they have been infected. Although most of them are asymptomatic or their symptoms are mild, experts say nobody should let down their guard because some patients are still being admitted to intensive care units with Covid and there are still deaths from the virus.

On 28 March the Ministry of Health introduced a new system of monitoring and controlling Covid-19 because the acute phase of the pandemic was over. This means that tests to confirm or discount infection are now

only carried out in health centres on people over 60, immunocompromised patients and pregnant women. As a result, many people who develop symptoms and think they may have caught Covid test themselves instead of going to a health centre or hospital.

Fewer tests and higher cases

Because the public health service is now carrying out fewer tests for active infection, which include PCR and antigen tests, the real figures are much higher than the ones which are issued by the authorities.

This is partly because some

people do not bother to do a test, and also because many who self-test and have a positive result do not report it to their doctor so they are never included in the statistics.

Despite what is stipulated in the regulation that came into force on 28 March about who should be tested for coronavirus, GPs have said that if someone arrives at their health centre with symptoms which could be Covid, they always carry out a test. "Nobody can stop us from using the tools we have at our disposal to provide the best possible diagnosis. That would not be logical, and it would not be ethical either," one of the GPs said.

Number of local healthcare workers off sick with Covid goes up fivefold in just two months

A union is calling for professionals to be equipped with FFP2 masks after absences went up from 98 in February to 520 in April

ÁNGEL ESCALERA

MALAGA. Five times as many healthcare professionals in Malaga province were off sick with Covid at the end of April than at the end

of February (the number rose from 98 to 520) and the CSIF union is calling for more measures to be taken to prevent the illness spreading among those working in the health care sector.

The number of positive infections in this sector quadrupled in the same period, from 701 to 2,698, coinciding with the increase in cases among the general public. Also, according to the union, many cases among the population are never reported,

as it is up to individuals to take an antigen test and notify the authorities if it is positive, so the real figure must be much higher.

The CISF union is insisting that health workers need better protective equipment and says they should use FFP2 masks instead of surgical ones because it has been scientifically proven that these offer a greater protection and are more durable. The union also says patients with Covid should be segregated from those

without the virus, to further safeguard medical staff.

CISF says it knows that the current protocols have been drawn up to reflect the latest phase of the pandemic and the relaxation of preventive measures, but the authorities should take into account the Law of Risk Prevention in the Workplace and the recommendations of the World Health Organization for protecting workers in health care settings.

For this reason, the union is also calling on members of the public to be prudent and use a mask in places with little ventilation and no space for social distancing, because "the pandemic is not over yet".

Spain to carry on mask-wearing rule inside aeroplanes despite new EU advice to end it

ÁLVARO SOTO

MADRID. Despite the EU recommending the end of wearing masks on aircraft, Spain's Health ministry said this week that it would still insist on face coverings in planes for the time being. It is up to each national government and not the EU to make the final decision on the rule. "It's a measure that's a good idea and if it were to change, it would need to be gradual and with the support of the experts," said Minister for Health Carolina Darias.

The EU had recommended masks end from 16 May for all except vulnerable passengers or for countries where mask-wearing stays compulsory nationally inside public transport. It says vaccines are having their desired effect.

Since last month, mask wearing is no longer compulsory inside airports or stations in Spain but it is still in force inside planes, trains, buses and taxis.

Bubble groups and coronavirus social distancing dropped in latest school guidelines

ÁLVARO SOTO

MADRID. New guidelines for Spanish schools, universities and other educational establishments have gone a step further in relaxing Covid-19 measures inside them. The Ministry of Health says that there is now no need to maintain social distancing and students in a class can "socialise and play with each other, interacting more normally."

The latest guide also says that, from now on, families will be able to go into both indoor and outdoor spaces at schools and when dropping off or picking up, however, people are asked to avoid forming crowds.

The experts have said in their guidelines that ventilation is "one of the most effective measures [against Covid]", and insist that it must be "kept up." "Cross ventilation should be ensured, with doors and/or windows opening opposite or at least on different sides of the room (classrooms, dining rooms, gyms, etc.)"

Patients are waiting longer for surgery due to the pandemic

The average wait for an operation in Malaga province was 124 days at the end of last year and for a first appointment with a consultant it was 104 days

ÁNGEL ESCALERA

MALAGA. The fifth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is the main reason why the average waiting time for surgery has become longer in five of the six Andalusian Health Service hospitals in Malaga province.

According to latest data released last week and based on the end of last year, the only local hospital with a drop in waiting time for surgery over the previous six months, was Clínico Virgen de la Victoria hospital, from 110 days to 66.

Meanwhile, in the Regional hospital (formerly called Carlos Haya), the Costa del Sol in Marbella, and the hospitals in Antequera, La Axarquía and Ronda, the time to wait for surgery had gone up.

On 30 December last year, 21,048 patients were waiting for operations in Malaga province in-



Hospital Regional has the longest waiting list for surgery locally. NITO SALAS

cluding the Costa del Sol. That was 1,073 (or 5.4 per cent) more than the last data, six months earlier in June 2021. The average waiting time was 124 days (three days more than six months earlier).

The hospital in Malaga province with the longest average waiting time for surgery was the large Regional (in Malaga city), at 208 days. At the end of December last year,

patients at the Costa del Sol hospital in Marbella had to wait an average of 68 days for surgery; in Antequera 106 days; in La Axarquía 85 days; and in Ronda 70 days.

Appointments with consultants

In terms of the wait to see a specialist for the first time after a referral from a GP, the average wait also

went up in five of these six hospitals.

At the end of 2021, there were 203,640 people in Malaga province waiting for a first consultation with a specialist (26,584 more than six months earlier), with an average waiting time of 104 days compared with 94 in June 2021.

The arrival of the fifth wave of the pandemic last summer is directly linked to the increase in the number of people waiting for surgery and those waiting for a first meeting with a consultant, because priority had to be given to patients with Covid. The number of Covid cases also shot up at the same time as many medical staff were on holiday, and some operating theatres are shut down during August.

Only the Serranía hospital in Ronda had managed to reduce the response time for specialist appointments from 121 to 111 days by the end of December.

Regional data

In terms of the whole of the Andalucía region - including Malaga - the figures for 30 December last year show that 135,008 patients were on the waiting lists for surgery (11,669 more than six months earlier), with an average delay of 134 days. At the same time, 873,047 patients in the region were waiting for a first appointment with a specialist (152,441 more), and on average they had to wait 105 days (17 days longer).

The Andalusian health service insists that its waiting lists have gone down by 31%

A. ESCALERA

MALAGA. In response to complaints about the time people in Malaga province have to wait for surgery in Andalucía, the health service says that its waiting lists have actually reduced by 31 per cent when the past three years are considered, and not just the last year, which has been influenced by Covid.

Official figures show that at the end of 2018 there were 30,730 people waiting for an operation in Malaga province, and on 30 December 2021 that had dropped to 21,048, which is 9,682 fewer.

In the same three years, the average waiting time for surgery also reduced by 62.54 per cent, from 322 days to 124.

Malaga province hospitals have reduced the number of patients on their waiting lists for an operation more than any other in the Andalucía region.

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Malaga, the Andalusian province with the most reports of gender-based violence

Andalucía was also the region of Spain with the highest number of registered victims, according to the National Institute of Statistics

IRENE QUIRANTE

MALAGA. The statistics for gender-based violence continue to be alarming and, apart from the figures themselves, they highlight a very persistent social problem. Once again Malaga is the Andalusian province where more cases of violence against women are reported every year. It reached top position in 2018 and maintained it last year with 6,861 cases.

Although there were fewer reports of gender-based violence during the pandemic, dropping from 8,130 in 2019 to 6,656 in 2020, the data from the Ministry of Equality show that last year they increased sharply by 3%.

This works out at an average of 19 reports a day. Most of these were cases where women talked voluntarily to the police (4,714) and in 1,357 cases the police submitted the report after being called to intervene in an incident.

In 2021, there were 1,179 protection orders issued in Malaga province, which was slightly lower than in the previous year (1,195).

The Ministry of Equality has also produced figures regarding calls to the 016 helpline for this year, and these show that there

have been over 700 so far. This is a free phone number for information and legal advice, which is answered 24 hours a day and is available in 53 different languages.

561 convictions

With regard to the number of court cases, 752 men were tried in the gender violence courts for violent crimes against women last year, and 561 were convicted.

Andalucía was also the region of Spain with the highest number of registered victims of gender violence, according to the National Institute of Statistics. Last year alone, a total of 6,720 cases and complaints regarding protection orders or other precautionary measures were filed in the region.



Galloping horse led to safety from A-45 motorway

Quick action by Casabermeja's Local Police force made it possible for a horse that had escaped from a nearby farm to be safely rescued from the Malaga carriageway of the A-45. The incident brought the traffic on the busy road to a halt in the middle of rush-hour traffic last Friday, and the horse was reportedly unscathed by its ordeal.

One of UK's 'Most Wanted' arrested at a Coín gym

SUR IN ENGLISH

MALAGA. One of the UK's most-wanted fugitives has been arrested in Malaga province as part of a joint operation involving the Spanish authorities, the UK's National Crime Agency, Merseyside Police and the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit. David Ungi, aged 30, was being sought for his suspected role in the murder

of 18-year-old Vinny Waddington in Liverpool in 2015. He was apprehended last week along with three other men as he entered a gym at a shopping centre in Coín. Officers seized a 9mm Ruger firearm and ammunition from a rucksack. Extradition proceedings are now under way after Ungi appeared in court in Malaga last Friday, 6 May and was remanded in custody.



David Ungi on his arrest. SUR

112 REPORTS

MIJAS COSTA

Briton arrested over alleged child abduction

Á.F. / J.C. A 48-year-old British man has been arrested in Mijas over contravening a court order to stay away from his ex-partner, stealing her car and taking their daughters with him without her consent. Alerted by his erratic driving, plain-clothes officers from the Mijas Local Police force pulled over the driver on the A-7 near Calahonda and found he was over the alcohol limit. He was arrested for contravening a court order, abduction of minors and driving under the influence of alcohol, and was remanded in custody pending a court appearance.

MIJAS COSTA / MONDA

Two deaths in crashes on Costa del Sol roads

SUR. One person died on Monday this week after their vehicle crashed head-on into a palm tree in Mijas Costa, according to the 112 Andalucía emergency services control room. The accident happened around 10.30am in the Riviera del Sol area next to Calahonda.

In a separate incident, on the same day, a 63-year-old motorcyclist died after a crash in Monda. The accident happened on the A-355 road, heading in the direction of Marbella. Emergency services rushed to the scene, but could do nothing to save the biker's life.



The crashed vehicle landed in the river bed. SUR

ESTEPONA

Four injured after car hits pedestrians and plunges off Estepona bridge

IRENE QUIRANTE. Four people were injured following an accident on a bridge in Estepona's Avenida Llanos del Litoral on Wednesday afternoon. At around 3.15pm a vehicle with two people inside lost control, crashed off the road, hit two pedestrians and plunged

off the river bridge.

Emergency services were quickly on the scene and witnesses said that the occupants of the car were able to get out of it by their own means. The injured people were taken to the Costa del Sol Hospital.

COSTA DEL SOL

Seven gummy bear drug arrests on the Costa

SOFÍA FERNÁNDEZ. Police officers have seized 11 kilos of gummy bear sweets impregnated with the hallucinogenic substance 25N-NBOM, which is better known as 'The Bomb' and whose effects can last for over 12 hours.

National Police officers searched seven properties in Benalmádena, Cártama and Malaga and made seven arrests during the raids, including the drug network's alleged leader, a British man who lives in Alhaurín el Grande.



Sweets laced with drugs. CNP

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'We have to welcome the British with open arms this summer'

Manuel Butler Director of the Spanish Tourism Office in London

He says this will be the first peak season with arrivals from the UK at 2019 levels and is confident that there will be no problems post-Brexit

PILAR MARTÍNEZ



MALAGA. He is an expert in tourism. His career, which has included being the head of Turespaña in 2012 and CEO of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), proves that. Manuel Butler, who is a qualified naval engineer, runs the Spanish Tourism Office in London, a post he held previously between 1999 and 2004. At a recent meeting with businesses from the Malaga tourism sector, which was organised by the Costa del Sol tourist board, Butler confirmed that British tourism is returning to pre-pandemic levels and he made some important points about the return of the principal source market for the destination. He is very clear that British tourists must go home with lovely memories of their re-encounter with the Costa del Sol, and he says, "We have to welcome these tourists with open arms."

–Are we going to see the keenly awaited recovery of British tourism this summer?

–The figures for the first quarter of this year were nowhere near normal, but it looks as if this summer Spanish destinations will return to 2019 levels in terms of British tourists. A little lower or a little higher, maybe, but yes, back to pre-pandemic figures.

–And how is the situation looking for the Costa del Sol?

–I have been checking the movements of tour operators and airlines, and everything is focused on Malaga airport and the Costa del Sol. This destination has a fantastic reputation, from Malaga city all along the coast and, as well, even the inland area is starting to get more traction. During the pandemic, which of course is not over yet, people have shown that they want to be out in the open air. The Costa del Sol tourist board is also doing a commendable job promoting the rural areas of this region.

–This looks like being the first normal summer in terms of the British market for two years. What message do you have for



Manuel Butler shared his knowledge of British tourism with representatives of the sector on the Costa. **sur**

He is keen for the Costa del Sol to attract the 6.5 million British tourists who spend up to 30% more than average on their holidays

the destination and the tourism sector ?

–You have to bear in mind that the British are our main customers and it has been hard for them, not being able to travel abroad for two years, especially with the climate in their own country. We have to welcome them with open arms and offer them a special experience, or detail, or a happy memory to take home with them: for example how nice the staff were in the hotel reception or the restaurant. I think that is the key. We have to be very conscious of the fact that we need to make them feel wanted.

–Airlines have been warning about potential problems at passport control for passengers from the UK, now that Britain is no longer an EU country and due to the consequences of Brexit, during this first summer of normality. Does that situation worry you?

–I know that more staff have been assigned to passport control and some processes at the airports have been automated. We will have to stay on our toes to make sure there are no problems this first summer since Brexit, and that everything goes smoothly.

–Portugal has decided to treat British tourists as if they were from an EU country; what effect is that likely to have for the Costa del Sol and other destinations in Spain?

–It isn't going to be positive. It might be neutral or it might be negative. We will have to see.

–As Spain has so many British

tourists, is the government not thinking of doing something similar to Portugal?

–So far I have had no indication of that, but that doesn't mean it won't happen.

–What is the profile of a British tourist now, after two years of pandemic? Are they keener on sustainability, are they more demanding...?

–Sustainability is very important and so is a personalised product. I believe that tourism has to take a step forward as some other industries have done, towards more personalised marketing. By that, I mean we need to try to satisfy the needs of specific consumers and look for those who are the most interesting types of visitor for the destination. We must listen to the consumer much more. That's why I say it is so important to refocus the whole of tourism on the people.

–To what extent is sustainability a determining factor when

the British are considering where to go on holiday?

–If there are two destinations that are similar in quality and price, and one is sustainable and the other is not, the customer will be more attracted to the sustainable one. That trend is going to become more important, although at the moment price is still the main factor. We are convinced that sustainability will become a predominant factor, which is why tourism needs to work on making certain facts known, such as that the hotels on the Costa del Sol have reduced their energy consumption by such-and-such an amount, or have reduced their carbon footprint by so much, and are taking measures such as putting an end to single-use plastics. Rather than talk about huge sums of investment, it is better to demonstrate what is being done in order to move forward in terms of sustainability.

–What impact could the Russian invasion of Ukraine have on the British market?

–Turkey is the country most affected by Russia invading Ukraine because it is a very popular holiday destination for the Russians. Only a tiny part of that clientele will go to Turkey now, so to attract other visitors it is likely to reduce its prices this summer. That will mean that some British tourists will choose to go there, and also some Germans.

How do you attract British tourists who have higher spending power?

–Through marketing and big data. Turespaña already has that knowledge because it carried out a major campaign in Germany. It is a matter of clearly segmenting clients who spend more and are most oriented towards environmental sustainability. If you know where those clients are and what their consumption patterns are, it's a question of adapting the marketing to that specific group. In the UK we are talking about 6.5 million people who travel abroad on average three times a year. In other words, we are talking about 18 or 19 million trips a year. They are a very important part of it because they also spend between 20 and 30 per cent more than the average British tourists who visit Spanish destinations at present.

–And the Costa del Sol could also benefit from that...

–Of course. We have to try to attract that type of tourists.

–What other niches are opening up in this country?

–Working from home, which is actually more than a niche; it is an until now undiscovered market. Offering that facility would be a great opportunity for the Costa del Sol because of the climate, infrastructure and gastronomy. I have seen a lot of interest among professional people in basing themselves in Malaga, and we are going to set to work on making inroads into that market.

— CAR BIKE HOME —

INSURANCE

THE SECRET? IT'S NOT JUST THE PRICE



Virgin chooses Malaga as base port for its Valiant Lady

The adult-only ship arrived for its first visit on Monday and will be a regular visitor to the Costa del Sol this summer

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. Dozens of cruise ships visit Malaga Port every year but most of them just come for the day, arriving in the morning and leaving in the evening.

However, British-multinational Virgin has decided to use Malaga as its base port so that passengers can begin their

cruises there and supplies can be taken on board.

This is why cruise liner Valiant Lady, which arrived in Malaga for the first time on Monday, stayed overnight and left on Tuesday afternoon.

The ship, which was built just last year, is 277 metres long and can carry up to 2,800 passengers, although this first time around only 700 were on board. She arrived from Gibraltar and her next destination was Palma de Mallorca.

According to the Virgin website, these cruises focus on gastronomy and sport. The Valiant Lady only accepts adults as pas-



Virgin's Valiant Lady with the Melilla ferry in the foreground. S. SALAS

sengers and there is no buffet: instead, those on a cruise can choose from 20 different places to eat. There is a tattoo studio, a boxing ring and a room where

yoga classes are held. Also, and unsurprisingly as the ship is owned by Virgin, there is a record shop on board and a large two-storey nightclub.

City's new marina for megayachts at Muelle Uno receives its first customers

IGNACIO LILLO

MALAGA. The specially adapted quayside to take luxury, large megayachts in Malaga Port has received its first vessels. Work has been going on for almost a year to install facilities along the water's edge and close to the shops and restaurants at the Muelle Uno leisure area.

First to arrive last week was a 35-metre vessel called Pantera followed by 4Ever, a 20-metre catamaran. Only some 150 metres of quay are operating at present and the full facility is expected to open at the start of June. The project has been developed by IGY and Ocean Capital Partners.

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HERE AND THERE

The new location of the nighttime feria is a 38,000-square-metre plot below La Cañada mall. **sur**

Marbella's San Bernabé feria in June will be held on a new site

After two years of low-key events, the annual fair is getting back to normal with the same range of activities as before the pandemic

JOAQUINA DUEÑAS

MARBELLA. Marbella will be celebrating its annual San Bernabé fair from 7 to 12 June at a new feria ground as the event gets back to normal for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Last year the decision was taken to organise a series of low-key activities instead to minimise the risk of spreading coronavirus. The bars will also be returning to La Alameda and Avenida del Mar in the centre of the town.

As is traditional, the feria will formally begin with an opening

speech, the crowning of the “queen” and her ladies-in-waiting and fireworks on Tuesday, 7 June.

“We’re back, we’re back!” said Yolanda Marín, council coordinator of the feria, announcing details of the celebrations earlier this week. “There will be the same line-up as before the pandemic, with concerts in both the day and night fairs, as normal,” she explained.

In the daytime fair, Marín said that there will be “21 bars spread along La Alameda and Avenida del Mar, as there were before”.

Easier access

The big change comes with the nighttime feria as the new fairground is being used for the first time. It is on a 38,000-square-metre plot of land in the vicinity of Arroyo Segundo, just be-

low the La Cañada shopping centre. “It is closer and easier to access on foot, especially for residents of neighbourhoods such as Divina Pastora, Santa Marta or Plaza de Toros, and there is no need to climb a hill as there was when it was in La Cañada,” Marín pointed out.

The site will be divided into various zones, according to the recommended age for each type of attraction. “First there will be ones for the youngest children from two to six years of age, then areas for older children and finally the areas for adults,” the coordinator explained.

Marín added that “from 4 to 6pm or 8pm, depending on which area, permission will be given for live music, and there are plans to have two days without music to allow people with diverse needs to enjoy the fair’s attractions.”

ESTEPONA

Socialist councillor complains about facilities in Cancelada

DAVID LERMA. The condition of the football pitch, the state of the sports centre and the lack of educational facilities in the Cancelada area of Estepona were highlighted by PSOE councillor Emma Molina in a statement to the press at the local football ground on Monday last week.

The PP-controlled town hall quickly countered her claims, saying that they were not true.

A spokesperson said that the pitch was regularly maintained and denied that the sports centre was closed, but said that “activities were about to restart in the next few days”.



Emma Molina

Molina claimed that since the sports hall has been privatised residents have to pay to use it and, as there is no place for young people to meet, the football pitch is used for drinking sessions and left in a mess which is not cleaned up regularly.

She also said that the plans to expand the cramped secondary school have been paralysed since 2018, despite having a budget of 1,800,000 euros to do so.

MARBELLA

Businesses in Marbella and San Pedro take to the streets

J. D. With the good weather looking like it is here to stay, businesses in Marbella Old Town and San Pedro Alcántara town centre will be taking advantage this Saturday, 14 May, and setting up stalls for a spring market in the streets between 10am and 8pm.

The town council is supporting both events which aim to revitalise and promote shopping in the centres of the towns.

Marbella’s market will be located in the Old Town while San Pedro will have stalls set up in Avenida de Marqués del Duero and in Calle Lagasca and Calle Cordoba.

In total, around fifty businesses will be taking part in Marbella and forty in San Pedro.

Besides the markets, there will be other activities for the whole family to enjoy and make the best of the weather. The Old Town in Marbella will have a brass band to enliven proceedings and San Pedro will have performances by local dance academies.

MIJAS

Initial work on the Camino Viejo de Coín road is put out to tender

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ. The initial phase of work to widen the Camino Viejo de Coín (A-7053) road in Mijas will be put out to tender for 6m euros. The improvements will be made in three phases. This is “one of the most important projects for the town in terms of road safety,” according to deputy mayor José Carlos Martín. The road, which connects Mijas with Alhaurín el Grande, has a high traffic density, with about 8,400 vehicles per day, he explained. The first phase, from the Víctimas de Terrorismo roundabout to Venta La Morena, will take about eight months.

MIJAS

Special hikers map of the Sierra is launched

SUR. A relief map of the massif of the Sierra de Mijas, the first of its kind because it is designed for high-performance hikers or those specialised in mountainous terrain, has been produced by Mijas town hall. It is available in Spanish, English, French and German and shows, in addition to the trails that run through it, the main points of interest, such as caves, ravines and unique species of trees.

Boats for barbeque use. **J.D.**

MARBELLA

Moraga boats reinstated on the beach

J. D. Following requests from residents and local associations, the ‘moraga’ boats that are used for barbecues and bonfires on the beaches of Marbella and San Pedro Alcántara, have been reinstated. The boats were taken off the sand at the start of the pandemic. “They are in the same places as before and there is the same number of boats,” explained María Victoria Martín-Lomeña of Marbella council. She added that this year they can be booked online from the town hall’s website.

MARBELLA

Locals demand breakwater to save beach

J. D. Around a thousand people attended a rally organised by the Plataforma Marbella por sus Playas (Marbella Platform for its Beaches) in Avenida del Mar last week. Residents demanded that work to put back the breakwaters (espigones) be put out to tender urgently. Resident Verónica Márquez recalled how the beaches were thirty years ago: “They had beautiful white sand but when they removed the breakwaters, the storms washed it all away.”

Around a thousand people attended the rally in Avenida del Mar. **JOSELE**



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Broadband is on its way to 37,000 homes without a connection in Malaga province

Avatel, the firm entrusted with the plan to take fibre connections to isolated areas in 101 municipalities, has set to work with a view to finishing in 2023

NURIA TRIGUERO

MALAGA. In European bureaucratic speak they call them white and grey areas. In white areas there is no provider of broadband access services currently operating and none is expected to emerge within the next three years; while in the grey areas there is already one operator providing an internet service, but no fast broadband. In everyday terms these are internet black spots: homes and businesses without access to a decent 21st century connection.

In the province of Malaga there are more than 37,000 households and businesses that are victims of the digital divide.

But they won't be for much longer: Avatel, the firm selected to carry out the Programa Único scheme in Malaga province, has already started work to take fibre optic connections to areas without broadband coverage, with a view to finishing the roll-out before the end of 2023.

Programa Único is an incentive scheme set up by the Spanish ministry of Financial Affairs and Digital Transformation and

financed by the Next Generation EU funds.

Closing the digital divide

Its mission is to bring to Spain the "universalisation of public networks of electronic communications capable of providing ultrafast broadband services (of speeds of more than 300Mbps and up to 1Gbps) to areas without adequate coverage or plans to provide it within the next

A firm that started life in Marbella

Avatel is the country's fifth telecommunications operator and a leader in rural areas. The company's roots lie on the Costa del Sol, although it is now a giant nationwide. It was born in 2012 in Marbella as a local operator for Wimax inter-

net networks - that is, via radio - and grew rapidly thanks to the acquisition of other local operators. Its fibre optic trail has now reached two million homes and businesses. It currently has 300 shops open in the areas where it operates and has more than 2,500 employees. It has a wide presence in rural areas of the province of Malaga.



Workers have already started laying cables in some areas. **SUR**

three years, through offering help to private sector operators".

Avatel won the contract to implement the plan for the province of Malaga, with a budget of 7,221,670 euros. Throughout the first quarter of the year it has been showing its plans to local authorities, the first step in its journey towards wiping out the digital divide, in small and not-so-small municipalities.

Work to lay the fibre optic cables has already started in isolated areas of Nerja and Carra-traca.

"This will be the first time that fibre optic reaches these 37,000 homes and businesses that will have access to speeds of

600Mbps. The creation of the network to reach all of these isolated points will involve an investment of more than nine million euros," said company sources.

"The start of the work to install the network in each town will depend on different factors related to obtaining permissions from town halls," said the firm. The deadline for the completion of the plan is 31 December 2023.

Avatel will provide the ultrafast connection through FTTH (Fibre To The Home), which allows several devices to be connected at the same time and is ideal for home-working and streaming videos.

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An Iryo train next to a traditional AVE in the Malaga depot. **J. M. GUERRERO**

Testing starts for trains set to break high-speed monopoly

The Iryo 'red arrow' trains are the fastest and quietest in Europe and should be linking Malaga and Madrid from next year

I. LILLO

ALAGA. The first ever privately operated high-speed train to run between the Costa del Sol and Madrid is currently being tested between Malaga and Cordoba, and is expected to be in service in early 2023. The bright red Frecciarossa (red arrow) trains will be operated by Ilsa, the company that holds one of the only two concessions for pri-

vately run high-speed rail services in the country - the other is Ouigo - and known as Iryo. They have a maximum speed of 360 km/h, although in Spain they are not able to travel faster than 300 km/h.

The company says these are the fastest and quietest high-speed trains in Europe. They are 200 metres long and can carry up to 460 passengers.

There will be ten trains a day between Malaga and Madrid, starting early in the morning, but at present no details have been given regarding the cost of fares. When the service comes into operation it will put an end to Spanish operator Renfe's monopoly.

Malaga delegation travels to Florida to mark Gálvez Day

MACHARAVIAYA

Representatives from Macharaviaya, the birthplace of the American independence hero, met with their counterparts in the city of Pensacola

JENNIE RHODES

MACHARAVIAYA. A delegation of representatives from Macharaviaya and Malaga's provincial authority, the Diputación de Málaga, travelled to the city of Pensacola in Florida to commemorate Gálvez day on 8 May, for the first time in three years. Such events have continued to take place via video conference during the pandemic.

The Mayor of Macharaviaya, Antonio Campos, was accompanied by the President of Mancomunidad de la Costa del Sol Axarquía, José Juan Jiménez and president of La Diputación, Francisco Salado.

The village of Macharaviaya in the Axarquía is the birthplace of American independence hero Bernardo de Gálvez and is twinned



Representatives from Malaga and Pensacola by the de Gálvez statue. SUR

with Pensacola.

The celebration takes place every 8 May to mark the anniversary of de Gálvez's victory over the English in the Battle of Pensacola during the American War of Independence in 1781.

The main ceremony took place at the Pensacola's statue of Bernardo de Gálvez, during which

Campos and the Pensacola mayor, Grover Robinson, laid a wreath in memory of the hero.

Campos referred to the recreation of the battle which has taken place in Macharaviaya to mark American Independence day on 4 July since 2009. He added that this year the reenactment is planned for Saturday 2 July.

Nerja Civil Protection volunteers to get new HQ

EUGENIO CABEZAS

NERJA. Nerja's Civil Protection volunteers group is to get a new headquarters, which will replace the current office in a former police station on Calle Carabeo.

The group has for more than a decade, shared the space in the town centre with the Municipal

School of Music and Dance.

The new HQ is to be built on a plot of land located next to the town's Enrique López Cuenca Sports Stadium.

Necessary resources

Nerja's councillor for Safety and Transport, Francisco Arce, said: "Our objective is to continue sup-

porting the Civil Protection group so that it has the necessary resources to allow its volunteers to continue carrying out the great work they do."

Arce went on to say that the land, which is owned by the town hall, "meets the necessary requirements for its location, size and proximity to the main roads, and is registered as urban, which makes it suitable for the intended use."

The town hall has not specified the planned investment or the estimated deadlines for the project to be completed.

HERE AND THERE



A lifeguard tower on Rincón de la Victoria beach. SUR

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA

Rincón makes plans for summer lifeguards

E. C. Rincón de la Victoria town hall has announced the public tender for the provision of a lifeguard service on the town's beaches for the coming summer holiday period.

The service, which covers the Rincón coastline from the beaches of La Cala del Moral to Los Rubios in Torre de Benagal-

bón, will provide information as well as control and monitor the beaches in terms of compliance with current Covid-19 rules.

The town hall explained that the service will be made up of a coordinator and 19 lifeguards distributed between vehicles, lifeguard towers, bicycles and water.

The service will run from 15 June to 30 September and will be available from 12pm to 8pm, from Monday to Sunday, including public holidays.

ALMUÑÉCAR

Campaign to attract Malaga's commuters

J. R. Almuñécar-La Herradura town hall's tourism department has launched a promotional campaign in Malaga's Metro.

The initiative aims to attract visitors to the municipality in Granada province, "in order to promote not only the holiday option but also the possibility of a getaway or weekend break, which has such an impact on the tourist industry in general," explained Almuñécar's head of tourism and beaches, Daniel Barbero.

The campaign includes different images that promote the local gastronomy, beaches, water sports and culture.

NERJA

Pedestrianisation of Nerja street complete

E. C. After six months of works that have led to complaints from residents and shopkeepers, the project to pedestrianise Nerja's Calle Diputación has finished.

The street, which connects Avenida Castilla Pérez with the Balcón de Europa through Plaza Cavana and Calle Carmen, will only be open to delivery vehicles at specific times and emergency vehicles.

Sewage pipes, water supplies, street lighting, telecommunications and sign posts have been updated and the street also has planters and benches.

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Slip road improvements will bring an end to A-7 tailbacks

ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE

The local mayor said that there will be regional financing thanks to a change to the Junta's 2021 budgets

ANDREA JIMÉNEZ

The Junta de Andalucía this week put out to tender the project to improve access from Malaga's A-7 outer ring road to Alhaurín de la Torre. This should finally put an end to long tailbacks forming on the A-7 carriageway during peak traffic hours.

The news was revealed earlier in the week by the mayor of the municipality, Joaquín Villanova, after receiving "confirmation" from the regional minister of Development of the Junta de Andalucía, Marifrán Carazo.

According to the local councillor, the project will be able to go



Alhaurín de la Torre access. SUR

riod of six months.

The improvement of the access to Alhaurín de la Torre will involve two lanes in each direction from the A-7 roundabout at the entrance to the town which will ease the congestion on a road that is widely used for access to the municipality and the Guadalhorce Valley.

"We are talking about a road that carries around 25,000 vehicles a day - one of the main access roads to the Guadalhorce Valley, so this action not only solves a traffic problem for Alhaurín but also the tailbacks that form on the A-7 at this exit," said the mayor.

Original plans for the slip road improvements, dating back to March 2018, were put on hold after the central government pulled the plug on the planned northern access road to Malaga Airport, a project that has also recently been put out to tender again.

ahead since there will be regional financing thanks to a budget modification of the Junta de Andalucía's carried over from 2021.

Villanova explained the project will go out to tender with a budget of 1.3 million euros and an approximate execution pe-

UN-backed conference to fight terrorists

Malaga played host this week to a UN-backed high-level conference on Human Rights, Civil Society and the Fight against Terrorism. It was a meeting point for representatives of countries, social organisations, victims of terrorism and the UN. Minister of the Interior, Fernando Grande-Marlaska, stressed that the international community will find in Spain its "firmest ally" in the defence of human rights and announced the fight against terrorism will be at the centre of the forthcoming EU presidency.



SALVADOR SALAS

Runners and walkers mark World Press Freedom Day

FRANCISCO GUTIÉRREZ

MALAGA. The fifth Malaga's Press Race, held last Sunday (8 May), brought together almost 800 people, including athletes, families, groups of friends and journalists, to celebrate World Press Freedom Day after a two-year hiatus because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As well as the traditional 7km race for serious runners through the city's streets, this year the organisers added the first Soli-

darity Walk, at just two kilometres long. The mayor, Francisco de la Torre, and the president of the Malaga Press Association, Elena Blanco Castilla, fired the starting gun for the event that was won by Mario García Moreno (Club Mediterráneo). In the women's absolute category, the winner was Teresa Velasco Castillo (Atletismo del Sur).

Part of the proceeds from the day will go to the UNHCR organisation and will be used to help refugees from Ukraine.



Athletes set off at the start of the 7km race around the city centre streets last Sunday morning. FRANCIS SILVA

HERE AND THERE



Margarita del Cid at the launch of Torremolinos Pride 2022. SUR

TORREMOLINOS

Torremolinos Pride is back after pandemic

TONY BRYANT. The town's mayor, Margarita del Cid, has presented the packed programme for Torremolinos Pride 2022, which will take place from Monday 30 May until Saturday 4 June. The town hall said that Pride 2022 will be open to everyone and will offer activities for all audiences. The event will offer more than 30 cultural and

social activities with a common denominator: the enhancement of diversity without labels.

The singer and composer María Peláe will read the opening proclamation and participate in the raising of the LGTBQ+ flag outside the town hall on Wednesday 1 June.

The festivities will centre on the Pablo Ruiz Picasso Cultural Centre and the main parade will take place through the centre of the town on Saturday 4 June.

TORREMOLINOS

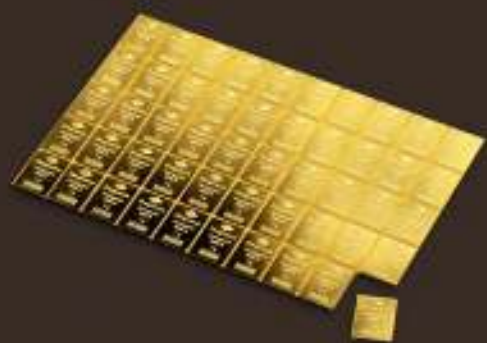
Costa town aspires to host Eurovision 2023

T.B. Torremolinos town hall has announced that it is going to formally request that the town be considered to host next year's Eurovision Song Contest if Spain wins this year's event, the final of which takes place in Turin, Italy, this Saturday (14 May). The mayor said that it would be "a huge opportunity for the whole of the Costa del Sol". But the odds are not good. Spain has competed in the contest continuously since 1961, but the last time the country won the contest was in Madrid in 1969, when Spain was involved in a four-way tie with France, the Netherlands and the UK.

MALAGA

Mayor issues stag and hen party warning

MATÍAS STUBER. They're back. The outrageous outfits and group T-shirts with dubious slogans. The good weather and easing of Covid-19 restrictions have attracted stag and hen parties back to Malaga in their droves. But, after an increase in the number of complaints from residents and some businesses about unruly groups, the city's mayor, Francisco de la Torre, has called for more control measures and sound level monitors to be installed in some tourist accommodation and has insisted that he will not allow Malaga to become an "uncontrolled city".



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Supermarket boom on the Costa del Sol - more than 50 stores have opened since the pandemic started

Coviran, Maskom, Carrefour and Mas are the firms that have grown the most in the province of Malaga in the last two years

JUAN SOTO



MALAGA. A change in consumers' shopping habits since the start of the pandemic is believed to be the reason so many new supermarkets have opened in Malaga province recently: since April 2020 the biggest supermarket chains have opened around 50 new branches. Coviran now has eight more; Maskom, Mas and Carrefour have opened a further seven each (not counting the stores taken over from Supersol); Mercadona has added five; El Jamón, Aldi and Suma each have another four; and there are three new Lidl stores in the province.

Most of these are in Malaga city



Mercadona opened its latest supermarket in the area last week in Ronda. SUR

and large tourist resorts such as Torremolinos, Mijas, Fuengirola and Marbella, although a few have been in small inland towns.

To put this in context, last year the Supersol chain closed down and sold all its supermarkets to Carrefour, Maskom and El Jamón.

Carrefour took over 48 of the stores, most of which have now been converted into Carrefour Market. Maskom bought four and El Jamón five.

The new supermarkets have created about 600 new jobs, with an average of 12 staff in each store. According to figures provided by the organisation that represents owners of foodstores, the Confederación Andaluza de Empresarios de Alimentación y Perfumería (CAEA), Malaga now has over 700 supermarkets belonging to large chains in total, employing around 13,000 people.

The director general of CAEA,

Álvaro González Zafra, said that 70 per cent of grocery shopping is done in supermarkets, more than in larger hypermarkets, markets or even online.

In his opinion, the high percentage can be put down to their competitor advantage in terms of proximity, variety and prices.

"They are close to where people live, that's why 90 per cent of customers go to do their shopping on foot," he said.

Leader in Andalucía

Although new supermarkets have been opening up all over Andalucía since the pandemic began,

IN FIGURES

600

jobs have been created by the new store openings in the province of Malaga

70

per cent of shopping for food is done in supermarkets owned by large chains

Malaga has gained more than any other province in the region.

In 2021 two out of every ten new stores were in Malaga, and it is also proving popular for international chains that are opening in Andalucía for the first time.

One example is Costco, which is due to build a large unit in Malaga Nostrum retail park and is considering other towns as well. The British giant Tesco also opened its first store in Andalucía in Mijas early on in the pandemic.

Nevertheless, experts say that although Covid has changed people's buying habits, it is noticeable that supermarket sales rose sharply in 2020, when the bars were closed for most of the year; but stabilised in 2021, when they were open again and people had somewhere else to go and consume alcohol and soft drinks.

Japan falls for Malaga's charms and exports there double in a decade

Companies in the province sold products worth 37.65 million euros to the Land of the Rising Sun last year, most from the agri-food sector

JUAN SOTO

MALAGA. Japan, one of the countries with the greatest export potential in the world, is beginning to fall for the charms of Malaga. Businesses in the province are accustomed to importing products from the Land of the Rising Sun, but many are now increasing their exports thanks to the increasing quality of the local agri-food sector. According to figures from ICEX, exports have doubled in the past ten years.

Last year, 145 businesses in

Malaga sold products to Japan, and 34 have been doing so regularly (at least for the past four years). Despite the difficulties of the pandemic, companies in the province exported products worth 37.65 million euros, and imported others worth 31.53 million. That positive difference of 6.12 million euros would have been unimaginable ten years ago.

The data is even more positive when compared with 2019, the year before the Covid pandemic, when Malaga businesses exported 46.10 million euros worth of goods to Japan, and imported 24.85 million. Exports to Japan have been increasing steadily since 2011, when they amounted to just 10.55 million euros.

The provincial director of ICEX in Malaga, Rafael Fuentes, admits that the number of businesses

exporting to Japan is still small but is growing. "And this is a very demanding market, so it shows that companies here are well set up for selling all over the world," he points out.

The biggest exports include meat products and olive oil, although fish products are also increasing. In 2021, Malaga exported food, drink and tobacco worth 34.98 million euros, including fats and oils (18.79 million euros), and meat products (14.29 million).

One of the events organised as part of the recent Japan Cultural Week in Malaga city was a meeting between executives from both countries to develop business opportunities. It was opened by mayor of Malaga, Francisco de la Torre, and Japanese ambassador to Spain, Kenji Hiramatsu.

They both remarked on the opportunities in Japan and Spain for generating business and synergies, and the ambassador confirmed that economic relations between the two are significant and "progressing with a firm step".

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I quit



It might seem like an odd litmus test for the strength of a country's labour market, but the number of Spaniards jacking in their jobs is a definite sign of improvement in this respect.

Dubbed the "Big Quit" or "Great Resignation", the Covid-induced trend of leaving a position in search of better-paid or more fulfilling em-

ployment is slowly catching on in Spain - and rather than fretting about that, employment minister Yolanda Diaz could see it as a sign that her reforms are working.

Last year in Spain, 30,000 people voluntarily left their jobs, contributing to the current pool of 109,000 unfilled positions. Diaz wants those vacancies filled quickly, but

maybe it's partly due to her improvement of employees' stability that the "Big Quit" is gaining traction in Spain: after all, you're more likely to give up what you already have if there's a reasonable chance of acquiring something better as a result. For Diaz, who has striven to increase quality instead of quantity within Spain's labour market, this is surely cause for celebration.

Diaz's approach is completely the opposite of that favoured by the Conservative government of Mariano Rajoy. Rajoy might have stuck to his promise to create 500,000 jobs every year, but many of these new positions wouldn't have outlasted the average

Mayfly.

In a telling sign of structural improvement, however, the percentage of permanent contracts has risen each month this year; and in April, almost half of all new contracts signed were permanent, the highest such proportion on record.

It's surely no coincidence that 27% of Spaniards - perhaps lured by the prospect of more remunerative permanent contracts - are giving serious thought to quitting their jobs in 2022, according to a February survey for Infojobs. In the wider context of Spain's suddenly-improved labour market, it could be that some of those 109,000 vacancies are

the dregs that no-one wants, outdated rejects destined for scrap.

Having said that, there remains a discrepancy between the amount of vacancies in Spain and the country's unemployment rate, which in 2021 was the highest in the EU for the thirteenth consecutive year. Diaz might have done a good job of raising quality rather than quantity, but her next challenge consists in tackling the latter.

In the meantime, let's hope that more and more people start walking into their bosses' offices, with a letter of notice in one hand and the middle finger of the other prominently displayed.

Spain looks to USA, Nigeria, Egypt and Qatar for gas supply

Gas brought in by methane tankers now makes up 75% of imports, while pipeline supplies from Algeria have fallen by a third following Russia's invasion of Ukraine

JOSÉ MARÍA CAMARERO

MADRID. Hurried changes have been taking place to the map of where Spain gets its gas from for generating power in order to keep up supply since the start of the war in Ukraine.

Spain has completely upended the source of its suppliers following the tension in Russia - the main exporter for Europe - and after a diplomatic row between Algeria - from where the Iberian Peninsula receives much of this raw material - and Morocco.

According to the figures for April, the USA is now the principal supplier of gas to Spain. And other countries such as Nigeria, Egypt

and Qatar, among others, who exported very little to this country until two months ago, have also increased their supplies.

Specifically, in April, gas from the USA represented 30.7% of all imports of this product, which is brought in by methane tankers to Spain's six regasification plants. On average so far this year, America has been providing around one-third of the gas consumed in Spain. A year ago, it was barely 20%.

Imports from Algeria, through the Medgaz pipeline which links the country directly with Almeria, came second, accounting for 23.4% of the total in April. This was lower than before, because last year 40% of Spain's gas came

Russia is still supplying 8% of Spain's gas, which is practically the same as before the invasion of Ukraine

from Algeria. However, the closure of the pipeline linking the country with Cadiz via Morocco in November 2021 reduced supplies from this source by one third.

New energy partners

Little by little, as weeks have passed, new energy partners have been consolidating their positions. In April, Nigeria supplied nearly 17% of the gas Spain needed, compared with 10% last year; Egypt supplied 6%, compared with 1% on average; and Qatar supplied 4.4%, practically double the amount 12 months earlier. Russia is still supplying 8% of Spain's gas, which is practically the same as before the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

At the same time, exports from Spain to Europe via the pipelines in the Basque Country and Navarra, which connect with France, are continuing to grow despite their minimal capacity in relation to all the gas that Spain can receive via methane tankers or the pipeline from Algeria.

The invasion of Ukraine has changed the direction in which the gas flows and the two pipelines are currently working at full capacity. In April, Spain exported 5,618 GWh of energy to France, and only received 464. It is the first time in history that there has been a negative balance of this size.

Changes from July to fuel discount are weighed up

J. M. CAMARERO

MADRID. On 1 April, the Spanish government introduced a three-month discount on fuel to offset increasing prices. It is now considering what to do from 1 July, and everything points to a change in the way the discount is applied.

At the moment, petrol and diesel are 20 céntimos per litre cheaper than they would otherwise be, with the government funding 15 céntimos of the discount and the oil companies paying the other five.

However, there are concerns that some companies are taking advantage of the situation and

increasing their prices to "swallow up" the discount. The government has warned fuel companies against this.

One alternative would be to provide the discount for those who most need it. This is something that was suggested originally, but the Ministry of Finance decided it would be too difficult to differentiate between users when it came to filling their vehicle with fuel.

However, there are other ways of achieving it, such as applying a retrospective refund, or providing some type of voucher to be presented when paying for the fuel.



Filling up has been subsidised. Ñ. SALAS

The benefits of a 'Strategic Financial Plan' for UK nationals in Spain

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EU talks are near the end and looking positive, Picardo says

When asked if they could be derailed by tensions over the Northern Ireland protocol, the chief minister said these talks are completely separate

DEBBIE BARTLETT

GIBRALTAR. Negotiations regarding Gibraltar's future relationship with the EU are nearing the end and are still looking positive, according to chief minister Fabian Picardo, who also stressed that these talks are completely separate from tensions between UK and the EU over the Northern Ireland protocol and should not be affected by them.

Speaking from London in an interview with GBC News, Picardo said the current talks had originally been scheduled as the final round of negotiations, but they may go on a little longer. He said all those involved are optimistic and are taking a positive approach.

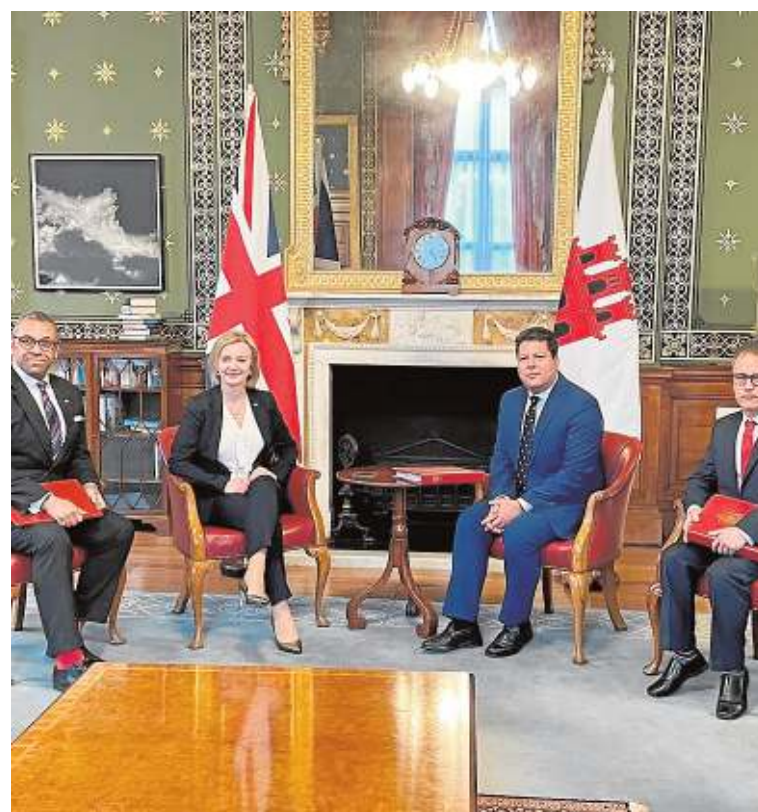
"We are within touching dis-

tance of finalising the principles of agreement. We have been buffeted by winds outside the room but are steering the ship towards agreement," he commented, pointing out that there have been other political tensions between the UK and the EU during the 18 months or so that the negotiations have taken place and the position of Spain, Gibraltar, the UK and the EU Commission has been that they should not be allowed to influence the talks.

"It is important to continue because of the long-term issues which are so important to Gibraltar and the region around us," he said.

When asked if there was a chance that an agreement could fall at the last hurdle, he replied that these are not yet the final round of talks, as the parties involved are currently fashioning what the Treaty between the UK and EU would look like in legal international text, but it would be wrong for them to be derailed by something external.

However, "in international poli-



Fabian Picardo and Dr Joseph Garcia with Liz Truss and James Cleverly. **SUR**

tics nothing is certain. We have to work very hard and be cold and mature in the approach we take to deliver what the people of Gibraltar want us to deliver," he said.

With regard to the meeting he and deputy chief minister Dr Joseph Garcia held with the UK foreign secretary Liz Truss and Europe minister James Cleverly on Wednesday, he said they held

detailed conversations on the issues in scope at the moment including the problems of UK nationals who hold blue civil registration cards and cannot cross the border into Spain, and that both ministers were already fully aware. "We seek to do whatever we can, not only for them but also for hauliers and all the other problems that Brexit has caused," he said.

IN BRIEF

SOCIETY

Convent garden open day this Saturday

D.B. Would you like to see the Governor of Gibraltar's garden?

The Convent Garden will be open to the public on Saturday 14 May from 11am to 4pm and it is also a chance to see the extensive renovations to the outside of the residence which have taken place during the past year.

Entry costs £1 and all the money raised will be donated to local charities.

CULTURE

A Celebration of Opera on Wednesday evening

D.B. A date to note in the diary for opera lovers: A Celebration of Opera will be held in the Convent ballroom on Wednesday 18 May at 8pm, featuring soprano Celia Costea, tenor Enrique Ferrer and pianist Ugo D'Orazio.

Tickets cost £22 (£10 for pensioners and students) and are available from www.buytickets.gi or the John Mackintosh Hall reception.

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On a daily basis, we receive calls from people who have already had heaters installed by other companies. Their main issues are always the same, they are unable to achieve the temperatures they desire and they see a noticeable increase on their electricity bill.

What you should know and what to watch out for?

Pool Services Group are happy to give you a free no-obligation advice, regardless of whether you decide to buy one of our Norsup heaters or choose to go elsewhere. We are confident enough to say once you receive our advice, you will choose one of our Norsup heaters, backed up by our guarantee, and we will not be beaten on any like-for-like quote.

In essence, there is no such thing as a heater that is too big for your pool; choosing a larger heater than you require will mean that the machine is running more efficiently, as it is not working to a high capacity to deliver the heat to your pool. Also take into account that one of the costly times to run your heater is when you first switch it on, the faster the pool reaches the desired temperature the better. A bigger heater will of course achieve this in less time.



A Norsup 13KW inverter heater is capable of heating this pool up to temps of 28°C to 29°C but will be constantly working to its full capacity (running at 100%) to achieve this, whereas a Norsup 17KW heater would be the obvious choice for your 8x4 pool, but we still recommend customers, for an extra 400 Euros, that they consider taking the Norsup 20KW heater. This heater would only be working at 80% of its capacity and would bring the average 8x4 pool up to 28°C in around 36 hours, once switched on.



Other companies may try to sell your heaters based on price and not on performance and efficiency. As a pool heater is a long term investment it is false economy to go for the cheapest option. There are many other factors to take into account, like how often do you want to heat your pool, and at what time of the year? Do you have solar power available? Are you buying for a rental property or are you thinking of selling your property in the coming years, all of these things need to be taken into account.

Speak to us about our heater and solar power packages.

Whilst the majority of the heaters we sell are inverter-type, which are more expensive to buy but considerably cheaper to run, there is also the cheaper option of a non-inverter. If you are only looking to heat your pool for a few months of the year, this is an option we can discuss with you to see if this is feasible.

Please don't even consider a heater that doesn't give a minimum of a 5 year warranty on the heat exchanger, as this is the most expensive part of the heater to replace due to its titanium content.

The full range of Norsup heaters all come with an unrivalled 10-year-warranty on the heat exchangers for your peace of mind.

Over the coming months every other week we will be writing an article covering pool and or pool equipment. In the next feature, we will be looking at pool covers, especially automatic/ electric, and solar PVC and polycarbonate covers. When you have invested in a pool heater, you need to do all you can to retain the heat in the water as most of the heat is lost through evaporation, a cover is a must when considering a pool heater and choosing the right cover becomes an important factor.

In the past an auto-cover seemed like a bit of a luxury with a typical cover, for an 8x4 pool, costing upwards of 8,000 Euros. Pool Services Group have made having an auto cover more affordable with a typical 8x4 cover costing less than 5,000 Euros.

Our covers are still of the highest quality and have been made affordable by our commitment to the manufacturer to represent them exclusively in Spain and our commitment that we will make them affordable to our clients.

Please feel free to give us a call we are happy to give you free advice and answer any questions you may have.

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024: Spain launches free 24-hour suicide prevention helpline as figures increase

The telephone helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year and is manned by qualified professionals who are employed by the scheme, and not by volunteers

ANTONIO PANIAGUA

MADRID. Every day, 11 people in Spain take their own life; in other words, that is one every two hours. In 2020, there were 3,941 cases of suicide, according to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics (INE). It has been the principal cause of unnatural death ever since 2008, when the number of people who took their own life first exceeded that of those who died in traffic accidents.

Now, the government has taken an important step towards breaking down the taboos around suicidal behaviour with its 24-hour telephone hotline, which started operating this week and is run by Cruz Roja (Red Cross). It is completely confidential, accessible by everyone and is answered immediately.

This suicide prevention number is 024, and it is available every day of the year.

Announcing the measure in Madrid, Health Minister Carolina Darias pointed out that apart from the 11 people a day who take their own life in Spain, about 220 others attempt to do so and the numbers are increasing. The government has organised a me-

dia campaign to raise awareness of the 024 helpline for the rest of this month and in June.

Emotional support

The phone number is manned by qualified professionals who are employed by the scheme, and not by volunteers. If the risk is considered high, they will alert the emergency services, explained Fátima Cabello of Cruz Roja, at the launch of this new prevention service.

When someone rings 024 the response is immediate, and preventive guidance and emotional support is available for anyone who is considering suicide or family members of someone who is at risk.

Dolors López Aliaga, whose daughter took her own life, has since written a book about how to cope with the loss and how suicidal behaviour is not a "problem of one family or individual but of society". "There's no typical profile of a suicidal person; it could affect anyone. It's vital that people know how to recognise danger signs and risk factors," she said.

The president of the Spanish Confederation of Mental Health, Nel González, said there needs to be more visibility regarding emotional problems.

"We live in a system which tries to resolve physical problems immediately, but not psychological ones because they can't be seen," he said.

The 024 line is also accessible by people who communicate through sign language, and for

those who do not speak Spanish, the helpline has a telephone interpreting service, so that users can speak to someone in their own language.

Until now, the only suicide prevention and mental health helplines in Spain have been those run by associations - such as Teléfono de la Esperanza (in Spanish) and Samaritans in Spain (in English) - but there was not a publicly-funded public attention service.

Fundación Anar, an organisation that runs telephone lines and a chat for children and adolescents with problems, revealed some chilling figures last week. In the last decade, calls for help for youngsters with suicidal ideas multiplied by 12, from 298 in 2012 to 3,665 in 2021.

HELPLINES

► **024.** The new Spanish government free 24-hour 365-day helpline run by the Red Cross. Real time telephone interpreting service for non-Spanish speakers.

► **Samaritans in Spain.** Free helpline in English for anyone feeling desperate, anxious or alone: 900525100 between 10am and 10pm or email pat@samaritansinspain.com.

► **Anar.** Helpline and chat for children and teens (Spanish). 900202010 www.anar.org

Eleven suicides take place in Spain every day

The number of people who take their own lives almost triples deaths caused by traffic accidents

Deaths by suicide — **11** people every day

3,941 people (2020)

Deaths in traffic accidents

1,370 people (2020)

Deaths from breast cancer

6,621 people (2019)

Deaths from lung cancer

11,265 people (2018)

Deaths from colon cancer

22,153 people (2019)

11 people every day



74% men **26%** women



Source: INE, DGT and Sociedad Española Oncología

Á.S.

Malaga, among the provinces with the highest suicide rates in the country

The Hospital Regional has set up a project to detect suicidal behaviour and prevent deaths

ÁNGEL ESCALERA

MALAGA. Malaga province, along with Galicia and Asturias, has one of the highest suicide rates in Spain. There is no clear cause of this trend, said Dr Antonio Bordallo, the director of clinical management for mental health at the launch of a prevention programme this week. Named

'Código Suicidio' (Code Suicide), the aim of the scheme is to detect suicidal behaviour and prevent deaths.

The number of people to take their own lives has increased in Malaga province, which has gone from 83 deaths in 2013 to 122 in 2019, the most recent figure available. These are the official figures, but the real ones are higher. In Andalucía between 700 and 800 people take their own lives every year, according to Antonio Bordallo.

While exact figures are not available, the number of suicides

is considered to have increased during the pandemic of the last two years, as there has been an increase in the number of calls for help in cases of suicide attempts.

Around 75% of cases of suicide involve men and 25% women. However in the case of attempted suicides, 60-70% involve women and 40-30% men.

An increase in suicidal behaviour among adolescents has also been confirmed, although the average age of suicide cases is still around middle-age.

Hospital staff and officials at-

tending the launch of the project stressed that the problem of suicide should be made more visible, so that it stops being taboo and can be more easily prevented.

The Andalusian government's delegate in Malaga, Patricia Navarro, said that there was an unwritten pact of silence surrounding suicide to avoid a copycat effect, something that should no longer exist as people need to

speak clearly about the problem.

"You can't prevent something that's hidden away or that is unknown. The aim of the project being carried out by the Hospital Regional is to achieve a situation in which suicide is not an option," said Navarro.

In charge of the project is psychiatrist Maribel Gómez del Cid, who explained that the "código suicidio" would be activated when a patient with suicidal behaviour arrives at the hospital's accident and emergency department.

The plan involves patient care and assistance (diagnosis, treatment and care) as well as having a research aspect (creating a risk profile of people with suicidal tendencies) and a training programme for professionals.

"Suicide has to be made visible," said Dr Gómez del Cid.

Officials and doctors say the problem of suicide should be made more visible as "you can't prevent something that's hidden away"



Paz Esteban (right) arrives to meet MPs in the Congreso last week. EFE

Controversy as government replaces its spy chief over Pegasus hacking fallout

SUR

MADRID. The government took the decision this week to replace the head of its CNI spying agency, provoking strong criticism from opposition parties.

The move followed the recent revelation that pro-independence Catalan politicians had been spied on in the past by the CNI using

hard-to-detect Pegasus spyware on their mobile phones and the later news that the Prime Minister and other ministers had been spied on by Pegasus by a foreign body or government.

Defending his decision to replace Paz Esteban as head of the CNI this week, PM Pedro Sánchez told MPs that there had been a “clear breach of security” in al-

lowing the spying of government ministers’ phones by a government or body outside of Spain.

However opposition parties were keen to point the blame for having Paz Esteban step down on the government’s unrelated need to placate Catalan MPs who had been victims of spying by Spanish authorities.

The Socialist-party-led government relies on the votes of the Catalan ERC party to stay in power and therefore has been at pains to keep them happy since the scandal of pro-independence politicians’ phones being hacked was broken by The New Yorker magazine last month.

Last week Paz Esteban had told MPs behind closed doors that 18 people linked to the Catalan independence movement had been spied on - fully legally - with Pegasus software in 2019, including the regional president and ERC leader Pere Aragonès. While Esteban still seemed to enjoy the confidence of the government last week after that news, by this week she was gone.

The leader of the conservative Partido Popular party, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, said that Sánchez had turned a “problem” with his political allies into a “crisis of State”.

Reports seen by SUR show that the CNI had warned ministers several times of the risks of Pegasus software.

IN BRIEF

LEGISLATION

Ministers to approve draft abortion law text

A. TORRICES. The government is hoping to approve the proposed text of its new abortion law next week before sending it to the Congreso for debate, with the aim of having it in force in early 2023. It says it will be “more ambitious and wide-ranging” than the previous legislation of 2010.

The final text has not yet been confirmed, but, as well as guaranteeing the right to voluntary, free abortion during the first 14 weeks of pregnancy in public health hospitals, it could possibly also declare surrogate pregnancies to be violence against women, approve initiatives to promote menstrual health and prosecute bad gynaecological and obstetric practices during pregnancy and birth.

BORDERS

Moroccan frontier at Ceuta and Melilla to open

SUR. Spain and Morocco agreed on Wednesday to reopen “in the coming days” their land border at the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African coast. The heavily-used frontier was closed firstly by Covid restrictions and then by serious diplomatic problems between the two countries which boiled over into a mass crossing of people from Morocco into Ceuta a year ago when that country’s police dropped their guard. It will be up to the Interior ministry to announce the firm date.

CRIME

Policeman ‘assaulted’ by tourists in theft mix up

SUR. Several tourists attacked a plain-clothes officer from Barcelona’s local police force on Tuesday after mistaking him for a thief. He was, in fact, actually trying to prevent a robbery. The incident happened in Plaza del Mar, in the city’s Barceloneta district. The alleged attackers were tracked down to a hotel and charged with a crime against authority and for causing the police officer’s injuries. Video footage shared online showed a group of men violently kicking another man in the street.



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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Bike lane

Re the article by E.C. on the second bike lane - Nerja (Oasis de Capistrano) to Maro on the N-340 in SUR in English (6 May). I am disabled and live in Urb. del Águila Maro; with my disability I am only able to get around locally on my motorised scooter.

Is the new bike lane permitted to be used by disability scooters?

In the Maro area I use my scooter but there are numerous difficulties where the footpaths terminate without ramps, including crossings that only have ramps on one side. In fact all the designated crossings only have one or no ramps. This also inconveniences people with prams or wheelchairs.

I have been to the town hall in Nerja to discuss the problem of disabled access to pavements several times with photos and they have been surprised but there is never any action.

The main road, N-340, and the road to the caves is very and dangerous to be used by disability scooters, etc.

KEN WESCOTT

Trees cut down in
Arroyo de la Miel

It was upsetting to see so many mature trees cut down along Avenida Salvador Vicente, Arroyo de la Miel. All that remains now are ugly stumps.

Trees provide much

needed shade, nesting sites for birds, they absorb CO2 and add to the general ambience.

Asking around, nobody knew the reason and there are no signs to explain.

This is so disappointing.

ALAN FERGUSON

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THE MUSIC MAKER
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Stag's army

About twenty-five years ago, I recall being very surprised to see the new street signs that had sprung up around Malaga: "Centro Histórico" they boasted, made, as they were, in the shape of an arrow to point everyone in the right direction. They replaced the ones that had, hitherto, simply said "Centro". It was clear that big plans were afoot and, credit where it's due, the city has undergone a radical transformation in the intervening years, positioning itself as a big cheese in the European tourist destination market. This state of affairs is, of course, a double-edged sword.

A subject of heated debate currently is the plethora of stag and hen parties that arrive in town each weekend. Some bars and restaurants have banned them. Down at The Shakespeare we simply dig out the Leonard Cohen albums and let nature take its course.

I've never been on a stag night but, as we live in times when everyone is an expert on everything, I'm not going to let that stop me from offering a few tips if you're

planning to indulge in one of these dubious shindigs.

First, try to get out of it, using any feasible excuse available including family bereavements. "Sorry, my grandmother died," is fine - "The Lads" don't need to know it was thirty years ago. If, in spite of your best efforts, you still find yourself at the airport with eight middle-aged men wearing smudged lipstick and fishnet stockings, keep a polite distance, and sport a rictus grin which will make it look to your group like you're mildly amused by their infantile jokes but also gives onlookers the impression that you're embarrassed by their antics. You are.

Next, don't drink anything at the airport. It's called a "stag weekend" for a reason - it's a three-day marathon of beer and kebabs and your liver isn't twenty-three years old these days. If others start drinking before the flight, tell them you can't join them out of respect for your grandmother who choked on a bottle of lager.

Having arrived at your hotel/apartment, take a shower so

long that the others might leave without remembering to take you with them. If this tactic fails, under no circumstances accept any fancy dress, especially involving lipstick or fishnet stockings. Ditto, T-shirts with rude slogans - these immediately make everyone loathe you.

From here on in, it's a question of preserving as much dignity as you possibly can. It won't be easy but most excruciatingly embarrassing situations can be mitigated to some degree. If anyone in your group climbs on a table/tries to get a lewd sing-song going/suggests a round of tequila slammers (or indulge in all three simultaneously), whip out the pocket chess set you secreted into your jacket pocket back home and offer any random stranger a game. Tut and shake your head throughout the match. Lose on purpose.

Apologise constantly for the rest of the stay, visit some museums or anywhere, in fact, that doesn't have a bar and (pretend to) sleep for the entire journey home. Phew! You made it - congratulations.

IDÍGORAS

"Scientists in Zafarraya are searching for the reasons for the extinction of the Neanderthals and their link to Homo sapiens"

It would be easier to find the reasons for the extinction of Homo sapiens



SUR in English

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THE BOTTOM LINE
TXEMA MARTÍN

Those who spy on me

They probably spy on all of us most of the time so there is no need to put a virus on our mobile phones. Nor sack the spy chief. Our emails are screened to send us adverts they think are relevant to us and to find everything out about us, down to the last detail. I remember seeing a documentary about ten years ago about the terms and conditions we accept when we sign up for a service or a web page on the internet, and those previously unseen texts are truly terri-

fying. They are impossible to read and, in fact, I don't think anybody does read them unless it is their job or they desperately need to get a life.

There are cases where being spied on can have its advantages. I can think of several. In the world of marketing, for example, if we accept advertising as routine, I would prefer to see something that interests me and not violins or diving equipment. They say Amazon knows what we are going to buy before we even

know what the product is like. The recommendations for new music on Spotify make their algorithms one of the best DJs on the planet, and they perform for you alone.

I know where several of my spies are. A few months ago I downloaded Tik-Tok, the short video app that you scroll through with your finger and is the closest thing to mixing zapping with amphetamines. I can understand that teenagers get transfixed by it, but it is also distressing because there are few things worse than that for stimulating concentration. After a while looking at it you seem like a zombie and it is difficult to concentrate on a single paragraph.

The content seems made for you because the system learns every time you touch the screen or keyboard. They know so much about me that I suspect they lis-

ten in, to such an extent that I might end up telling them all my business.

Mobile phones are set up to listen the whole time, like Alexa. If you spend a couple of days talking about how much you want to visit Finland, without actually typing any of the words in a search engine, it is highly likely that adverts or content about a trip to Helsinki will suddenly start appearing.

Most of the time we are literally surrounded by microphones and cameras. A lot of devices have them. There are a couple of writers who have said in the past that they don't want an internet connection because it has a hidden camera and spies on you. Now they have a 68" TV screen equipped with artificial intelligence in their living room. If some circumstances are impossible to get away from, what is the point in resisting?

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'Your home country makes you more of a foreigner than you feel yourself'

Theodor Kallifatides Writer

The Greek-Swedish author has been in Malaga to promote *Timandra*, the novel, newly translated into Spanish, which he considers to be his best

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. At the age of 84, Theodor Kallifatides (Molaoi, Greece, 1938) visited Malaga for the first time in his life this week and described the city as "wonderful". He didn't visit the capital of the Costa del Sol as a tourist, but to promote his newly translated book *Timandra*. Despite this new historic novel being published in Spanish for the first time, the Greek-Swedish author has had some of his work translated into English as well, namely *Peasants and Masters*; *With the Coolness of Her Lips*; or, most recently, *The Siege of Troy*. And many of his English-speaking followers will be hoping that Kallifatides also translates *Timandra* - the novel he considers to be his best.

-Timandra was first published in 1994. Why translate it now? And why do you say it's your best work?

-The only reason is that Joan Tarrida, the publisher, found my work three or four years ago. He's an excellent publisher and he found *Timandra*. He said: "What do you think? It's a wonderful book." I said, "Okay, publish it." [The book] was the end of my quest for freedom. I left my country because I was tired of the political situation, it was the first step to a new freedom. Then I decided to write in Swedish after a few years, that was the second step. And then I decided to get rid of my sex, in the sense that I must try to understand women deeper than I used to.

-What did that understanding entail?

-Until I was 35 years old, I knew nothing of women; I flirted or went to bed with them. It was a time when everyone said that women and men cannot understand each other. I asked why. My most intimate friends when I was young were women, and they were wonderful friends. So I understood that figure of *Timandra* needed to tell the story; to try to see if I, as a man, could write about a woman.

-So writing that book can't have been an easy task.

-No, and there was a technical part of the book. *Timandra* lived in a period where Latin wasn't part of the world, she could not use words



Greek writer Theodor Kallifatides, who lives in Sweden, visited Malaga this week. SHAY CONAGHAN

of Latin origin. I decided to write the book in Swedish, word by word. The critics were happy with the language of the book, but they didn't know why. I do know that it's a book that I've put more work into than any other. So I call it my best.

-What was it like to write from the female point of view?

-It was difficult, of course. I needed to use all my imagination, all my sensibility to construct the character of *Timandra*. It was a different experience because you have to put the world upside down.

-What do you mean by that?

-Usually, when a male writer writes about a woman, he describes his reactions, his psychology, his feelings. I wanted to do it the other way around. I tried to feel deeper in myself, to understand *Timandra*. The result was a liberation of all sex stigmas and misogyny that I was brought up with. That's why I wanted to write a book where I somehow tried to restore the position of a woman in daily life.

-Timandra is set during the Peloponnesian War and you lived through the Greek civil war and the Second World War. How much inspiration did you take from your personal experience?

-If something is the same in our life it's war. Wars never solve any problems, they just create new ones. Look what's happening in Ukraine now. It started with someone in Russian thinking it would take a few days to take over. Will there be a winner? No. Ukraine will be totally destroyed; Russia will suffer a lot of loss of human life.

All wars are absurd

-So both wars are comparable?

-In the *Illiad*, Homer says that war is the fountain of all tears. He was right then and he is right now. The Peloponnesian War was as absurd as any war today. So I don't think it matters if I write about *Timandra* or a modern woman. The only thing is that *Timandra* was easier for me to cope with.

-To cope with?

-Yes, because it was the Golden Age of Athens. Philosophers, poets, painters... It was a golden moment of humanity. So then I thought that it was a happy coincidence that she was there at the same time.

-You found a voice to talk about your past. Do you think we'll see Ukrainian children write about what they've witnessed?

-I'm sure of it, not theoretically, but practically, because I know what happens with immigrant children.

-What exactly happens to them?

-Many young writers now in Sweden are of foreign origin. What do they do? Many of them go into the artistic world to try to describe that huge experience of their parents, but it's also huge for them too. It's inevitable that we'll see a lot of novels from these children growing up now.

-Children remember a lot.

-If you are three years old and see your father killed, or your mother raped, it's not something

you forget. And if you're a writer, you write about it.

-Speaking of writing, are there any Spanish authors that you enjoy?

-Spain has some huge writers. Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, Cervantes... Now there are so many good writers. I have not had time to read them all.

Reading local writers

-So who have you read?

-I have read wonderful books by Aramburu, Atxaga, Llamazares and Juan Cruz. I hope to start reading one of the novels of Antonio Soler. Spain does not lack good writers. On the contrary.

-What do you think of the rest of Spanish culture?

-Spanish artists own the world. Spanish culture is great and I'm sorry that I did not start learning Spanish earlier. The last two years I've been learning it and I'll continue. It takes some time, but it's worth it.

-You've also directed a film. Is there a reason why you stopped, or did just you prefer writing?

-Doing that film I found out all the difficulties of making one. You think you make all the decisions, but no. I discovered that I cannot work with other people, I must work with myself. Me and the book. It was a dream to make a film. I studied theatre in Greece, but that was not my stage.

-How does it feel to follow Greece from another country?

-Sometimes it's very painful because you would like to say something but you know it doesn't have any importance. It's a strange feeling, an impotent feeling. When you go to some place else, you become somebody new. Then, your home treats you as somebody who has done something somewhere else. They make you more of a foreigner than you feel yourself.

-It seems like immigration is becoming the norm.

-The situation of immigrants will not stop here. I think people in the coming generations will end up living their lives some place else outside their country. We all follow the movements of society. I hope that we will find a way to accept the multi-ethnicity of societies and be well with it.

-Would you say you're more in touch with your Swedish life or with your Greek roots?

-My life is Swedish. In Sweden I am an immigrant, but by now I would be an immigrant even to Greece. I have lost everything that counted in my life. I have no family left there, I'm the last one. I did not want to be a tourist in my own country. I don't have any intention of going back to Greece.

Children take centre stage at local Norwegian National Day celebrations

The Norwegian community on the Costa del Sol will be celebrating their Constitution Day on 17 May, which is also known as children's day

ALEKK M. SAANDERS

BENALMÁDENA. Norwegians celebrate their Constitution Day on 17 May, also known as children's day. This year, besides the traditional children's parade in Benalmádena, an art competition is being dedicated to a historical Norwegian personality who lived in Andalucía.

In Norway, on Constitution Day, practically every elementary school district organises its own parade, led by marching bands. One of their goals is to emphasise the role of children in Norwegian society. The largest of the traditional parades is held in the Norwegian capital where tens of thousands of people gather together and walk, waving flags, shouting "hurrah!"

The children's parade on 17 May



The Norwegian school in Benalmádena. SUR

has also become a tradition on the Costa del Sol. In Benalmádena, students from the Norwegian school (Den Norske Skolen), along with a guest Spanish marching band take to the streets. The parade starts in the centre of Arroyo de la Miel at 10.45am. Everyone sings the Norwegian national anthem, along with other traditional songs. At 11.15am, outside the Casa de Cultura, speeches will be given by mayor Víctor Na-

vas, and head teacher Trude Jahren.

This year over 100 Norwegian students and teachers will participate in the National Day celebrations in Benalmádena.

Some of them will show off their "bunad", Norway's traditional costume. At 12.30pm events move to the school for games and other activities.

Traditionally, a class from a local Spanish school in Benalmádena Pueblo has been invited to join the activities. This time the new school outdoor canteen will offer typical waffles, hot dogs and ice cream.

Painting in nature

Hot dogs, though in Andalusian style, and ice cream, are also being prepared in the Los Caracoles (The Snails) rural complex, in the area of Frigiliana, Torrox and Nerja. The population of Norwegians and other Scandinavians is rapidly increasing on the east side of the Costa del Sol.

On 17 May, the complex will wel-

come all Norwegians who would like to spend the day in natural surroundings, with Andalusian food, including toast with smoked salmon.

The organisers are sure that the peaceful surroundings, exotic fruit trees and an abundance of different flowers, as well as the unique snail-shaped buildings will attract both children and grown-up Norwegians. Additionally, the Norway "day" will last in Los Caracoles for a couple of weeks thanks to an art contest for children.

From 17 May to 31 May, a creative corner of the rural complex will be a space for painting and drawing. The topic of the art competition is "My image of the Princess of Norway". The activity aims to raise awareness of Christine, Princess of Norway, the daughter of Håkon IV, King of Norway, who in the 13th century came to Spain to live. It is believed she enjoyed Andalucía and she died young here in 1262.

Until the end of the month all pictures with their imaginative portraits will be on display and later evaluated by a panel of judges.

ANDALUSIAN BIRD WATCH PETER JONES

The wonders of May

May is the month of the great homecoming, when many birds that left to spend the winter in Africa come back

May is a great month to see many of our resident and summer visitors; they will be in full breeding mode and those often-elusive smaller birds will be more visible, as the males sing the proclamation of territories. Others will have already begun the cycle of procreation and some of our resident birds, such as black wheatear, blackbird and others, will be feeding young. Our white stork will be attracting our attention as they pass backwards and forwards with food for their newly hatched youngsters; what a magnificent sight they make as they glide across the skyline of urban areas.

Up here in my mountains, the large and obvious griffon vultures are also bringing food to their young and allow some very close encounters with these colossuses of the skies; while the more elusive Bonelli's eagle can be viewed more easily as they attend to their young. A number of resident smaller birds started the breeding cycle earlier and are already fledging their first broods. May is also a



The common cuckoo. P. JONES

time when many elusive and skulking small birds can be more easily seen as males take to exposed perches to sing a song of attraction, not just for females, but also a declaration of territory and a warning to other males. It really is a great time to go birding!

For those who love their wildflowers I recommend a visit up to the mountains of the Serranía de Ronda; the higher altitude makes for a later flowering time and May is producing a wonderful display of colour.

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IN THE FRAME

From the race course to the stages of the Costa del Sol

Nigel Smith. The former farmer enjoyed a career training prize-winning race horses prior to arriving in Fuengirola to work as an entertainer

TONY BRYANT



It is sometimes difficult for entertainers on the Costa del Sol to create a show that is truly different from the rest, especially seeing as the local music scene has just about every genre covered. However, one expat entertainer is currently embarking on a series of shows that are completely unique, because, as he is keen to point out, “nobody else is doing this type of show”.

Nigel Smith, who arrived on the coast in 2015 to work as an entertainer in the La Jabega Hotel in Fuengirola, will host the first of his ‘one man song and story act’ next week, a show where he shares stories and secrets from his long career as a professional racehorse trainer, as well as singing songs from his extensive repertoire.

Born in Worcester in 1956, Nigel grew up on a farm in the small village of Upton Snodsbury, which is where his love of horses materialised.

Nigel first started in gymkhana, and he also acquired a passion for hunting.

He then entered into show jumping and point-to-point racing (steeplechasing for amateur riders), but the six-foot-tall, 14-stone, youngster soon

realised that a career as a jockey would not be possible, so he decided to try his hand at training.

He applied to the Jockey Club for a permit, which would allow him to train his own horses and those owned by his family.

“I needed references from people who already had a licence. Those that knew me thought that I had the necessary background because I lived on a farm which had plenty of land and horses, and because I had hunted,” Nigel explains to SUR in English.

Nigel received his permit at the age of 23, and he was one of the youngest to get a permit in the UK at that time. Until then, he had been riding other people’s horses, but now he would need one of his own. He went to speak with the manager of Barclays Bank in order to secure a loan of 2,000 pounds, which he would have to repay in one year.

“The bank manager was the person who gave me a start. It would have been a damn sight harder without his help. I repaid the loan in twelve months to the day, after the selling the horse that I had brought with the loan, and this is how it all



Former race horse trainer, Nigel Smith, will host his song and story act in Fuengirola next week. SUR

began,” he says in his country-fied accent.

After receiving his full licence, he went on to train the horses of many private clients, one of which was a horse called 42D. It was sponsored by the owner of Trident International Bras, and this is a period Nigel describes as a “hilarious time”, because the horse ended up on page three of The Sun.

He also trained the winner of the first floodlit race in Wolverhampton, which was attended by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

A breakdown in a relationship in 2003 led to his decision to go to China to train horses, a position he had learned of in a local racing publication. More than 60 people applied for the position, although it was Nigel who secured the post.

“At that time there were lots

“You need to know what you are doing when breaking in a horse, because one end kicks and the other end bites”

of little clubs in Beijing owned by rich individuals who raced against each other. Then a chap built a massive complex and he employed 18 trainers from around the world. I was the only one from the UK,” he says.

After three years in China, Nigel headed to New Zealand to train horses, but after his father became ill, he returned to the family farm in Worcester.

Singing to his horses

Nigel’s other love is singing, a passion that developed while

singing in the church choir as a child, although he says that he was never confident enough to sing on stage. This all changed after he began singing to his horses, that became his first audience.

“You need to know what you are doing when breaking in a horse, or you are going to get hurt, because one end kicks and the other end bites. I found that the best way to do it was to keep calm, which for me, was to sing. I used to ride around the country singing to my horses, which seemed to keep them calm,” he says, bursting into laughter.

Of course, stories such as these and numerous others are included in Nigel’s one-man show, which can be seen at the A’Roma Pizzeria in Fuengirola at 7.30pm on Tuesday 17 May.

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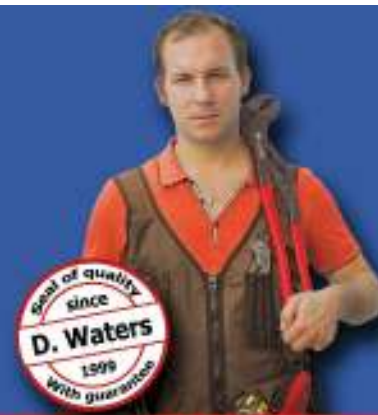
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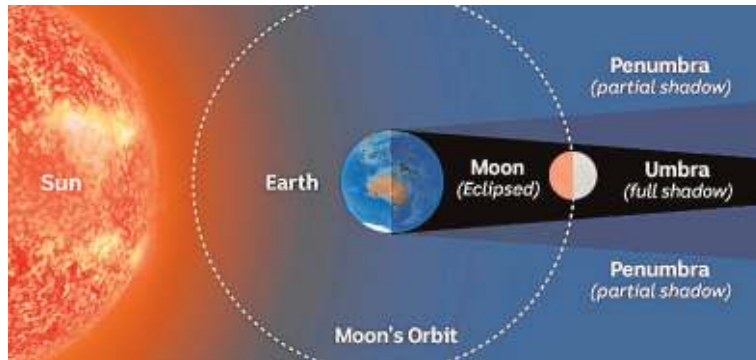
THE NIGHT SKY
KEN CAMPBELL

A total eclipse of the moon

An eclipse of the moon occurs when the sun, Earth and moon are in a direct line with the Earth in the middle. The moon will pass through the shadow created by the Earth.

An eclipse of the sun is when the set-up is the other way round, with the moon now in the middle and the shadow of the moon falls upon the Earth. Whereas an eclipse of the Sun can only be seen in a very small path along the Earth, an eclipse of the moon can be seen by anyone who can see the moon during the eclipse, and because the Earth is so much bigger than the moon, our shadow covers the whole of the moon not just a small path.

From 4.30am on Monday 16 May, the Earth's shadow will begin to slowly creep across the moon from the left-hand side. Total eclipse will occur at 5.30am when the whole of the moon will be engulfed by the shadow.



The moon won't go completely blank though, it will appear as a deep shade of red, this is caused by the sun's light being scattered through our atmosphere. If you were standing on the moon you would see the sun blacked out by the Earth but around it would be a ring of sunlight. The actual colour that the moon will go will depend on atmospheric conditions at the time.

Maximum eclipse will occur at 6.10am when the moon will be in the centre of our shadow, and this will be when it will appear darkest. At 6.55am, the shadow

will begin to withdraw from the left and the moon will begin to reappear.

Unfortunately, this eclipse will be near to dawn and the moon will begin to set before the eclipse is over. But make the most of it as there will not be another one visible from Spain for many years to come.

Meanwhile, mark your calendar for 2 August 2027, when a total eclipse of the sun will pass directly over the south coast of Spain from Gibraltar to Malaga and onwards - book your viewing space now!



Peter, Yana and Gareth on the Balcón de Europa last Friday. **SUR**

Nerja's 41 Club makes 400-euro donation to local Ukrainian charity

JENNIE RHODES

NERJA. Nerja's 41 Club Chairman Peter MacLeod presented a 400-euro donation to Gareth Arnold, one of the main coordinators of the charity 'Axarquia con Ucrania' (Axarquia with Ukraine) last Friday.

Peter and Gareth were accompanied by Yana, a Ukrainian refugee who arrived in Nerja two

months ago with her daughter. She is one of the 57 people who travelled on the bus organised by the charity in March.

Peter, who is hosting one of the families himself, said that he was "pleased" to be able to make the contribution.

Gareth said how "grateful" he was to so many people and organisations for their support. "Axarquia con Ucrania has been able to provide our refugee friends not only with homes but help them to become independent."

Yana added, "I know I speak for us all when I thank the people of Nerja for their warm welcome and all the people who have helped so much."

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DENISE BUSH



GARDENING

Phlox subulata

Native to eastern and central America, Phlox subulata forms a dense carpet of perfumed, starry flowers in late spring until mid summer.

Common names for this little herbaceous perennial include creeping phlox, moss phlox, moss pink and mountain phlox. Reaching only 10-15cm tall it can form a mat of vegetation up to 60cm wide,

making it ideal for ground cover, rockeries and for draping over walls and containers. It can also be grown as a border, in cottage gardens or between pavers.

The creeping stems are covered with fine, needle-like leaves which look a bit like moss (hence common names) and in early-to-

mid spring, the foliage is completely smothered by blooms.

Each flower has five, notched petals and they come in a variety of colours from purple-blue to pink, red and white. The flowers are a rich source of nectar and attract lots of bees and butterflies. After flowering is over, the moss pink will need shearing all over to promote new growth and

flowers the following year. It will also prevent the stems getting hard and woody and eventually losing their leaves.

Phlox subulata is heat and drought tolerant once established but, like all drought resistant plants, will thrive better in the hottest months if watered occasionally. Avoid watering when the plant is in full sun as this could cause damage to the leaves and flowers.

A good location would be a spot that gets full sun during the morning and some dappled shade during the afternoon. The hot afternoon sun may cause some scorching. This species of Phlox is also resistant to salty air and is often used for soil erosion control as it can cover large areas.

Propagation is easy, a large clump can be lifted and divided in the winter or semi-ripe cuttings can be taken in the summer although using hormone rooting powder will give the best results.

A slow release fertiliser can be used around the base of the plant in spring.



Phlox subulata and variety Candy Stripe (inset). WIKIMEDIA/PIXABAY

READERS' PHOTOS



ALISON GARCÍA

A good year for roses

This rose was a cutting given to reader Alison García by a friend four years ago. "It took ages to root and then it looked like it was going to die each summer but this year it has grown much stronger and is producing these beautiful, scented blooms," she says.

Cacti collection

"Cacti collecting can become an obsession," admits Sandra Richards. She says that over the last twenty years she has managed to amass over thirty different species, and still can't resist adding more to her collection. "I only have to see one that is a little different and have to buy it, although many are 'pups' given to me by friends." The one to the right of the picture is from a cactus that her father has had for over fifty years.



SANDRA RICHARDS

PHOTOS

Calling all gardeners

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

your photos to english@diariosures or send them to SUR in English, Avda Dr Marañón 48, 29009 Málaga, with a caption and a few words of explanation. Alternatively, you can send them to us via Facebook (surenglish) or Twitter (@SUR_English).

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WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

13 MAY 1844

Royal decree sees the birth of the Guardia Civil

The Guardia Civil (Civil Guard) is the oldest law enforcement agency in the country. It was founded as a national police force during the reign of Queen Isabel II of Spain. A royal decree mandating the creation of the gendarmerie was reformed on 13 May 1844 by Francisco Javier Girón y Ezpeleta, 2nd Duke of Ahumada, who was first Director-General of the force. That date is therefore considered the birthday of the Guardia Civil. Previously, law enforcement had been the responsibility of the Santa Hermandad (Holy Brotherhood), an organisation of municipal groups. However, corruption was pervasive in the Brotherhood: officials were constantly subject to local political influence, and the system was

ineffective, particularly outside the cities and major towns. The first recruitment campaign for the new force began in the summer of 1844. It appears more men applied for the positions than were available. Finally, 14 senior officers, 232 officers and 5,769 guards, divided in 14 Tercios, formed the first staff of the Guardia Civil. Incidentally, 'guardia' is etymologically derived from the Gothic word 'wardja', which comes from the Old German 'warten', meaning 'watch' or 'guard'. The word 'civil' in Latin means 'citizen'. The initial goal of the Guardia Civil was putting an end to crime on the nation's highways. Andalucía particularly needed the most help. Banditry was quite endemic here. Numerous robberies and holdups of business-



Francisco Javier Girón y Ezpeleta, founder of the Guardia Civil. SUR

men, travellers and peddlers, as well as foreign tourists, took place in the region. Nevertheless, it was not easy even for the Guardia to eradicate banditry completely. For example, in 1884, one traveller reported the existence of brigandage in and around the city of Malaga: "The favourite and original method of the 'Malagueño' highwayman is to creep up quietly behind his victim, muffle his head and arms in a cloak, and then relieve him of his valuables. Should he resist, he is instantly disembowelled with the dexterous thrust

of a knife." It was stressed that highwaymen's weapons were of "undoubted efficacy against the dagger of an adversary or the rifle of a Civil Guard". Today, the Civil Guard is military in nature and is responsible for civil policing under the authority of both the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defence. It patrols and investigates crimes in rural areas, including highways and ports, while the National Police force deals with safety in urban situations. Incidentally, originally mem-

bers of the Guardia Civil stood out due to their peculiar head wear - the tricornio (three-cornered) hat. But nowadays, together with their original army-style tunic and trousers, the hat is reserved just for ceremonial parades and duty performed outside of public buildings. Other than that, today, a cap or a beret, and a modernised new style of working uniform are worn.

LANGUAGE FOOTNOTE

Ciudadanos	Citizens
Policía	Police
Delitos	Offences
Cuartel	Barracks
Guardia	Guard
Nacional	National
Bandolero	Bandit
Silbar	To whistle
Patrulla	Patrol
Jefe	Boss
Responsabilidad	Responsibility
Solicitar	To apply for
Cuerpo de seguridad	Security force
Carretera	Road
Reclutamiento	Recruitment

Bilingual crossword inside back page

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Demand for photovoltaic systems is higher than ever

The abolition of the so-called solar tax has paved the way for photovoltaic systems for private use

ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE

The company Smart Photovoltaic Systems S.L. stands for high-quality photovoltaic systems made in Germany. The owner and found-

der of the company is Frank Weiss who has been in the solar business since 2007 and has provided more than 1,300 installations in residential buildings, industrial premises and solar parks.

The abolition of the so-called solar tax has paved the way for the profitable use of photovoltaic energy for private use.

Another reason, for the high demand, is that electricity prices have risen dramatically over the

last 12 months; this means that a photovoltaic system, for one's own home or commercial premises, now pays for itself much more quickly. Also, there is still uncertainty about how energy prices will behave in the future.

Frank Weiss also offers systems that supply your home with completely independent solar power. This works with a hybrid inverter, which stores the solar power with a battery bank and releases it again at night. In this way, you can use the solar power 24/7 and are completely independent of the conventional electricity providers.

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BENALMADENA/ TORREMOLINOS.
Emma 683 298 897

FUENGIROLA.
Diana 952 580 142 / 605 022 121

MIJAS.
Carrefour Mijas.
952 580 726 / 670 643 488

MIJAS COSTA.
Lisa 633 587 586

MARBELLA.
659 344 816.
Lisa 633 587 586

SAN PEDRO DE ALCANTARA.
Traducciones San Pedro
952 789 204 / 654 613 094

ESTEPONA.
Carmen
659 344 816 / 952 806 408

NERJA.
David 644 179 712

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EXHIBITIONS

Casa de las Tejerinas

ESTEPONA. Casa de Las Tejerinas, Plaza del Flores.

Sebastián Machinea Until 25 May. Universos Paralelos is the title of this exhibition of colourful works.

Jesús Villaba. Until 1 June. The Different exhibition includes 12 large format gouache paintings on wood.



Sebastián Machinea, Estepona

Frank Bauer

MARBELLA. Until 10 June. Reiners Contemporary Art, Camino de Camoján.

Reiners Contemporary Art Gallery is holding an exhibition of hyper-realistic art by the German artist, Frank Bauer. La Serenidad de las Cosas consists of eight, large format paintings based on photographs.

Retornos de la Desbandá

BENALMÁDENA. Until 22 May. Centro de Exposiciones.

The exhibition consists of 56 black and white photographs taken by Norman Bethune, a Canadian surgeon who joined the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War as a volunteer doctor. In February 1937, he helped the people of Malaga to flee to Almeria, treating the sick and the many who were wounded by aircraft machine guns during the desperate march. Thousands were killed or died on the journey.

Kjell Sporrang

ESTEPONA. Until 3 June. Lobby of the Estepona Hotel & Spa Resort. Artist Kjell Sporrang will be exhibiting a collection of his abstract paintings entitled Summer Exhibition By The Sea.

Art Gaucín

GAUCÍN. 27-29 May, 3-5 June, 11am-7pm.

This will be the 16th open studios, after a two year break due to the pandemic, and 20 artists are involved. It is the longest running open studios in Andalucía. All the artists except the visiting artist live or have their studio in Gaucín. A wide range of work and paintings, sculpture, photography and ceramics will be on display. A map of Gaucín showing locations of the studios will be available at the tourist office in Gaucín, at bars and restaurants and in the artists' studios.

Mingote (Breve) Historia de la Gente

MALAGA. Until 30 June. Centro Cultural Fundación Unicaja.

The Unicaja Foundation is exhibiting a collection of 250 drawings by newspaper cartoonist Mingote. They reflect human conflicts, poverty, nature, art, culture and education among other topics, often in a humorous way.

Motorbike exhibition

MALAGA. Until 15 May. Palacio de Ferias y Congresos.

An exhibition of motorbikes and all products and accessories related to them. www.eventosmotor.com

Olga Gorbunova

MALAGA. Until 27 June. Sala Alfajar, C/Cister 1.

An exhibition of floral watercolours entitled Jardín de mi Alma created by Olga Gorbunova. www.alfajar.es

Malaga Picasso Museum

MALAGA. Museo Picasso Málaga, Calle San Agustín.

Paula Rego. Until 21 August. Nearly 90 works make up the exhibition by Portuguese artist Paula Rego. It includes large oil and pastel works as well as smaller formats and collages.

Cara a Cara: Picasso y Los Maestros Antiguos. Until 26 June. Works by El Greco, Francisco Pacheco, Giovanni Battista Caracciolo, Cornelius Norbertus Gijsbretchs, Bernardo Lorente Germán, Diego Bejarano and Zurbarán will be displayed alongside those of Picasso to demonstrate links between his works and those of the old grand masters. www.museopicassomalaga.org.

Yukimasa Ida. Until 2 October. An exhibition of 43 pieces, variations of Picasso's work, including sculptures, paintings and drawings.

Museo Picasso Casa Natal

MALAGA. Until 2 October. Plaza de la Merced.

The Japanese artist Yukimasa Ida is exhibiting a series of works dedicated to Pablo Ruiz Picasso.

HM Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Exhibition

GIBALTAR. From 7 June to 22 July Gustavo Bacarissas Gallery, Case-mates. Free.

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. Organised by the Gibraltar National Archives. A full programme of events: www.culture.gi

Centre Pompidou

MALAGA. Muelle Uno.

<https://centrepompidou-malaga.eu/>
Un Tiempo Propio. Until 15 October 2023. The new semi-permanent exhibition includes over 100 works by various artists such as Picasso's sculpture Girl With A Skipping Rope, sculptures by Philippe Starck and Hans Brockhage as well as works by Braque, Derain, Jean Coctain, Henri Matisse and Picabia among many others.

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo

MALAGA.

Phil Frost Until 22 May. The American artist Phil Frost is exhibiting for the first time in Europe. Plotting Upon the Passage of Time is curated by Fernando Francés and consists of a



Art Gaucín, Gaucín

selection of paintings on canvas, wood and reclaimed doors, which have been produced over the course of his artistic career from 1997 to the present day. His work is rooted in sensations, perception, environment, memory and imagination, arising from tumultuous emotions through a meditated and calculated process. In

his works, the artist includes glued objects such as toy cars, small stones, bottles with buttons or cans, among other items.

Julian Schnabel. Until 12 June. The exhibition: Schnabel and Spain: Anything Can Be a Model for a Painting, consists of twenty-three paintings by the American artist with abstract and figurative elements.

Charles Sandison. Until 24 July. The CAC is presenting a video created by British artist Charles Sandison entitled Rage, love and despair (2003). The content of the video reflects the emotions of rage, love and despair through coloured words that float across the screen and collide.

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

Cristóbal Quintero. Until 19 June. The exhibition: '99 cosas' (99 Things), is a selection of paintings in different formats and techniques from the last five years of Quintero's artistic career. In a single painting he combines features from different periods in the history of art.

Ateneo

MALAGA. Ateneo de Málaga, C/Compañía 2.

Pedro Zamora. Until 27 May. The artwork in "What I would paint if I could paint" is made from old book covers, as this artist turns trash to treasure.
Svetlana Kalachnik. Until 3 June. "My world across the line" depicts rural Andalucía through the eyes of this Russian artist.

Fernando de la Rosa

MALAGA. Until 29 May. Museo del Patrimonio Municipal (MUPAM).

Malaga artist Fernando de la Rosa is exhibiting Paisajes del Tiempo, a fusion of paint and collages of photos.

Carmen Thyssen Museum

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

Free entry on 18 May from 10am until 8pm to celebrate Día Internacional de los Museos.

Real(ismos). Until 4 September.

Real(ismos) is the new temporary exhibition at the museum. It consists of over 80 works, paintings, sculptures, etchings, photos and drawings by artists such as Dalí, Miró, Picasso and Mallo.

Juana Francés. Until 19 June. One of the greatest Spanish artists of the twentieth century, Juana Francés was a pioneer of abstract art and a founder member of the El Paso group.



Olga Gorbunova, Malaga

Her works are on display in the Sala Noble.

www.carmenthyssenmalaga.org

CAC Veléz-Málaga

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 29 May. C/ Félix Lomas.

An exhibition commemorating the tenth anniversary of Malaga Photography Society.

Diary of a snail

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 28 May. Plaza de la Constitución.

Diario de un caracol is the title of an exhibition by local artist Pablo Berenguer, made up of 26 pieces created at different stages in his life, all with the same bright colours and an element of fantasy.

Cauce del Soñar

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 10 June. Centro de Arte Contemporáneo.

A total of twenty-six works donated to the María Zambrano Foundation after the death of Pedro Calvente Rivero.

Facing Identities

NERJA. Until 28 May. C/Almirante Ferrándiz.

An exhibition of paintings by Mexican artists Erik Rivera and Sergio Cruz-Durán.

Esther Martínez Recuero

ALMUÑÉCAR. Until 15 May. Casa de la Cultura.

A member of the local Asociación Arte, Esther Martínez Recuero is exhibiting some of her works entitled Oleadas.

Falkland Islands exhibition

GIBALTAR. Until 27 May. John Mackintosh Hall.

The Gibraltar National Archives will be hosting the exhibition which cele-



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brates the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Falkland Islands. There will also be recorded testimonials from Falkland war veterans and a collection of memorabilia.

MUSIC AND DANCE

La Cochera Caberet

MÁLAGA. Avda de los Guindos.

14 May, 9pm. Mad Dogs, a tribute to Joe Cocker.

15 May 12pm An adaptation of the classic Cinderella for all the family (in Spanish).

Tickets: www.lacocheraentra-das.com/

Ventana Abierta Jazz Club

NERJA. Hotel Plaza Cavana, C/Granada.

13 May. Ana Cisneros Trio.

www.ventana-abierta.es Call: 690073871

Jazz, rhythm and blues festival

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 14 May, 9pm. Teatro del Carmen.

Performances by Mama Paula Blues band, The Custom Blues band and Escarlata O'Hu. Tickets from Delegación de Cultura.

The Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra

MÁLAGA. Various venues.

13 May, 8pm. Teatro Cervantes.

Pieces by Miralles and Mahler.

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



Café del Mundo, Nerja

8pm.

17 May. Malaga Philharmonic sextet.

More information: www.orquestafilarmonicademalaga.com Twitter: @filarmonimalaga or Facebook: www.facebook.com/Filarmonica-Malaga.

La Posada

MÁLAGA. Vincci Posada del Patio,

Pasillo de Sta Isabel. 8.30pm Every Friday,

13 May. Iris Oboe

www.tallerblues.es

Museum concerts

MÁLAGA. Free.

Museo Carmen Thyssen.

22 May, 12pm. Students from the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Málaga will be in concert to celebrate the Día Internacional de los Museos. www.carmenthyssenmalaga.org/

Picasso Museum.

17 May, 8pm. Orquesta Filarmónica de Málaga sextet.

Louie Louie Bar

ESTEPONA. Estepona port.

13 May 11pm. Lere. The Catalan musician presents his new album Cosecha Propia.

13 May, 1am. We Are Not Djs.

14 May, 9.30pm. The KP Band

14 May, 11.30pm. The El Boquerón Underground. An underground rock group from Marbella.

14 May, 1am. DJ Le Fox.

www.louielouierockbar.com/

Christy's Irish Gastro Pub

FUENGIROLA. Every Thursday.

C/Olleria.

20 May 8.30pm. Rogues in Brogues, traditional Irish music. More info on Facebook or call: 655 896 698

Pedro Guerra

GRANADA. 14 May, 9pm. Teatro Caja Granada.

Pedro Guerra presents his new recording El Viaje.

Café del Mundo

ANDALUCÍA. Various venues.

26 May 9.30pm. Hotel El Palacio Santa Paula, Granada. Tickets from Festival Discos, C/Príncipe 7 (Plaza Bib-Rambla).

27 May, 8pm. Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja, Nerja. www.mientrada.net

28 May, 9.30pm. Hotel El Califa, Vejer de la Frontera. www.ticketentradas.com

Craft beer festival returns to Rincón de la Victoria

EUGENIO CABEZAS

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA.

Rincón de la Victoria is hosting the Birra&Art craft beer festival in the town's Plaza Al Ándalus from 13 to 15 May.

Around 55 different types of beer supplied by ten national breweries will be on offer: Blanca Verde, La Sagra, Domus, La Quince, Scher Hof, DouGall's, Segal, Birra manial, La Cibeles and The One.

There will also be 24 international food stalls including German sausages, Mexican and Spanish food and an Argentinian barbecue.

As well as the beer and gastronomy, there will be stalls selling handicrafts, as well as live music.

The mayor of Rincón de la Victoria, Francisco Salado said the event was an opportunity to "learn about the culture of beer and experience new trends and flavours."

The Festival programme includes live pop rock concerts with music from Merci



Enjoy a beer in the sun. SUR

Players, on Friday, 13 May (10pm), Mita i Mita and Money Makers, on Saturday, 14 May (3pm and 10pm) and on Sunday 15 May, Joker Rock Band, (5pm). All concerts are free of charge. The price of the beers on offer starts at three euros.

The festival will open to the public on Friday 13 May at 12pm, on Saturday from 12pm to 1am and on Sunday from 12pm to 7pm.

Cachorreña Festival

IN HONOUR OF SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR

MAY 15TH 2022

BARRIADA SAN ISIDRO.
VILLA DE ALHAURÍN EL GRANDE



10.00h.

Celebration of Eucharist in Honour of St Isidore the farmworker sung by the choir of the brotherhood of Our Lady of Grace

11.00h.

Inauguration of II International Cuisine Show

11.30h.

Exhibition of classic cars, Classic Car Club Torremolinos

12.00h.

Prizes for products grown in the countryside of Alhaurin

13.30h.

Show cooking.

13.30h.

Tasting of pur typical Cachorreñas and Mojete Alhaurino

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There will be music by the orchestra "A-Compas" Activities for the little ones. Children's workshops and traditional games

MUSIC AND DANCE

Live music at Da Bruno
MARBELLA. *Da Bruno Sul Mare. Paseo Marítimo.*
Chill & Go jazz plus DJ. 14 May, 9pm
The Bee Gees tribute. 18 May, 9pm.
Pilar and Carlos plus DJ. 21 May, 9pm
Fred Díaz Show. 25 May, 9pm
Valeriano Gamghebeli, opera. 27 May, 9pm
Book a table: www.dabruno.com/es-sul-mare or call: 952903318

Choir concert
ALMUÑÉCAR. 28 May, 8pm. *Auditorio Casa de la Cultura.*
The Coro Ciudad de Almuñécar are celebrating their 35th anniversary with a special concert.

Piano recital
MARBELLA. 13 May, 7pm. *Museo Jorge Rando.*
Internationally renowned composer and pianist Leon Gurvitch will be performing Impresiones musicales which reflects the paintings exhibited in the gallery.

Young Promúsica Orchestra
MALAGA. 14 May, 7pm. *Sala Unicaja de Conciertos María Cristina. C/Marqués de Valdecañas.*
Spanish music and poetry performed by the Joven Orquesta Promúsica. The programme will include pieces by composers such as Boccherini, Albéniz, Tárrega, Malats, Granados, Falla, Ulierte and Lehmborg. www.fundacionunicaja.com

Los Seres de Mar
NERJA. 28 May, 9pm. *Centro Cultural Villa de Nerja.*
Elisa Urrestarazu saxophonist and Cornelia Lenzin, pianist, dedicate their music to women composers. The programme will feature works



such as Amy Beach's Berceuse; Paule Maurice's Tableaux de Provence, inspired by Provençal folk music and Ida Gotkovsky's Brilliance. Tickets from the Casa de Cultura or email: villadenerja@nerja.es

Terral Music Festival
MALAGA. 24 June to 5 July. *Teatro Cervantes, C/ Ramos Marín.*
The music at the festival spans many different genres from different parts of the world, including bossa nova, flamenco, fado and afro-cuban.

Break Dance
RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. 21 May, 7pm. *Plaza de la Constitución.*
Un Show de la Calle includes performances and workshops on break dance and graffiti. Entry free.

Music in my district
MALAGA. Various locations in Malaga city.
Malaga town hall has organised a series of processional music concerts called La Banda Sonora De Mi Ciudad which will take place throughout the month of May at various locations. The full programme can be found:

www.malaga.eu
Eboni Quintet Klezmer
VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. 26 May. *Cultural space Museo de Vélez-Málaga, MVVEL.*
A concert to commemorate Los Gálvez de Macharaviaya. mvvel@velezmalaga.es

Dance show
MARBELLA. 28 May, 8.30pm. *Las Mariposas.*
REA Danza collective will perform 'El paradisum', representing the inner passions of various characters from the baroque era. Information and bookings: +34 654 013 232, reservas@musicaconencanto.org

FLAMENCO

Flamenco in Progress
TORROX. *Teatro Municipal Villa de Torrox.*
22 May, 7pm. Rocío Márquez and Bronquio - Tercer Cielo.
28 May, 8.30pm. Antonio Lizana and Eduardo Guerrero - Sinfonía del Cuerpo.
5 June. Ana Morales - Peculiar. Tickets 5€: www.mientrada.net

Noches de Flamenco
MALAGA. 14 May, 8pm. *Colmao de la Peña Brevia, C/Ramón Franquela.*
The flamenco dance group Luisa Chicano. With Vicente Román (vocals) and Luis 'El Salao' (guitar). Reservations: 687607526

THEATRE AND OPERA

A Night of Opera
GIBRALTAR. 18 May, 8pm. *Convent Ballroom. £22.*
The Gibraltar Philharmonic Orchestra has organised a night of opera with soprano Celia Costea and tenor Enrique Ferrer and pianist Ugo D'Orazio. Discount for senior students and students. Information: tgpsociety@gmail.com Tickets: www.buytickets.gi

Thespa
FUENGIROLA. 25 May, 7.30pm. *Masonic Hall, Edificio Bougainvillea, Los Boliches.*
The first performance will be a famous monologue from "Shirley Valentine" performed by guest, Sheila Mellor, from International Theatre Studio. This first play is followed by a two-course meal. Then "Sea View Suite", a short play written by a Thespa member, Michael Edwards. Bookings: thespabooking@gmail.com Information call: 604174300

CHARITY

Raising funds for Dementia support group
FUENGIROLA. 24 May, 7pm. *Occidental Hotel. 25€.*
An evening of clairvoyance with spiritualist medium Steve Holbrook. Tickets: +44 7979145353 or +34 610774408

Triple A Annual Dog Walk
MARBELLA. 15 May, 10am. *Starting from Restaurante Manuka, Centro Comercial Plaza del Mar. 15€*
Bring your dog along or walk one from Triple A and raise money for the shelter. Fee includes donation, breakfast and goody bag. Reserve a place: events@tripleamarbella.org

Concert for Pat's Rescue
ALHAURÍN DE LA TORRE. 21 May, 7pm. *La Risa Lauro Golf. 10€*
With Roy Potter AKA Frank Sinatra and guests including Barry Steele. Tickets from Pat's Rescue Retreat shop, Papelería Cristina or call: 683422464

Fun run for autism charity
TORRE DEL MAR. 29 May, 10.30am *from Paseo Marítimo Virgen del Carmen.*
The V Carrera Solidaria del Color is a 5km fun run to raise money for ACTEA autism charity. Inscriptions: Box Akyles, Plazamar and Calle Poniente, Base shops in Torre del Mar and Vélez-Málaga or <http://www.globaltempo.com/carreras.php?id=1774> After the race there will be live music, zumba, raffles and lots of colour.

LECTURES AND TOURS

The Arts Society de la Frontera
SAN ROQUE. 18 May, 11am. *San Roque Golf and Country Club.*
Illustrated Talk: Sorolla: The Master

Towns and villages honour the patron saint of land workers

The San Isidro Labrador festival will take place in many towns and villages across the province over the next few days

TONY BRYANT

MALAGA. San Isidro was a Spanish farm worker known for his piety toward the poor land workers and their animals. His real name was Isidro de Merlo y Quintana and he was said to have possessed mysterious powers because he was often accompanied by a pair of angels.
Every year, in many towns and villages across the province, his memory is honoured with a festival which often includes a Romería.
In Cártama, this year's festivities will take place in the El Cruce shopping centre from Friday 13 (today) until Monday 16 May, and will include various activities and events. The Procession of San Isidro Labrador takes place on Saturday while romería to the banks of the Guadalhorce takes place on Sunday.



Images of San Isidro will take centre stage this weekend. SUR

Churriana celebrates the festival until 16 May in the fairground with concerts and various activities such as a procession and competitions. Alameda in La Vega de Antequera, will hold various concerts on Saturday in the municipal marquee and hold its renowned romería on Sunday.
San Isidro is celebrated in Almuñécar with mass in the El Salvador church on 15 May at 9am and then a romería leaving via Calle Puerto de la Cruz and heading to Camino de la Vega Primera until it reaches Caicillos, the traditional stopping point.
Estepona celebrates with

cooking demonstrations, tastings, exhibitions, chainsaw carving, offering of flowers (14 May) live music and dancing.
Periana town hall has decided to use the festival to support Ukraine and will exchange the 40,000 kilos of wheat (usually poured onto the statue of the saint from the balconies along the procession route) for a donation to the country. The festivities start today, 13 May and the pilgrimage will take place on 21 May.
This festival is celebrated in many other towns in the province of Malaga. For more information, see the web sites of the relevant town halls.



talk radio europe

What you up to?

Listening to Viewpoint on TRE it's getting heated

What they talking about?

Ukraine of course, you should join the debate

BTW tune into the Lawyer later – I sent in a question re Spanish Wills

Oh good, I'll listen out for it

Did you hear the Citizens Advice Bureau on Post-Brexit issues last week?

Yes, I did. Thank goodness TRE keeps us in the loop.

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of Light by Arantxa Sardina. Visitors: 12€ includes a glass of wine after lecture. delafrontera@theartsociety.org / 634287821

Vegetable Gardening

MIJAS. 14 May, 11 June, 11am-1pm. *Asociación Alegría de la Huerta Andaluza, Valtocado.* A series of workshops to learn about traditional vegetable growing in Mijas. Registration 25€ plus 5€ per workshop. Organised by Soroptimist International Costa del Sol and Dept de Extranjeros. Reservations: soroptimist.fsd@gmail.com

FIESTAS AND FERIAS

Fiesta de Naranja

COÍN. 14 May. The festival celebrating the orange harvest coincides with the Annette Delataille speed painting competition, a gastronomy fair (themed around oranges) and a live music and dance show entitled six hours of folklore. More information about activities during the festival are on the town hall's Facebook page and Twitter.

MORE IDEAS

Theatrical English Cemetery Tour

MÁLAGA. 27 May, 6pm, 7.30pm. 10€ Hear about some of the fascinating stories of those who are buried there such as William Mark, founder of the cemetery; Margaret Noble, co-founder of the Noble hospital; Robert Boyd, 19th century liberal and romantic hero and Gamel Woosley, writer. Tickets: info@eventosconhistoria.com, call: 667428233 or send a bizum to 674022580. More information: www.eventosconhistoria.com



Lux Mundi

TORRE DEL MAR. Mon and Wed 10am-1pm, Fridays, 11am - 1pm. *Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, Avda Moscatel. luxmundi@lux-mundi.org.*
Taizé Prayer. 27 May, 7.45pm. San Andrés church.
Coach trip to Guadix. 23 May. Bookings: 952543334 or email: luxmundi@lux-mundi.org

Lux Mundi

FUENGIROLA. Mondays to Fridays, 10am - 1pm. *Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, C/Nueva 3.*
Taizé Prayer. 26 May, 6pm at San José church. Send an email to be included in prayers: luxmundi@gmail.com.

ORIGINAL VERSION 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.
Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore. 12.50 (Sun).
Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness. 12.40 (Sun); 17.15, 20.00 (Fri-Sun), 20.30 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).
The Northman. 12.00 (Sun); 19.25 (Tue).
Firestarter. 19.15 (Tues).
Father Stu. 19.45 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. C/ Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922. www.yelmocines.es
Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness. 19.00 (Fri-Sun); 19.30 (Tues).
The Northman. 20.35 (Tues).
Downton Abbey. 12.20 (Sun); 19.35 (Tues).
Father Stu. 22.10 (Tues).
Firestarter. 20.15 (Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Vialia

MÁLAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia. Tel: 902220922
X: 21.55 (Tues).
Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of

Madness: 12.30 (Sun); 17.15, 20.00 (Fri, Sun, Wed); 18.00 (Sat); 20.30 (Mon, Tues).

Northman: 19.20 (Tues); 22.10 (Sat-Mon, Wed, Thurs).

Father Stu: 22.35 (Tues).

Downton Abbey: 12.20 (Sun); 19.35 (Tues).

Firestarter: 20.20 (Tues).

Twenty-One Pilots Livestream Experience: 20.15, 20.20 (Thurs).

Cinesur Miramar

FUENGIROLA. Avda de la Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.
Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness: 17.30 (every day except Sat, Sun); 20.15 (Fri, Mon, Tues, Thurs); 22.10 (Fri); 12.15, 16.00, 18.35, 19.55, 21.15 (Sat, Sun); 22.30 (Sun); 19.05, 21.45 (Wed); 21.40 (Mon, Tues, Thurs).
Downton Abbey: 12.00, 17.00 (every day).
Father Stu: 12.00, 16.30 (every day).
Days of Thunder: 20.00 (19 May).
Ballet: Swan Lake: 20.15 (19 May).
Zelig: 20.00 (17 May).

Cinesur Ingenio

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Avda Juan Carlos, 1. Tel: 667773187.
Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness: 12.10, 16.00 (Sat, Sun) 18.35, 21.15 (Fri, Sat, Sun) 17.30, 20.00 (Mon-Wed)
Firestarter: 22.00 (Mon-Wed); 22.30 (Fri, Sat).
Zelig: 20.00 (17 May).
Days of Thunder: 20.00 (19 May).
Ballet: Swan Lake: 20.15 (19 May).

Cinesa

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Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness: 12.30 (Sat, Sun); 17.00 (Mon-Wed), 18.50, 21.55 (Thurs); 21.30 (Fri-Sun, Wed).
Firestarter: 17.25 (Mon-Wed).
Downton Abbey: 15.55 (Thurs).
Northman: 22.15 (Thurs).
The Lost City: 16.10 (Thurs).
Eurovision Song Contest final: 21.00 (Sat).
Ballet: Swan Lake: 20.15 (19 May).

Top guitarists head to Benalmádena festival

TONY BRYANT

BENALMÁDENA. The fifth edition of the Benalmádena Flamenco Guitar Festival kicks off on Tuesday 17 May, an event that will present some of Andalucía's most prominent guitarists.

Organised by the town hall and the Peña Flamenca La Repompa, the festival, which continues until November, will offer a series of concerts in the peña, which is located in Arroyo de la Miel.

The cycle begins with a concert by the Malaga guitarist Rubén Lara, a 29-year-old revelation who made his name accompanying renowned singers such as Israel Fernández, Miguel Poveda and Lela Soto.

Lara, who studied in Morón de la Frontera, (one of the cradles of the flamenco guitar) is a connoisseur of the cante (singing), although his concert on Tuesday will be his first as a solo guitarist.

The festival continues on Tuesday 7 June, with a recital by Pepe Justicia (Jaen), a musician who has not only worked with numerous top flamenco performers, but who is also well known in the jazz scene.

He has performed all over Spain and Europe with artists like the pianists Henry Vincent Kneuer and Chano Domínguez. He also regularly collaborates with the Filarmónica de Baden-Baden.



Curro de María. SUR

After a summer break during July and August, the festival will return on Tuesday 6 September with a concert by another well-established Malaga guitarist, Curro de María.

Curro has travelled the world performing with his wife, the dancer La Lupi, and he has also worked with some of the greatest singers to be associated with the art, including Chano Lobato, Estrella Morente and José de la Tomasa.

José Carlos Gómez (Cadiz) will bring his exceptional talent to the peña on Tuesday 4 October; while Luis Medina (Cordoba), one of the most influential guitarists of his generation, will close the cycle on Tuesday 15 November.

For further information and reservations, call: 676335967.



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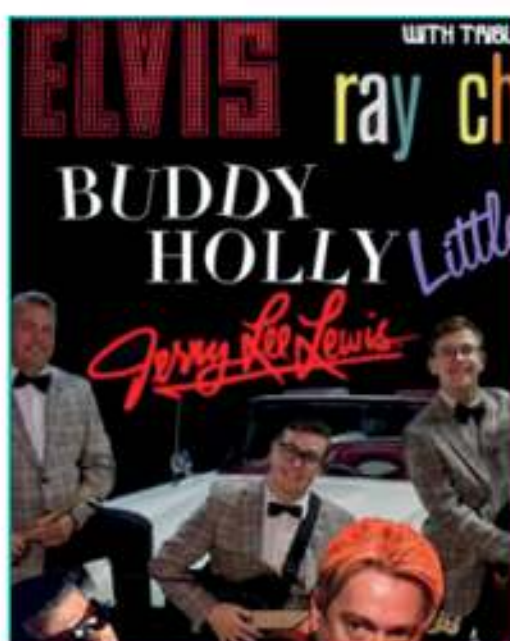
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LEONE BRASSERIE

THE LEONE BRASSERIE ROARS IN FRONT-LINE PUERTO BANÚS

The completely remodelled venue offers everything diners may wish for in a chic and trendy restaurant

PUERTO BANÚS

The former Don Leone on the front line of Puerto Banús has been completely remodelled, refurbished and renamed Leone Brasserie, and now offers everything that diners may wish for in a chic and trendy restaurant.

Designed by Nezha Kanouni, a local Marbella interior designer who is also responsible for the fantastic Max Beach rebirth, Leone offers a new concept with its open-air atmosphere and retractable glass roof giving that al-fresco dining experience.

Leone is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 10am to midnight, seven days a week, and also offers a range of food for children, vegetarians and vegans.

Fresh ingredients

The cuisine is a tasteful blend of modern, fresh ingredients with a touch of Asia and the specials include a wide range of very popular sushi options all created by Executive chef Patrice Godino. Visit <https://www.leonebanus.com> to see the entire menu.

The choice of drinks includes everything you could expect as well as a range of top cocktails created especially for Leone by its mixologist with a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks at prices that won't break the bank.

Guests are welcomed by experienced manager Ignacio Miro and his friendly and attentive staff, and apart from the great selection of food and drinks, there's the added fascination



Leone Brasserie offers a new dimension in dining. SUR



The interior design is chic and trendy. SUR

of enjoying the ambience of the busy marina as you watch the world walk by.

Music is chilled, as are the drinks, and the commitment of the staff to provide exceptional service combined with a wide range of delicious food means you can be sure that your first visit to this exciting reborn venue won't be your last.

Leone only opened at Easter this year and is already making a name for itself, attracting a wide range of diners, so whenever possible, it is recommended that if you are thinking of visiting that you make a

reservation, as with even room for 110 covers, it can quickly fill up.

LEONE BRASSERIE

More information:

Address: Muelle Rivera, Local 44-45, Puerto Banús
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Tonic wines

ANDREW J. LINN



There is no adequate translation of tonic wine in Spanish, probably so that the phrase won't get confused with tonic water. About the nearest thing is bitters, and while there are many types of bitters, from rhubarb to chocolate via celery, Angostura is the nearest the English speaker will get to the original product, in that funny little bottle with the oversize label.

But tonic wines have a long and interesting history, although they have not always been viewed in a favourable light. The best-known, Buckfast, is unjustly known as a drink that satisfies the demand for a cheap and highly alcoholic pick-me-up, or lay-me-down, with the tag line when things go wrong of 'Blame it on the Bucky'. In truth such potions took over from red wine in the mid-1850s, prior to which Bordeaux was believed to be especially good for 'children and literary persons', and 70 years ago Australian wine suppliers advertised their products as 'natural tonics'.

Prior to that 'coca wines' were mixtures of fortified red wine and coca leaf.

However, it soon became apparent that there was no such thing as a genuine tonic wine, and Buckfast is the sole survivor. The label states it offers no health benefits. Created by Benedictine monks in the 1880s, it is fortified red wine with added caffeine, as well as some secret ingredients. Amazingly, sales have reached \$60 million annu-

Tonic wines have a long and interesting history although they have not always been viewed favourably

ally. Tonic wines were sold in British pharmacies but they're hard to find today - probably no great loss to the modern drinker. Some things are best resigned to history.

The Jerez bodega of Caballero produced the first genuine Spanish liquor, again with the obligatory secret recipe 185 years ago and 25° alcohol. Most Jerez bodegas marketed a 'ponche' at some time or another.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Camarolos

A true 'mountain wine' from the Sierras de Málaga, although unusually a red this time. From the Victoria Ordoñez stable, it is a blend of cabernet sauvignon, syrah and tempranillo, and is only available in limited quantities. Around 22 euros.



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MARTA FERNÁNDEZ VALLEJO

Breaking wind is not a question of manners, but of health

It must be vented. Its noise and odour can alert us to problems

Flatulence is not a laughing matter or bad manners, but a sign of our health. Breaking wind in public is considered one of the most socially rejected acts. But it is a natural, healthy reaction... and necessary for the organism! In some cases, a build-up of gas can reveal digestive problems, food intolerances and bad eating habits (such as eating fast) and avoiding expelling it can cause abdominal pain and lead to more serious disorders. Marta Romero, nutritionist and qualified dietician, explains to us the clues to look out for and the warning signs.

Between 12 and 20 a day is normal

It is a natural process derived from digestion. Flatulence can be generated by the type of food that is ingested, the air that is introduced when eating or by the bacteria that are generated during the digestion process. It is normal to have gas every day -between 12 and 20-. In fact, we expel between 0.5 and 1.5 litres of gas daily, a volume enough to fill a medium-sized balloon. Men tend to generate more than women and smoking increases flatulence. In older people flatulence is more frequent, as digestive processes slow down due to the changes they undergo with the passing of the years.

When to worry

We should pay attention when gas is accompanied by other symptoms such as an unpleasant odour, bloating, abdominal pain, heartburn, reflux.... This could be because of an imbalance of microbiota -living microorganisms or bacteria found in the intestine or digestive tract-, food intolerances, eating too fast, constipation or little variety in the foods that we eat, among others. Alarm signals are triggered when these gases prevent us from leading a normal life -a high amount of flatulence every



ILUSTRATION IVÁN BRAVO

time we eat- accompanied by changes in stool consistency.

Why are they different?

The noisiest gases are those caused by the air we swallow when we eat. They are pushed out by that same air, at a higher speed. And they sound louder. This type of wind is usually related to constipation and can be accompanied by becoming overweight, alteration of blood lipids, type 2 diabetes, irritable bowel and low serotonin levels: origin of headaches, insomnia, irritability and depression.

Flatulence resulting from the

fermentation of food by bacteria in the intestine tends to be more odorous but silent. If the smell is like rotten eggs, it is caused by hydrogen sulfide, and it is common for pale and very soft stools to appear as well. This type of wind is often accompanied by irritable colon, low blood pressure, bleeding gums and chronic pain. The odour can also come from the fermentation of feces if we have constipation.

What foods are the worst?

There are some foods that we can't digest. The bacteria in the intes-

tine are in charge of this process, but each one 'eats' one thing - they generate substances such as butyrate, which is indispensable for the cells of the intestine. As a consequence of this process, gases are created, but if we do not have the bacteria that eat the food we have just eaten, flatulence increases.

Among the foods that cause the most wind are cabbage, broccoli, leeks, artichokes, legumes, whole grains, fruit in syrup and sweeteners. The smelliest flatulence is caused by foods rich in sulphur such as cauliflower, soy, animal protein, cabbage, cucumbers, bell peppers, onions, cashew nuts, garlic, wheat and maize.

The danger of holding it in

Flatulence should never be held in. The gas has to come out and holding it in can lead to abdominal and chest pain as well as inflammation and trigger diverticulitis - rupture of the pouches in the inner wall of the intestine due to increased pressure from stool or gas - and even peritonitis. Research at Newcastle University showed that if gas is not expelled "it can pass through the intestinal wall and is absorbed into the blood and released on exhalation with the breath".

Relation to anxiety

Flatulence can also be a consequence of anxiety and stress. "We swallow a good amount of air when

Advice

If it is smelly wind...

Increase the intake of foods rich in healthy fats, such as avocado, extra virgin olive oil and nuts; and fermented foods such as sauerkraut, miso and kefir, along with vegetables, except those rich in sulphites such as garlic, onion, leek and asparagus, says nutritionist Marta Romero. Legumes should be soaked for 24 hours and cumin and fennel should be added when cooking.

If it is noisy but not smelly

This is the type of flatulence that is due more to the air we swallow when we eat too fast. It is necessary to let the stomach rest for 12 hours between dinner and breakfast, exercise and combat stress with yoga and mindfulness. Eating three meals a day instead of five will help a lot, says Romero.

Natural remedies

Papaya and pineapple provide enzymes necessary to improve digestion and therefore help reduce gas. Ginger is another excellent remedy, either as an infusion or grated with food. Infusions of dandelion, chamomile and green anise also help to prevent gas, points out Reme Navarro Escrivá, who has a degree in pharmacy and nutrition and dietetics.

we eat, and it increases significantly if we chew food when we are anxious. Likewise, common acts such as smoking or chewing gum also make us swallow more air," says Reme Navarro, who has a degree in pharmacy and in nutrition and dietetics. Therefore, "eating more slowly, making sure that you are chewing your food correctly and avoiding fizzy drinks, as well as not smoking or chewing gum, can reduce the incidence of this troublesome disorder, Navarro explained.

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S1

Healthcare for UK state pensioners living in Spain

MÁLAGA

SUR. There are almost 400,000 UK nationals registered as living in Spain, more than any other country in Europe. The British Embassy in Spain recently surveyed a group of UK nationals who were planning a move to Spain, over 76% of respondents said that healthcare was a key concern when planning their move. It may come as welcome news then, that if you are a resident in Spain and claim a UK state pension, you're entitled to state healthcare paid for by the UK government through the S1 scheme. The S1 is part of the reciprocal healthcare arrangements that the UK has agreed with the EU & Switzerland. We look at some key advice to get registered properly.

Apply for an S1 from the UK

You'll need to be claiming a UK state pension in order to apply for an S1 form. Remember that even if you've lived in Spain for years and are already in receipt of healthcare on the basis of permanent

residency, you should make sure you change over to S1 registration, if you're entitled to it.

If you haven't yet moved, your first point of contact should be with the Spanish Consulate in the UK. They'll inform you which visa you need to apply for, and which documents you need to present to obtain the visa. This might include the S1 form.

Register your S1 form as soon as you can

Once you have received your S1 form from the UK, and registered your residency in Spain, you should register your S1 with the social security office – the Instituto Nacional de la Seguridad Social (INSS). If you don't do this, you aren't officially registered and you can't register with a health centre or get a health card. As soon as your S1 form arrives, make an appointment with the INSS, or go online to their registration portal and register online. Once you've completed this step with the INSS, they will send you a

document to confirm you're on the system. At that point, you can register for a GP and apply for a health card at your local health centre.

Cover your dependants

Your dependants may also be entitled to an S1 form, which would enable them to have their healthcare costs met by the UK government too. To find out whether your family member is classed as a dependant in Spain, you can check with your local social security office or on the www.seg-social.es website. To apply as a dependant, the main S1 holder needs to have applied first – call the NHS Overseas Healthcare Services to make the application (details above).

A dependant's cover will continue for as long as the main holder has their S1. If they begin claiming their own UK state pension, their current form will be cancelled and they'll be reissued with an S1 form in their own right. This will happen automatically, so it's really impor-



FREEMK

tant to ensure that you inform the NHS Overseas Healthcare Services about any changes to your address or personal details.

If you're a dependant and your partner (the main S1 holder) dies, your cover as a dependant will be cancelled. In these circumstances, you would need to contact the International Pension Centre (search "International Pension Centre" on gov.uk) to find out if you are eligible for another S1.

Understand what you're covered for

Once you've registered your S1 form with the INSS and signed up at the local health centre, you'll be issued a health card. As an S1 holder, you can expect the same level of cover as a Spanish pensioner.

For prescription costs, when you present your health card at the pharmacy, they will automatically apply the subsidised pensioner rate. Remember that not all treatments or supplies are free in Spain, such as dentistry or orthopaedic supplies.

You can find out more about the S1, and how to access healthcare in Spain by searching "healthcare in Spain" on gov.uk.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

To apply for the S1, or find out if you're eligible, call the NHS Overseas Healthcare Services:

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"The onset of dementia is delayed by four to nine years in people who speak more than one language"

Marcelo Berthier Neurologist

The Cognitive Medicine and Aphasia Unit he heads at Malaga University is world famous for treating loss of language

SUSANA ZAMORA



MALAGA. Although he studied medicine in his country of birth, Argentina, Marcelo Berthier came to Malaga 32 years ago, attracted by the quality of life in the city. Now, this professor of Neurology at the university and scientist with the IBIMA is internationally renowned as a pioneer in a combined treatment for aphasia (a language disorder which makes communication through speech or writing difficult after a brain injury) which uses medication, language rehabilitation and non-intensive brain stimulation.

–What is it about the brain that has made you dedicate so much of your life to it?

–We humans are our brains. They regulate everything and I have been specialised in that field since 1980, when I started to work with people who had lost their language through some type of brain damage. My interest was always in studying the biological bases of language. It is what makes us humans, what differentiates us from other primates and it is a fascinating and enigmatic subject, although society hardly pays it any attention.

–How can we care for our brain better?

–A stroke is one of the most common causes of aphasia, so we have to control the vascular risk factors (hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol, smoking, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle etc), but there are also other things that a healthy person can do. For example, someone who is bilingual has greater cognitive reserve, more ability in their brain than someone monolingual. In fact, the symptoms of dementia are delayed by between four and nine years in people who speak more than one language, so using another language, reading it and understanding what you are read-

ing is fundamental. The part of the brain that regulates our language has to be kept active, so speaking one or several others is desirable.

–After so many years of study, what has been most revealing?

–Historically, it was believed there was only a remote possibility of recovering language after a total or partial loss as a consequence of brain damage; now, we know that is not so. That has been the major challenge: finding ways for people with aphasia to communicate again in some way and recover their quality of life.

–The announcement that Bruce Willis was retiring after being diagnosed with aphasia has focused the media spotlight on this disorder. What is the probability of a healthy person suffering from it?

–Aphasia has multiple causes: in adults, the most common is a stroke and cardiovascular accidents in general; also neurodegenerative illnesses such as Alzheimer's or primary progressive aphasia, which is probably what Bruce Willis has; but also, it could be tumours or head trauma. The older you are, the higher the risk of suffering from one of these conditions, and therefore the probability of aphasia. It is a symptom of certain neurological conditions and its clinical characteristics and the way they evolve in the long term are different. With a malignant tumour it is going to be worse than in someone who has a stroke. In general, the illnesses that affect the left hemisphere of the brain, which is responsible for language, are susceptible to causing aphasia. The vast majority of right-handed people have lateralised language in the left side of the brain. Those who are left-handed tend to behave similarly to right-handed people, but may have more atypical localisations in both brain hemispheres and, exceptionally, in the right hemisphere. That also occurs with those who are ambidextrous.

–Does that mean the risk of suffering aphasia is related to whether a person is right-handed or left-handed?

–Not necessarily, because we see right-handed people who recover well and left-handed or ambidextrous people who don't. Aphasia is a heterogeneous disorder in which many personal character-



Marcelo Berthier. FRANCIS SILVA

TREATMENTS

"In chronic cases of aphasia, the role of the administration could be greatly improved"

STATISTICS

"In Andalucía alone, more than 7,000 people a year suffer a stroke"

istics are involved. If someone who is illiterate is affected by it, it won't be the same as a person with high ability. Their capacity for recovery is very different. An illiterate person has a very limited vocabulary, surprisingly it consists of only 300 to 500 words, while a university graduate can use around 30,000 words. That means their language is wider, richer and more distributed in

the brain. The margin for recovery is greater in someone who has more vocabulary, because they have more resources, more possibilities of finding alternatives for those words that they cannot pronounce.

–Can aphasia happen from one day to the next?

–It depends. Bruce Willis had time to prepare press releases announcing his retirement so that makes us think his illness evolved slowly, like neurodegenerative illnesses do. On the other hand if someone has a stroke, they go from being able to speak to not being able to, just like that. It is a sudden change and that indicates what the cause might be.

–And when it happens, how do people manage the helplessness of wanting to express themselves verbally but not being able to?

–It depends on the severity of the aphasia. About 30 per cent of secondary aphasias are serious, although that does not necessarily mean they are not going to improve. However, aphasia is a devastating disorder. In a study carried out in Toronto, Canada, in 2010, they asked 65,000 elderly people in care homes what most affected their quality of life. Aphasia was number one, ahead of cancer and tetraplegia. When someone loses the ability to speak they are going to lose their job, their finances will be affected, their relationships with family and friends are going to be different, they are at greater risk of suffering depression, anxiety and frustration. They will lose autonomy, because sometimes they can't move. Aphasia is the cornerstone, but there are a number of knock-on effects that reduce quality of life. That's why our job is not just to deal with the language problems, but all the associated side-effects.

–What is the darkest side of this disorder?

–The worst case is when there are a lot of side effects. There are many serious and even fatal illnesses which for a long time do not create the same impediments. For example, a patient diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, which is also devastating, can live acceptably for the early years. However, someone with aphasia loses so much from the first day. The only difference from the rest is that they may recover, at least partially.

–Are there unmistakable signs that something is not right?

–Yes. The first is someone's ability to communicate as they usually do, difficulty in remembering certain words or slow communication. They also start to say words that don't make sense, may not understand what they read, or be able to read aloud, or write. Those all indicate an alteration in language and are a warning sign, especially if they happen suddenly. In neurodegenerative illnesses, the most common symptom is an inability to pronounce words, for example if they want to say 'cup' but can't. They know what they want to say, but can't access the word to speak it.

–And do the authorities provide suitable treatment?

–Stroke units play an essential role in early diagnosis in order to reverse the effects so aphasia does not occur or, if it does, it is less severe. When it comes to chronic care, I think it could be improved. As society doesn't know what aphasia is, the State doesn't pay much attention to it. The resources are good, but could be optimised. Remote care is one of the most-used methods during the pandemic and it is more economical than in-person therapies. I hope it will continue. In fact, we have a project which aims to show that online therapy can work and is cheaper to apply. It reduces the costs and doesn't leave the patients isolated, because one of the reasons aphasia patients give up on their therapies is the problem of transport.

–What role does your unit play?

–It was created in 2004 and since then the team, which is multidisciplinary, has increased in terms of researchers. There are psychologists, speech therapists, linguists, computer engineers (neuro-imaging) and neurologists to treat all aspects of the disorder. We have been pioneers in the treatment of aphasia with medication and we use it together with intensive rehabilitation and non-invasive brain stimulation techniques. Used together, the results are more robust.

–But at the moment your unit still only carries out research.

–It is a research unit with ongoing projects in which people who meet a number of criteria are welcome to participate. But not everyone with aphasia, because we are not a treatment centre. We would be overwhelmed if we tried to do both: in Andalucía alone, 7,000 people a year suffer a stroke. However, as a public institution, we do give free advice and analysis.

–What comes next?

–We now know a great deal about the left hemisphere and how the brain repairs itself, but one of the greatest challenges is identifying predictive factors. We would like to know whether someone is going to be able to recover fully or not, so that we can adapt our treatment strategy with that knowledge to hand and find what will work best for them.

Malaga move out of the frying pan and into the fire

With some major defensive errors, the Blue and Whites were back to their worst version and only reacted when they went 2-0 down

SERGIO CORTÉS

MALAGA. Malaga made it three games without a win they drew 0-0 with 6th-place Real Oviedo, the most in-form side in the league who had won their previous six matches prior to stepping onto La Rosaleda's pitch.

Pablo Guede made sure to keep the rival coach guessing about the Blue and Whites' line-up, as the Argentine surprised most fans with some unexpected changes, most notably the inclusion of 20-year-old Víctor Olmo at left-back, and Sekou Gassama partnering Brandon at the front.

Malaga got the match off to a good start, as they had a big boost thanks to the 22,000 Malaga fans flooding to the stadium to cheer on the team in one of the most crucial games of the season.

The first-half ended goalless and it was a rather uneventful opening 45 minutes. Though Malaga mainly dominated in possession and in chances, the closest

they came to scoring was a skewed shot by Vadillo ten minutes from the break, when he found himself one on-one with the goalkeeper.

There was a feeling around the stadium that Oviedo knew what they were doing. They were calm on the ball and cunning in defence, waiting patiently for their hosts to make a mistake and attempt to mount swift counterattacks - even if they only tried that on a couple of occasions.

Second-half snooze fest

Oviedo came out stronger in the second-half and were more in-tune with how they usually play. They came close to Malaga's goal a few times, but, like their hosts, they struggled to find the final shot.

With half an hour left, Malaga started to turn the heat up, aided for the umpteenth time by the fans at La Rosaleda. But the Blue and Whites still lacked conviction to make it into the Oviedo box.

As the minutes wore on, both the team and the crowd became deflated, and it was becoming increasingly clear that Malaga were not going to be able to break the deadlock.

And so, the game eventually ended goalless. It wasn't Malaga's worst performance of the season,



Malaga's Febas, runs with the ball against Real Oviedo. MARIANO POZO

The Blue and Whites are struggling to win crucial points that would allow them to further expand their safety net

but it was far from their best.

The only positive to be taken away from the game is that it was against a very good side that just didn't turn it up on the day, and the Blue and Whites can at least be proud of breaking the visitor's

six-game winning streak.

"It's the worst position to play in football," said goalkeeper Dani Martín, who managed to keep a clean sheet after a tricky spell under the goalpost. "I didn't have much to do today, only a couple of chances for them I think."

"We've been conceding quite a lot at the back in recent games and in attack we're scoring quite a few," Martín said. "We're in a situation that no one wants to be in, but we know what there is."

Martín also touched upon how the team is feeling at the moment,

SECOND DIVISION

Results - Gameweek 39

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

League table

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PT
1. Almería	39	23	7	9	63	32	76
2. Eibar	39	21	11	7	56	42	74
3. Valladolid	39	21	9	9	64	42	72
4. Tenerife	39	20	9	10	52	31	69
5. Girona	39	19	7	13	54	40	64
6. Real Oviedo	39	16	16	7	50	34	64
7. Ponferradina	39	17	12	10	57	49	63
8. Las Palmas	39	16	13	10	52	46	61
9. Cartagena	39	16	5	18	55	55	53
10. Ibiza	39	12	16	11	50	50	52
11. Huesca	39	12	15	12	46	38	51
12. Burgos	39	14	8	17	39	40	50
13. Leganés	39	12	14	13	43	46	50
14. Zaragoza	39	10	19	10	33	42	49
15. Lugo	39	9	20	10	44	48	47
16. Mirandés	39	13	7	19	49	59	46
17. Sporting	39	10	12	17	41	46	42
18. Malaga	39	10	12	17	34	55	42
19. R.Sociedad B	39	10	10	19	40	54	40
20. Amorebieta	39	7	16	16	42	58	37
21. Fuenlabrada	39	5	14	20	35	59	29
22. Alcorcón	39	5	10	24	35	68	25

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MARIANO POZO

Malaga duo eyed by Real Madrid for their B team

Scouts at Real Madrid are closely following the situation of two young Malaga players, Loren and Roberto, as Malaga loom over relegation. The duo have been on the current league champions' radar since they played in Malaga's B team last season. Loren was top scorer with 24 goals while Roberto's tally of 19 meant he finished fifth.



Members of Fundación Málaga, the Genuine team and other club representatives pose together. MÁLAGA CF

TIMETABLE

► **Fundación Málaga's games.** Fundación Málaga CF-Sevilla FC (Sat, 12pm); Elche-Fundación Málaga (Sat, 6pm); Fundación Málaga-Las Palmas (Sun, 12pm).

stage of the ongoing season following the first stages in April, which were played in Gran Canaria and in Gijón.

The Málaga team, who were present in the Canary Islands, performed a big role in the Team Spirit Group (each group is given its own, unique name). The Andalusians managed to win against RCD Mallorca and SD Huesca, as well as one defeat to Real Sociedad Fundazioa y una derrota, frente a la Real Sociedad Fundazioa. Málaga also picked up 89 out of 90 possible Fair Play points (an additional scoring method on top of the usual points teams can gain), finishing in first place in that particular category.

Fundación Málaga CF will take on Sevilla, Elche and UD Las Palmas on home turf. Access to the games is free. The opening ceremony will take place today, Friday at 8pm on La Rosaleda's pitch. Among those present will be LaLiga's president, Javier Tebas, as well as important Málaga CF representatives led by administrator José María Muñoz.

LaLiga Genuine arrives at La Rosaleda

Málaga's stadium will host the 18-team competition this weekend and LaLiga president Javier Tebas will be at the tournament's presentation

SUR

MÁLAGA. Málaga's La Rosaleda stadium continues its 80th anniversary celebrations and will be the host of the Málaga stage of the LaLiga Genuine Santander, a foot-

ball tournament whose participants are part of the intellectually disabled collective, which will be played between 13 and 15 May in the city. It's an event that will transform Málaga into Spain's most Genuine city. The tourna-

ment will bring together a total of 18 participating teams from across the country, with Fundación Málaga taking over as hosts.

Málaga and their foundation, together with Fundación LaLiga, are organising the second



A LOOK AT LA LIGA

ROB PALMER Commentator, ESPN

An ever-increasing age gap

With a footballer's lifespan starting earlier and ending later, it will be interesting to see what player qualities clubs will value more



The oddest thing is happening in top-flight football: the players are getting younger; but also getting older at the same time.

As I prepare my weekly commentary notes, it is becoming increasingly clear that there is a growing disparity between the young 'uns and the oldies.

At one end of the scale, we have Gavi, who played for Barcelona just 24 days after his 17th birthday; at the other, there's Joaquín Sánchez, who will celebrate his 41st birthday in the summer.

It's proving to be that if you are old enough, you are good enough. But then again, experience is difficult to beat.

FC Barcelona was forced to fast-track a number of players from the academy this season just to make up matchday num-

bers. They've fielded seven players aged 18 or under this season as a necessity. The upside is the emergence of Gavi who became a regular well before his 18th birthday. This followed last season's emergence and development of Pedri and Ansu Fati, who are already Spain internationals as teens.

Twenty-one players aged 18 or younger have played in La Liga this season.

Real Madrid's success has been reliant on players at the other end of their careers. Carlo Ancelotti has leant heavily on his thirty-somethings. Thibaut Courtois, Nacho, Dani Carvajal, Lucas Vázquez, Casemiro, Luka Modrić, and Toni Kroos have been the backbone of the side - while Karim Benzema is arguably the best player in the world this season at the ripe age of 34.

In recent weeks, several oldies have been grabbing the headlines. The granddaddy of them all is Joaquín who was instrumental in Real Betis's Copa del Rey success. Backing him up was 39-year-old goalkeeper Claudio Bravo who won the battle to become the club's number one this season.

Two of the relegation-threatened sides are leaning on their veteran strikers. Forty-something Jorge Molina weighed in with an important double for Granada in their crucial win against Mallorca. While Levante are desperate to get former Spain international Roberto Soldado on the field as he's scored two goals in his last three starts. He's hoping to celebrate his 37th birthday at the end of the month in conjunction with a staying-up party.



Real Betis captain and veteran Joaquín will turn 41 in July. EFE

Let's not forget Dani Alves, who was the forgotten man until Xavi invited his former teammate to show the Barcelona babes the ropes at the Camp Nou. The Brazilian is now 39.

It's a dilemma for clubs when offering veteran players new deals. They would look at a player approaching his 30th birthday and wonder what they

would be getting in three years' time if they offered a lucrative contract.

In Spain, Benzema is proving age is just a number as he follows Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo by continuing to deliver well beyond the previously recognised sell-by date.

Never before has there been such a spread of ages.



Ana Peláez poses with her trophy after winning in Madrid. **SUR**

Golfer Ana Peláez wins convincingly in Madrid

The Malaga local achieved a win with no major problems at the Jarama-RACE Golf Club as she beat Swede Linnea Strom by six strokes

SUR

MALAGA. Young Malaga local Ana Peláez completed a fantastic week on Sunday as she emphatically and clearly imposed herself in the Comunidad de Madrid Ladies Open, a tournament that falls under the Ladies European Tour (LET) and whose first edition was hosted by the Jarama-RACE Golf Club, in Madrid. The local Malaga golfer didn't stray too far away from the script, and followed a solid tee-to-green game to continually shoot below par in each hole.

Peláez made her intentions clear on the opening hole of the first day of competition, strengthening her lead with an early birdie, which was followed by another on hole three. The first part of her round continued with more chances of birdies, but she wouldn't take another until the 11th hole, and she struck an eagle on the thirteenth.

However, for the 24-year-old the key to her win was "in my head

and in my determination, and I also hit the ball quite well." With a six-stroke lead and five holes left to play, the logical thing would be for her to get carried away, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Ana Peláez's smile didn't change one iota.

Maintaining maximum concentration throughout her routine, Peláez continued her play without any cracks appearing, which allowed her to record yet another birdie on the seventeenth, sealing a card of 66 strokes (-6) that not only allowed her to win her first professional tournament, but also granted her the full rights to take part in the Ladies European Tournament for the next two-and-a-half years.

"I can't find the words to describe today. We've enjoyed it a lot. It's been a whole host of feelings, all the personal and family efforts during the last few years have been worth it. For me it's a dream come true, one of the many I have." It's important to note that Ana Peláez turned pro less than a year ago, and this win means her life "has turned upside down, it changes everything. I was very eager to win, this feels different," Peláez said.

Peláez gave extensive thanks to her family. "Sometimes, the road gets a little bit tough and it's important to have the help of your family, and of my coach. Today we can enjoy the win together. The taste of victory can't be described."

Peláez is playing in the LET Team Series in Bangkok. She booked her place in the tournament thanks to her win in Madrid, and was second after day one.

The win gives Ana Peláez the full rights card to play in the Ladies European Tour (LET) for the next two-and-a-half years.

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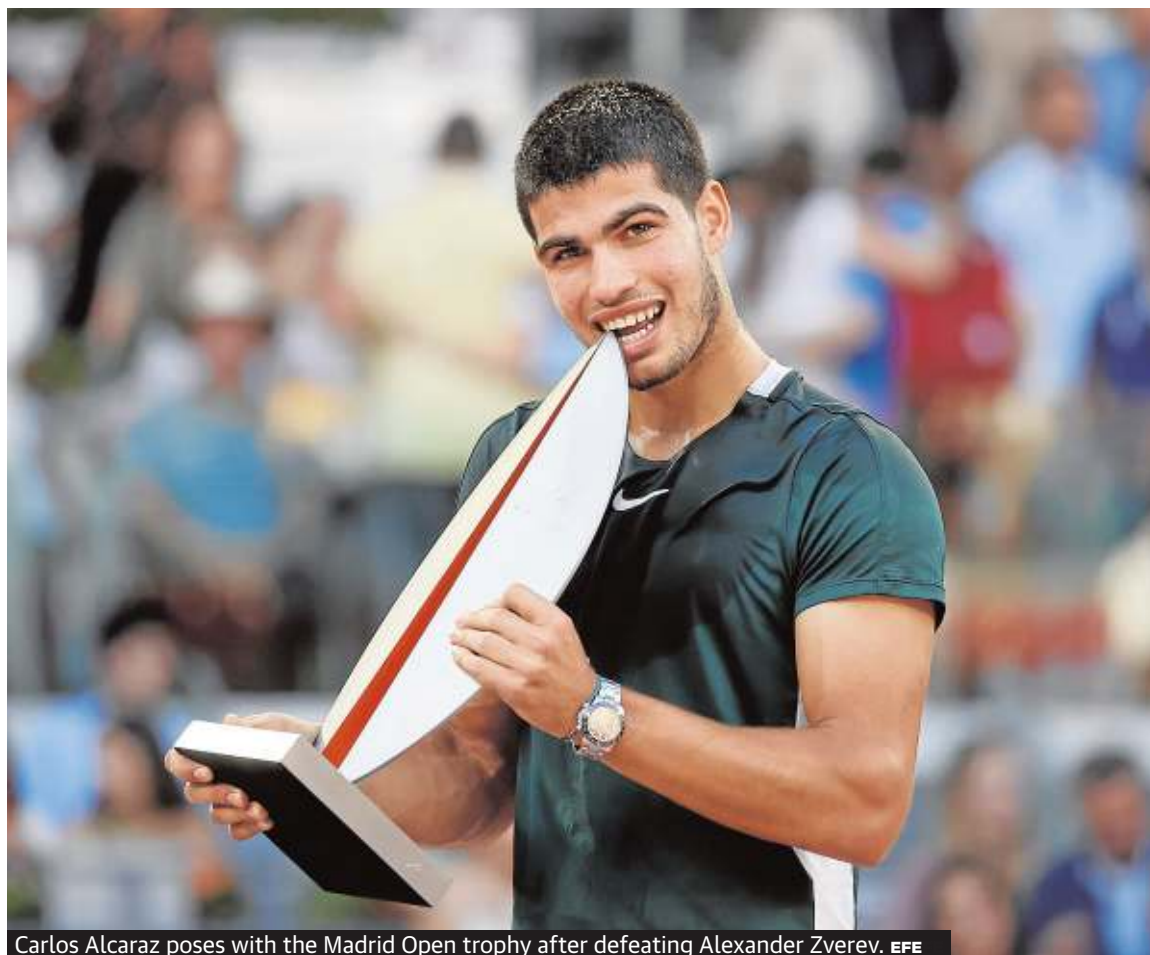


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Carlos Alcaraz poses with the Madrid Open trophy after defeating Alexander Zverev. EFE

Spain's future tennis star is born

Carlos Alcaraz's wins over Zverev, Djokovic and Nadal at the Madrid Open topped off his incredible week

SHAY CONAGHAN

MALAGA. Carlos Alcaraz (now ranked world number 6) has had some week. The 19-year-old tennis player easily defeated Alex-

ander Zverev (3rd seed) in straight sets on Sunday to lift his second title of the season in Madrid, after picking up his first in Miami Open earlier this year.

Alcaraz seems to have been born to play these types of matches, and it doesn't seem likely that he'd lose any of them. Zverev was incapable of countering anything he did, and watching the youngster means that anything could happen.

So that means that for Alcaraz, it's impossible to set a limit on

his potential, as this latest win increased his 2022 trophy tally to four and also improved his - so far - impeccable unbeaten record in finals, where he has won six out of six.

The young Spaniard completed the feat in the capital after a whirlwind week that saw him also hand out defeats to Novak Djokovic and fellow Spaniard Rafa Nadal in the semi and quarter-finals, respectively. Alcaraz's win over Nadal was as symbolic as it was impressive. Given that the Mallorcan is the undisputed 'King of Clay' thanks to his record-breaking 13 wins at the French Open (which starts next week), it looked like he was handing over the baton to Alcaraz, who is his successor in everything but name.

Alcaraz's physical attributes are to be envied: he stands relatively tall at 1.85 metres, and on his slender figure rests pure muscle fibre. His physical change is evident, to the point where he's become a well-honed machine. He trains, competes and wins. Alcaraz, who was the future, is now the present.

Spectacular 2022 so far

And it was precisely the Roland Garros French Open organisers who highlighted the fact that the 19-year-old could be the next big thing on the Paris courts. On their Twitter account, the tournament said: "Carlos Alcaraz gets the big-

Alcaraz is the favourite to win the French Open later this month, as he has a 16 win-one loss record on clay courts in 2022

gest clay title of his career... For now." And it's not a far-fetched assumption that he could crown himself as Nadal's definitive successor come the end of the tournament.

Alcaraz has been on fire this year. No male player has won as many matches in 2022, as he tops the winners' leaderboard with a 28-3 win-loss record, only losing to Sebastian Korda, Rafa Nadal and Matteo Berrettini.

Even more impressive is his record when playing on clay, taking 16 wins and losing out just once. "He's the best player in the world right now," said Alexander Zverev after Sunday's final. The rankings might not reflect that, but Alcaraz is close to making it to the top.

Chirpy chap

It's easy to forget just how young he still is. Alcaraz, who likes to be called either 'Charlie' or 'Carlitos', said that he just applied what his grandfather had taught him when he was younger, such as being level-headed or having courage.

His constant ear-to-ear grin suggests that reality maybe has not sunk in yet, and that he's still a kid who loves playing tennis and enjoying the simple things in life. He visits his hometown of El Palmar (Murcia) whenever he can, and, up until a couple of years ago, he could be found on the local football pitches playing in games with his childhood friends.

His enthusiasm stems from the lesson Virginia Garfia, Carlitos' mother, taught her son: "Be happy, smile and never do bad by others." And that life lesson shines through Alcaraz both on and off the court.

Davidovich loses three-hour match to Augier-Aliassime in Rome

In a long battle reminiscent of the one he fought at the Australian Open, the Andalusian failed to take advantage of several key chances against the Canadian

PEDRO LUIS ALONSO

MALAGA. Alejandro Davidovich (ranked 27th) recorded yet another defeat in a match that he was tantalisingly close to winning. It was déjà vu for the Rincón de la Victoria local, who lost 6-4, 6-7 (2) and 2-6 in the quarter-finals of the Italian Open to Felix Augier-Aliassime (9th), in what was a gruelling battle that lasted three hours.

The match was strangely similar to the match that both play-

ers took part in at the Australian Open in January: Davidovich dominated in the majority of the points and he took the initiative at the baseline, but was ultimately defeated by the Canadian, who proved to be very effective when it came to the most crucial points.

The tiebreaker was once again a determining factor. Davidovich was showing an unusually solid version of himself, and he played for over two hours without suffering a break and giving his opponent only one chance to do so. But that still wouldn't be enough. The Andalusian squandered seven break points and showed an unrecognisable version of himself during the second-set tiebreaker, ceding six consecutive points to Augier-Aliassime.

Even then, with both players winning a set, Davidovich dominated in the overall points scored,

leading the Canadian 81-78, again reminiscent of the match in Australia, where the Rincón local won on points (168-162) but lost 1-3 in sets.

There was another key factor that would determine the match's outcome: Davidovich had played another three-hour match the day before, while Augier-Aliassime received a bye. The Andalusian's fatigue was noticeable in the third and final set, and he had the crowd against him as he protested several of the umpire's calls.

Davidovich's exhaustion really stood out by the time the tiebreaker came around, even though he had been on top for those initial two hours. He made several mistakes and was later unable to pick himself up as the match entered its final stages. Augier-Aliassime only grew stronger, especially when he hit some



Alejandro Davidovich prepares to hit the ball in the Italian Open. AFP

spectacular shots. The Canadian has been in good form all year, heavily helped by his advisor Toni Nadal (Rafa Nadal's uncle).

Alejandro Davidovich, who hasn't registered to play in either

Lyon or Geneva but could take part as a wildcard, now has a two-week break before Roland Garros gets under way in Paris, which will be the end of the clay court season.

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THE STARS




Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
You don't have to ditch your current job or business, but a few smaller tweaks might lead to an exciting shift over coming months.




Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
As the Sun glides into your home zone, it invites you to make more time to recharge and nurture yourself. Taking a step back from life can help you reset.




Aries
March 21st - April 20th
Has something been bothering you? You may have no choice but to deal with it, despite some resistance. In the end, good communication could be the key.




Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Need to take a leap of faith? Your confidence in yourself seems to be growing. You know what you want, and nothing can stop you once you put your mind to it.




Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
Events might occur that push you out of your current situation and bring new and more exciting options. And the Sun's move into your sign will be like a rebirth, as a fresh new start awaits you.




Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
Something is bursting to get out into the open, and it could be a talent or skill, your feelings for someone or the opportunity to start a business.



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
If information has been hidden because of a fear of the consequences, this can very quickly change. Once it's discussed, the atmosphere will quickly shift to the positive.




Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
Pent-up feelings could come bursting out, and it maybe something small that triggers them. The fact is that you may have wanted to speak about this for some while, and this can be the time.



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
With resourceful management you could turn your financial situation around. Next week you'll discover where you might tend to fritter money away too easily.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
You may find it hard to control your emotions as a Lunar Eclipse in your sign could coincide with displays of feeling, whether tears or frustration. This might trigger a process of change.

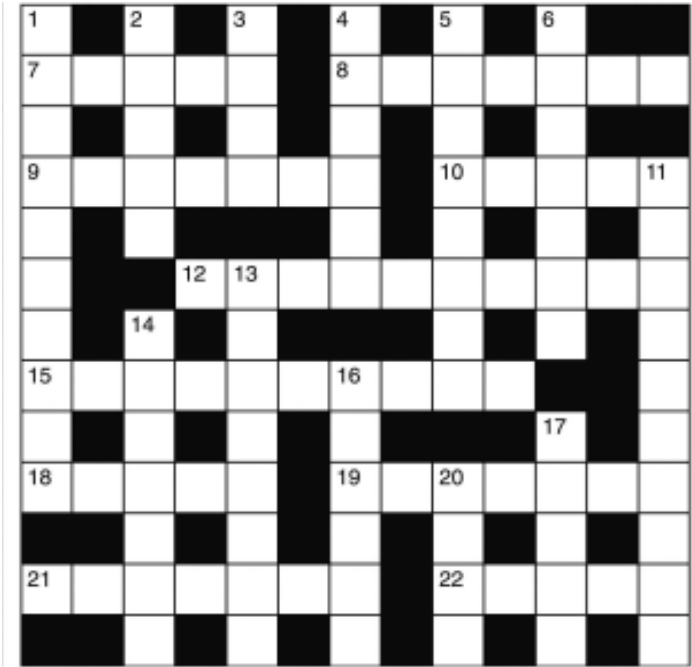


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
An event could help you see the end of a situation that has blotted your inner landscape. What can touch you is how kind and supportive others are.



Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
If you've felt unhappy in certain social situations, then you may be ready to jettison negative associations. It's better to end something that's proving bad for you and make a fresh start.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11514



Across

- 7 Rub out part of the answer as erroneous (5)
- 8 Coach who should know his station? (7)
- 9 Again wrongly curse saviour (7)
- 10 An object of the night (5)
- 12 Open-air theatre for children? (10)
- 15 Tell one's associate without ceremony (10)
- 18 Requirements of necessity (5)
- 19 Everything in the display is lacking in depth (7)
- 21 Doubter can make himself unduly noticeable (7)
- 22 Liquor producer not to be moved (5)

Down

- 1 Low spirits due to atmospheric conditions? (10)
- 2 Father will avail himself of the temporary stop (5)
- 3 A list for the hungry (4)
- 4 Full of skylights? (5)
- 5 Earlier spoken test of sort of work priest does? (8)
- 6 Quite an old article (7)
- 11 To descend borehole will prove very acceptable (2,4,4)
- 13 Bird gets stimulus from flower (8)
- 14 Do dramatically sound ones come from personal estate? (7)
- 16 A wren's response (6)
- 17 Exhausted with everything charged for (3-2)
- 20 Meals ought to include it, too (4)

SUDOKU BY HANZO

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

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

THE WORDPUZZLER

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

Can you identify the English sovereigns from the anagrams listed below?

- 1. Regoge
- 2. Ferdal
- 3. Sejam
- 4. Hyner
- 5. Grade
- 6. Honj
- 7. Nean
- 8. Dewdar
- 9. Army
- 10. Dahlor

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



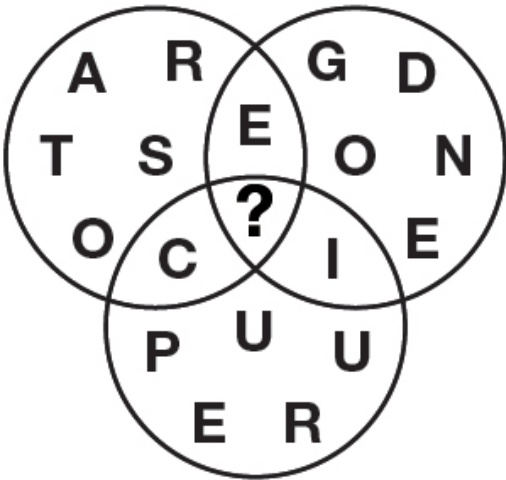
BATTLESHIPS

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

- Battleship
- Cruiser
- Destroyers
- Submarines

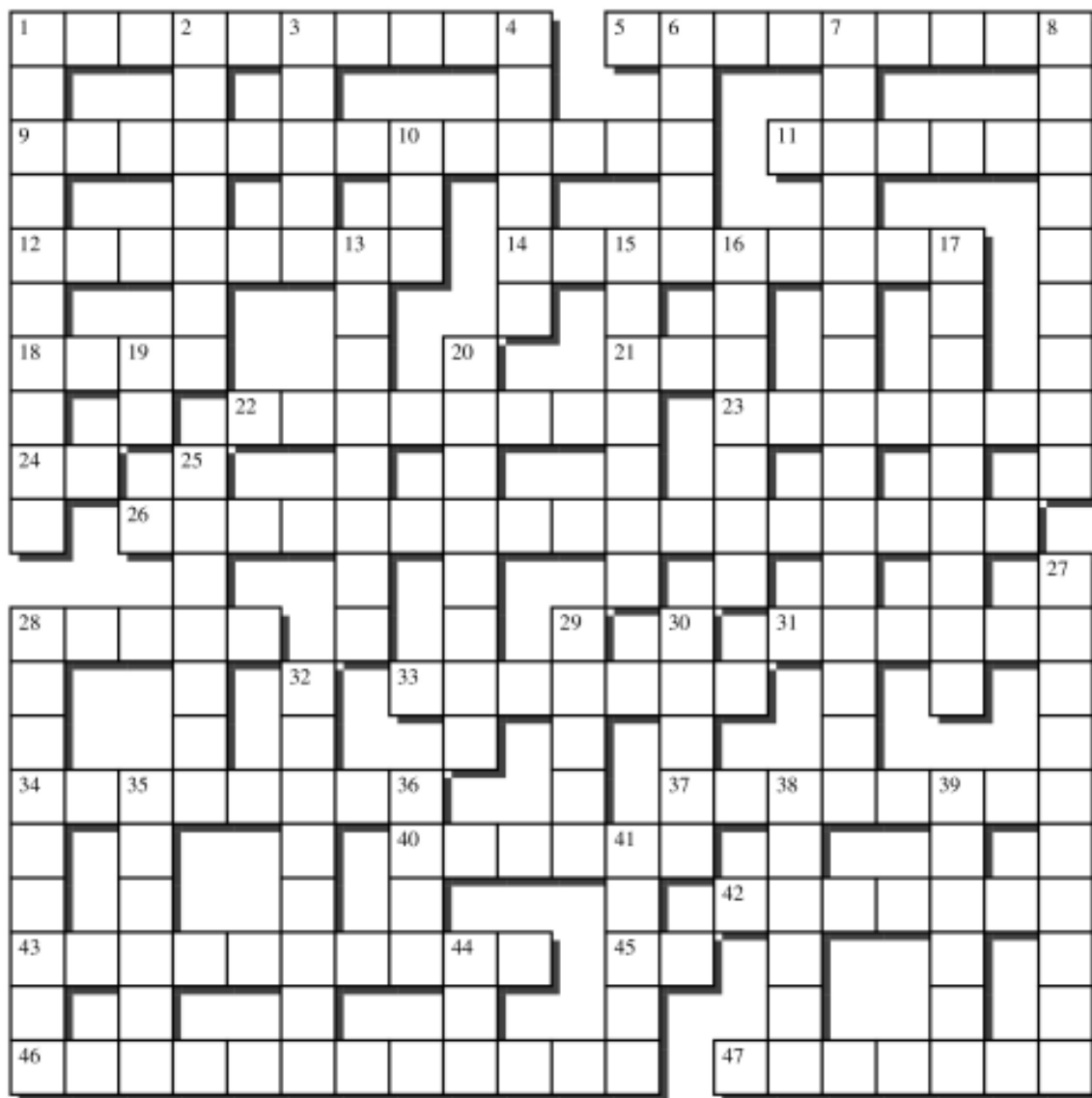
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	■							■			2
B											1
C											4
D							■				1
E											2
F								■			1
G											1
H				■							4
I										■	2
J								■			2
	3	1	3	1	1	2	3	2	0	4	

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?

Across

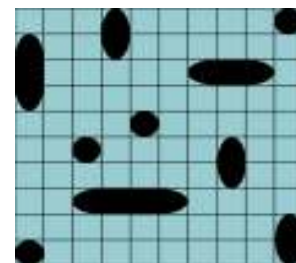


- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) Citizens (10) | 1) Roads (10) |
| 5) Favourite (m.pl) (9) | 2) Offences (7) |
| 9) Recruitment (13) | 3) To date (5) |
| 11) Stellar (6) | 4) You dream (6) |
| 12) Editors (8) | 6) Now (5) |
| 14) Artichoke (9) | 7) Responsibility (15) |
| 18) You are (4) | 8) To apply for (9) |
| 21) Even (3) | 10) More (3) |
| 22) Sunrise (8) | 13) To stamp / smash (8) |
| 23) Botched job (7) | 15) Barracks (7) |
| 24) Ace (2) | 16) I concluded (7) |
| 26) Security force (6,2,9) (17) | 17) + 20 down. Pedlar (8,9) (9) |
| 28) Bar (5) | 19) It's (2) |
| 31) It filters (6) | 20) +17 Down. Pedlar (8,9) (8) |
| 33) Police (7) | 25) Guard (7) |
| 34) Apron (8) | 27) National (pl) (10) |
| 37) Kerb (8) | 28) Bandit (m) (9) |
| 40) It fits in (6) | 29) Cuttlefish (5) |
| 42) Campaign (7) | 30) He whistles (5) |
| 43) They rolled up (10) | 32) Patrol (8) |
| 45) Faith (2) | 35) Bay (6) |
| 46) Obligations (12) | 36) To read (4) |
| 47) Summers (7) | 38) She reopens (6) |
| | 39) They call (6) |
| | 41) Bosses (5) |
| | 44) Eye (3) |

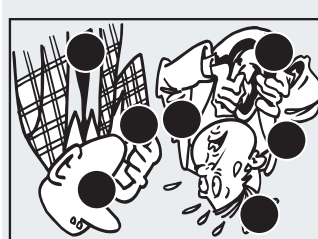
Solutions: Across: / Erase: 8 Inner: 9 Hesour: 10 Thing: 12
Playground: 15 Informally: 18 Needs: 19 Shallow: 21 Obdure: 22 Still.
Down: 1 Depressant: 2 Pause: 3 Metic: 4 Slary: 5 Pastoral: 6 Ambique:
11 Go down well: 13 Larkspur: 14 Effects: 16 Answer: 17 All-in: 20
Also.

1. George	U	S	H	A	R	O	L	D	A	
2. Alfred	A	N	N	E	T	E	L	U	R	W
3. James	R	E	G	N	O	E	D	G	A	R
4. Henry	A	L	F	R	E	D	E	V	A	
5. Edgar	D	I	V	I	S	W	O	O	F	J
6. John	I	J	F	A	P	A	M	R	I	O
7. Anne	M	A	R	A	F	E	G	G	H	
8. Edward	B	M	O	A	T	D	R	E	L	N
9. Mary	L	E	M	A	E	W	N	E	A	
10. Harold	T	E	S	P	O	L	R	O	T	N

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TORDILLO 40ENCA 42CAMPANA
TENDOLATRON 45FE 46HUBICACIONES
TIVERANOS
KOWN:
CARRETERAS 2DELITR 3ADAPAR
SUEÑAS 6AHORA 7RESPONSABILIDAD
SOLICITAR 10MAS 12ESTAMPAR
SCLAVITEL 16CONCILLIT 17ABILITANTE
9ES 25VENDEDOR 25GUARDA
7NACIONALES 28ANVOCADERO 29JUBIA
50SIBA 32PUNTILLA 35LATERE 36TEER
8REABIRE 39LITAMVN 44JEFES 44OJO



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



Boque de Zafarraya cave in Alcaucín, which was discovered by Cecilio Barroso in 1981, could hold the key to the disappearance of the Neanderthals and help scientists to understand their relationship with the modern humans, Homo sapiens, who ended up taking their place.

The Neanderthals inhabited Europe, the Near East, Middle East and central Asia between 230,000 and 40,000 years ago. The reason they became extinct is shrouded in mystery but experts believe it is linked in some way to the emergence of modern man.

So far, the cave has yielded a few fossilised remains, a complete jawbone and a fragment of femur, which are now on display at the Museum of Malaga.

New DNA analysing techniques have opened up new avenues for research in this field: it is now possible to extract samples of human origin from sediments taken from the cave, without the need for organic remains being present.

This is what researchers from Germany's Max Planck Institute were doing over Easter, in collaboration with Spanish experts.

300 samples

About 300 samples of sediment from the cave were taken to Germany for analysis, because the method of extracting DNA from ancient sediments is an extremely new technique which has been developed by the German laboratory.

"It is a very unusual methodology which does not need human remains in order to sequence DNA; it is obtained from the sediments, from remains which have



Spanish and German experts are working together on the project

and why they disappeared," he said.

The Boquete de Zafarraya cave is of particular interest to anthropologists and historians because only a very few sites hold remains from Neanderthal times. All trace of them was lost in other parts of Europe 40,000 years ago, but they appear to have taken refuge in southern Spain, Italy and Gibraltar. It is at that time that they may have come into contact with Homo sapiens.

A base for hunting

The Neanderthals are not thought to have used this cave in the Sierra de Alhama as a place to live, but as an occasional base for hunting, at least between 30,000 and 45,000 years ago.

Scientists are excited at the possibility that there was some type of relationship between these two hominids, because it would indicate why the Neanderthals vanished. Some experts say that, as around three per cent of the non-African human genome comes from the ancient Neanderthals, that in itself is proof that there was cross-breeding between the two.

However, the fact that evidence of modern humans began to appear at the same time that all traces of the Neanderthals were lost has been interpreted in different ways.

Some anthropologists suspect that the Neanderthals were exterminated by the Homo sapiens, while others are more drawn to the theory that they became naturally extinct through the pernicious effects of increasing cross-breeding.

Searching for the demise of the Neanderthals

Analysis. A team from the Max Planck Institute in Germany is studying DNA samples from sediment in the Boquete de Zafarraya cave in Alcaucín to try to determine if there was any relationship between them and modern humans

FRANCISCO GUTIÉRREZ



▲ Sediment. Around 300 samples from the cave have been collected and sent for DNA analysis.

fallen in the past and, curiously, seem more stable over time than organic remains," explained Enrique Viguera, a professor of Genetics at Malaga university.

The genetic study being carried out in Germany will provide a profile of the inhabitants of the cave through systematic study of the past 60,000 years.

"If they show that there were remains from the Neanderthals and modern humans at the same time, we will have a clue as to what happened to the Neanderthals

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