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April 26th to May 2nd 2024
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**LIFESAVING
HEROES
FRIENDS
PRACTISE
WHAT THEY
LEARNED
SOONER THAN
EXPECTED** **P7**



TV chef Alberto Chicote points to ingredients during the charity event on Monday. **JOSELE**



Top chefs help kids cook up healthy dishes for a worthy cause

Chefs for Children, which raises funds for autism in Spain, holds its latest charity day in Benahavís **P36-37**

Government's plan to control erosion brings largest ever amount of sand to top up beaches from Nerja to Manilva

Contracts worth more than two million euros in total have been awarded to collect sand from rivers and ports and use it to build up eroded beaches. The plans affect the eastern and western Costa del Sol, from Nerja to Manilva. **P2**

Community, civic and political leaders united in calls for a better rail service on the Costa del Sol **P11**

Audiences in Mijas and Fuengirola to revisit nineties cult film with The Sound of The Commitments **P24**

PM mulls over resigning after accusations made against wife

Pedro Sánchez has cancelled his public agenda until Monday to "reflect" on whether "it is worth" carrying on

The future of the current Spanish government has been left up in the air this week after Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said he was considering resignation. The

shock announcement came in a letter on social media, addressed to the people of Spain, after initial investigations were opened into Sánchez's wife Begoña Gómez, over allegations of influence peddling and corruption. The Socialist PM accused right-wing groups of waging a "harassment" campaign and said he would announce his decision on Monday. The opposition criticised his move as "irresponsible". **P18**

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Largest ever amount of sand to be added to Costa del Sol beaches to control erosion

The government is to invest more than two million euros in a project that will take sand from river beds, quarries and ports to replenish beaches

CHUS HEREDIA

MALAGA. Beaches along the entire Costa del Sol - from Nerja to Manilva - will benefit from new sand as well as upgrades to old pipes, walls and breakwaters under a new two-million-euro improvement plan. Central government has unveiled the plan which is the largest investment to improve Malaga beaches in decades, apart from emergency works after storms.

The Malaga province coastline is receding, mainly due to a lack of silt from rivers topping up beaches. When river flows are restricted (for example, by building reservoirs) or channelled for irrigation, the sediment load decreases. This, combined with the development of housing, has meant that government action was needed; now two large contracts for the work - one for the eastern and the other for the western coast - have been awarded.

The contractor for both is Hermanos Pérez Garrán, based in Alhaurín de la Torre, a firm that also specialises in maintenance of watercourses and streams and in excavations. The contract is valued at just over two million euros, with a completion period of six months. The double contract has been a long time coming, being in the pipeline since at least March last year.

Once the agreement is signed, some work will start before summer, while other projects will be postponed, so as not to interfere with the peak tourist season.

According to the plans, there will be work along the entire coastline, which covers some 169 kilometres and 14 municipali-



File photo of work to redistribute sand on a beach on the east side of Malaga city centre. SUR

ties (Nerja, Torrox, Algarrobo, Vélez-Málaga, Rincón de la Victoria, Malaga, Torremolinos, Benalmádena, Fuengirola, Mijas, Marbella, Estepona, Manilva and Casares). Work will involve top-ups of new sand; demolition of old structures such as pipes, walls or breakwaters; dune regeneration; gathering top-up sand from rivers and other places such as quarries or harbour channels.

The project is promoted by the environment ministry and has EU funding.

Malaga city and Axarquía

The contract for the eastern coast, for which eight companies competed, has a budget of 801,831 euros and will cover the beaches of Malaga city. Among the possi-

ble places to collect new sand in this eastern area are the Benamargosa river, the Íberos stream (Cajiz) and the mouths of the Guadalhorce, Torrox, Chillar and Vélez rivers. The other sources of top-ups will be from balancing up parts of beaches which have too much sand with others with a shortage, or from inlets such as the port of El Candado.

The beaches where work is expected to happen are El Palo, Pedregalejo, Algarrobo, Candado, Malagueta, Playazo, Torrecilla, Rincón, Elimar, Valle-Niza, Benajarafe, Ferrara, Chucho, Guadalmar, Llanos, Ferrara, El Morche, Benagalbón, Los Rubios, Torre del Mar and Chilches.

The other contract, covering the western Costa between Torremolinos and Manilva, which

had seven bidders, is valued at 1.28 million euros. The government has listed possible sources of sand in this area as the river in Fuengirola; the Guadalmina river in Marbella; in Estepona, the Velerín, Castor, Padrón, Guadalmansa or the Abejeras streams; in Mijas, the area of Entreríos. The port of Benalmádena is another possible source.

Among the beaches where work is expected are El Bombo, Cala Mijas, Cabopino, Las Chapas, Santa Ana, Cable, Pinillo, Guadalmína, La Rada, San Pedro, Castillo, Sabinillas, Playamar, Bajondillo, Malapesquera and Manilva.

The western contract also includes the demolition of structures which surface from time to time during winter storms.

IN FIGURES

1.28

million euros to be spent on the western Costa del Sol

801,831

euros to be spent on the eastern Costa and Malaga city

169

kilometres is the length of the Malaga coastline covering 14 municipalities

The Malaga province coastline is receding, mainly due to a lack of silt from rivers topping up beaches

There is also dune and river-bank regeneration, cleaning and clearing, removal of asbestos pipes and environmental quality controls.

Sand will be sieved

All the sand will be sieved and the sand added from river beds and streams as well as from quarries and ports will have the right grain size for the conditions of the beaches. Both projects have been drafted by Jesús Santos and directed by Manuel Béjar and were technically approved in January 2023.

This is a different plan from the annual work to deal with storm emergencies, which involved an investment of 2.2 and 1.3 million euros respectively over the past two financial years.



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Feared drug-mafia leader wanted in Holland disappears

Karim Bouyakhrichan was held in Marbella but was bailed despite a high risk of escape; his group once threatened to kill the Dutch crown princess

M. SÁIZ-PARDO / J. CANO

MADRID / MALAGA. The Marbella arrest of Karim Bouyakhrichan, probably the most dangerous and powerful kingpin of the 'Mocro Mafia', was celebrated by the Spanish authorities in early January.

The Dutch authorities were also particularly happy, as Bouyakhrichan - a Dutch citizen of Moroccan origin - had been on their radar for arrest for five years. He had become an obsession for them, especially after the Mocro Mafia - the network of North African criminals operating in the Netherlands - had threatened to kill the heir to the Dutch throne, Princess Amalia of Orange.

However, Bouyakhrichan's whereabouts have been unknown

since 1 April, weeks after he was bailed from detention on the Costa del Sol following bad court coordination and decisions some find hard to understand. It is now suspected he has left Spain and fled Spanish and Dutch justice.

Wanted for offences in Spain

Bouyakhrichan was first held in Marbella on 10 January when he presented himself to an investigating judge with his lawyers.

The accusations on Spanish soil of heading a money laundering ring more than justified the provisional detention. As expected, the magistrate's court in Marbella remanded him in custody.

But that imprisonment lasted little more than a month. On 22 February, Malaga provincial court released the alleged leader of the Mocro Mafia on bail, with lax precautionary measures, including the withdrawal of his passport, the obligation to appear in court every 15 days and the payment of bail of 50,000



The fugitive was first held in Marbella back in January. POLICIA NACIONAL

euros.

After handing in his passport at the Marbella court the day after his release from prison, the mafia boss signed in to the courts on the outskirts of Malaga on 1 and 15 March and again on 1 April. But after the latter date there is no record of him doing so.

Details of that surprise release on appeal are still unknown, but what is certain is that the Malaga

court of appeal took this decision despite strong opposition from the anti-drugs prosecutor's office.

By that time, Bouyakhrichan was already the subject of an arrest warrant issued by the Dutch authorities only hours after his arrest in Marbella.

That Dutch warrant reached Spain's High Court (Audiencia Nacional) without a problem. The case went to court headed by

Judge Ismael Moreno, who immediately processed the warrant, but it was not activated as the Malaga provincial court refused to do so, considering Bouyakhrichan had pending cases in Spain - a six-million-euro money laundering offence - before he could be handed over.

Dutch stress urgency

It was then that the Dutch authorities sent the Spanish High Court an extension of the surrender warrant. In it, they explained the extreme urgency of the transfer of this dangerous drug trafficker, leader of the Mocro Mafia, to the Netherlands due to his long criminal record.

Spain's High Court could have issued an arrest warrant at that time to secure his extradition, but it did not do so either, and it is not known why. Ismael Moreno simply decided to summon the offender - through his lawyer - to inform him of his extradition. However, without ordering his arrest, despite the fact that Bouyakhrichan had refused outright to end up in the Netherlands.

And from then on, there has not been any trace of him. Bouyakhrichan did not show up for the date with the Spanish High Court, or for any of his regular court appearances. His escape is said to have provoked outrage in the Netherlands.



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English students out of pocket after UK trip fails to take off

The group of 38 paid almost 27,000 euros to a Costa del Sol travel agent for flights and hotels but didn't receive their tickets

ANTONIO J. GUERRERO

ANTEQUERA. A group of 38 adult students and their tutors were unable to travel from Malaga to the United Kingdom this week in an effort to improve their English language skills after realising they were victims of an alleged scam by a travel agency based on the Costa del Sol.

After not being able to depart on the trip, the group met on Monday and decided to file a complaint with the authorities to demand the return of the 26,975 euros, the sum paid by the entire group.

According to María Jesús Morente, one of the teachers in the English department of the CEPER (Centro y Secciones de Educación Permanente) Ignacio de Toledo de Antequera, the group reported the incident at the National Police headquarters in the town this week.

A total of 35 students and three staff lodged a collective complaint in which they stated the travel agency based in Torre del Mar did not send the documentation needed to start the trip on Monday from Malaga Airport.



Adult students in one of the CEPER classrooms in Antequera. A.J.G.

The organisers of the trip contacted the travel agency but at first staff blamed the ticketing delay on the part of the airline then for a broken bone suffered by the manager of the company and another alleged excuse cited was the non-compliance of the flight broker, the teacher said.

“The scheduled trip should have been from 22 to 26 April, travelling from Malaga to London

where we would have been transferred to Oxford to stay in a hotel with breakfast included. From there, each day, we would be taken on an excursion, one day to Stonehenge, another to Windsor Castle and also have a free day in Oxford,” Morente said. The price included: airfares, bed and breakfast, transport from the airport and the daily excursion with a guide and entrance to the castle.

Man held over sexually assaulting minors at Nerja spa

EUGENIO CABEZAS

NERJA. Guardia Civil officers arrested a 34-year-old man in Nerja on Wednesday for allegedly sexually assaulting and corrupting minors he met at a gym in the town and then took to a spa. He is currently being held in custody while police investigations continue.

Operation Vaporfit began earlier this month following complaints made by the parents of two minors in which they reported in detail that an individual had contacted their children at a gym their offspring attended. According to a statement issued by police, the man had offered to help the minors with their training sessions

and to monitor their muscular development for free, although he was not an employee.

The Guardia Civil said he initially made contact with the minors at the gym but, after gaining their trust, he would invite them to visit a spa also located in Nerja, to which the suspect had free access. He would ask them to remove their clothes before sexually assaulting them. Officers seized six hard drives, three mobile phones, a laptop and an external memory card in searches carried out at the man's home and the spa.

112 REPORTS



Police officers surround the scene of the incident. sur

MARBELLA

Police swoop after gun pulled at Marbella school

IRENE QUIRANTE. There was considerable panic outside a school in San Pedro Alcántara on Monday when the elderly driver of a Ferrari sports car allegedly pulled out a gun. According to eyewitnesses, the suspect brandished the weapon in a threatening manner to several people who were

in the area, including the school caretaker, while complaining about cars that were double parked outside the school in the early afternoon. Heavily protected police teams were sent to the scene when the individual took refuge in a nearby property. When officers gained access they found a variety of simulated or compressed air weapons in the man's possession. He was not arrested, although the police are still evaluating his mental health.

RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA

Woman dies after being struck by tourist train

E.P. An 82-year-old woman died last Saturday evening after being struck by a tourist train in Rincón de la Victoria, according to 112 Andalucía. The accident happened just before 7pm when several callers alerted the emergency services that the sightseeing train had run over an elderly woman on Avenida del Mediterráneo. The accident is being investigated but the driver tested negative for alcohol and drugs.

MALAGA

Driver sought after homeless man's death

J.C. Police are searching for the driver of a car who allegedly fled the scene after hitting a homeless man while he was crossing a road in the dark on Malaga city's Guadalhorce industrial estate. The victim, who has not yet been identified, was crossing the road draped in a dark blanket when he was hit by two vehicles. He died at the scene. The driver of the first vehicle stopped but the second left the area.

MALAGA

Fleeing driver plunges to death from A-7 viaduct

J.C. A 43-year-old man has died after falling around 35 metres from an A-7 motorway viaduct just east of Malaga city. He allegedly had tried to escape from police officers who had been following his vehicle from the centre of Malaga during a high-speed chase. After the car

crashed into the central reservation the driver attempted to flee on foot, jumping over the barrier to try and make it to the other side of the A-7. Apparently, he did not realise he was on a viaduct due to it being nighttime.

The man died at the scene. His passenger remained inside the car after the accident. According to sources, the vehicle was carrying a stash of hashish hidden in the engine compartment.





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A busy Plaza de la Mezquita in Arroyo de la Miel during the St George's Day festivities on Tuesday. **SUR**

Hundreds turn out for Costa party in honour of St George

Some dressed in red and white to enjoy an afternoon of fun in the sun, filled with traditional English cuisine and good old-fashioned rock and roll

TONY BRYANT

BENALMÁDENA. Hundreds of residents and tourists gathered in Plaza de la Mezquita in Arroyo de la Miel on Tuesday this week to celebrate the feast of St George, a day that brought many English (and other nationalities) together to celebrate a saint identified with ideals of honour, bravery and gallantry.

The large-scale event, held in Benalmádena for the second consecutive year, began at 1pm and included a variety of live music performed by some of the coast's favourites, including The Costa Soul Singers, The Disclaimers, Mama Cath and the Soul Sisters, Rock of the Ages and The Andalusia Performing Arts Society (TA-



Age Concern and the Scouts had information stands at the event. **SUR**

PAS), among others.

Some of the patriotic revellers dressed in traditional red and white, while others turned out in summer attire to enjoy an afternoon in the sun, filled with traditional English cuisine and good old-fashioned rock and roll.

Organised by Cath John of the Welsh Society, who thanked "Benalmádena for turning up in their droves to party", the day was also used to raise funds for Age Concern. A raffle raised more than

1,000 euros to help launch the charity's new project to develop further help for people along the coast affected by Alzheimer's and dementia. Volunteers from the association were also on hand to offer help and advice about the services it offers.

Also at the event were leaders from the 1st Fuengirola Scouts, providing information about the group that is formed by Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers and is part of British Scouting Overseas.

HERE AND THERE



Participants in last year's Walkathon in Benalmádena. **A. P.**

BENALMÁDENA

Registration open for Cudeca Walkathon

T. BRYANT. The Cudeca cancer care foundation has announced that registration is now open for the annual Cudeca Walkathon, which will take place in Benalmádena Costa on Saturday 18 May.

As in previous years, the event will offer a ten and five-kilometre route along the promenade in Benalmádena. The ten-kilometre walk will be-

gin from Sunset Beach Club at 9.30am while those participating in the shorter walk will leave approximately one hour later.

Cudeca volunteers will offer the traditional warm up session before the fun hike, which usually attracts around 2,000 walkers, some of whom participate in fancy dress.

Once the walk is over, a variety of activities, organised by events company Exploamás, will be held. These will include live music, children's activities and a giant paella for all walkers.

MARBELLA

Night work causes lane closures in San Pedro

T. BRYANT. Safety improvement work inside the A-7 tunnel through San Pedro Alcántara, will mean nighttime lane closures continue until 26 June.

Emergency exits are being constructed inside the tunnel, costing around 3.76 million euros. To ensure the safety of the workers, the left lane will be shut on both carriageways between kilometres 1054.26 and 1055.26, although the right lane will remain open for traffic at all times.

The closures are from 9pm (Monday to Friday) or 10pm (weekends) until 7am.

MARBELLA

Real estate groups raise funds through sport

M. ALBARRAL. The real estate sector in Marbella and Estepona has unveiled a series of events to raise funds for different charities on the Costa del Sol, the fifth year it has done so. This week the Building the Future organisation presented its programme of sports and gastronomic events that will take place during the months of May and June. According to the group, they will "raise funds for charity while having a good time with friends and colleagues". The local organisations that will benefit from the fundraising this year will be AVOI, Club Deportivo Marbella Juega and CADI.

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Image of La Vinuela taken from a villa with a pool in Los Romanes. E. C.

Axarquía town halls seek consensus over filling of private swimming pools

EUGENIO CABEZAS

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. The president of the Mancomunidad association of town halls in the Axarquía, Jorge Martín, and the managing director of public water company, Axaragua Daniel Cívico, have called on the area's town halls to reach a consensus on the filling of private swimming pools as summer approaches.

At a meeting on Tuesday the situation of La Viñuela reservoir was once again analysed. This is currently at 31.23 cubic hectometres, or 19.01 per cent of its capacity.

Also discussed were the water saving measures adapted by the town halls and approved by the Drought Management Committee of the Mediterranean Basins in February; before the heavy

rainfall over Easter.

With regard to the filling of the swimming pools, Martin called for "consensus between all town halls" in making the final decision but highlighted that it is the town halls that "are responsible in this matter" and that they need to analyse "what margin exists for the filling of swimming pools for the summer".

The Mancomunidad has written to the Junta de Andalucía asking that the filling and refilling of private and communal swimming pools that are not used for tourism purposes be authorised.

It has proposed using non-drinking water from wells in the area as this subsequently receives the corresponding chlorinating and purification treatments once the water is in the swimming pools.

Axarquía escape room nominated for prestigious national award

E. CABEZAS

TORRE DEL MAR. Torrenigma in Torre del Mar is the first escape room in Malaga province to be nominated for an Escape Room Award; the equivalent of the Spanish Goya film industry awards in Spain.

Torrenigma will be competing against other escape rooms for the top prize at the Escape Room Awards ceremony on Sunday at the Caixaforum in Valencia.

Inaugurated in 2017, Torrenigma was opened by Juan (41) and Alberto (36) Gil. "This nomination represents a historic milestone as we are the first escape room in the whole province to be considered for these prestigious awards, equivalent to the Goya Awards in the world of Spanish cinema," said Juan.

The brothers from Vélez-Málaga have been passionate about escape rooms since they were very young and decided to run their own centre in their hometown. "Since its launch, we have received praise from both fans and critics in the industry," they point out.

Around 16,000 people have passed through the escape room in the centre of Torre del Mar since it opened in 2017. A session costs 50 euros for two people and 108 euros for six players.

HERE AND THERE



Club Med 2 cruise ship during its visit to Puerto Banús this week. SUR

MARBELLA

Club Med schooner sails into Puerto Banús

DAVID LERMA. With its imposing five masts, the Club Med 2 schooner sailed into Puerto Banús this week after departing from Gibralt-

tar. The sailing ship has capacity for 386 cruise passengers, either in cabins or in one of the ten suites. There are also several restaurants and sports facilities on board. After leaving the Costa del Sol, the vessel will soon be crossing the waters of the Adriatic and Aegean seas.

TORRE DEL MAR

Lifeguard dogs to attend training course

E. C. Following the announcement earlier this month that Vélez-Málaga will have lifeguard dogs on its beaches for the first time this summer, from 2 to 5 May the dogs and their handlers will be taking part in a training course on Torre del Mar's dog beach. Manuel Durán, coordinator of the municipal beaches department invited the general public to go along on the last day of the course to see a demonstration of how the dogs and handlers work together.

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

Eight family members arrested in drugs bust

E. C. National Police officers in Vélez-Málaga have arrested eight members of the same family for allegedly trafficking drugs and selling cocaine and other substances from three homes in the town. Operation Duck started after a tip-off about drug dealing in La Gloria area of Vélez-Málaga, leading to five searches being carried out in homes, two of which were used to grow marijuana plants. As well as drugs, officers also seized 2,940 euros in cash and weighing equipment.



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The presentation of the Vitur Summit in Malaga this week. SUR

Costa to host Europe's biggest holiday rental sector event

PILAR MARTÍNEZ

MALAGA. Malaga has been chosen to host the largest event of the holiday rental sector in Europe on 8 and 9 May.

Andalusian tourist housing association AVVA-Pro president Carlos Pérez Lanzac announced the event on Tuesday and said: "Vitur

Summit will become the epicentre of the tourist property and accommodation sector, and a meeting point for investors, operators, owners and service companies in the sector together with public institutions and employers' associations." He pointed out that more than 700 company leaders in the sector, authorities and European

institutions will take part in the event.

Lanzac, also the founder of Vitur Summit, said the sector has experienced rapid growth, both inside and outside Spain, and pointed out Europe maintains a leading position in tourist accommodation worldwide, with Spain being the top European destination. "The global market for tourist homes and apartments will reach 315 billion dollars in 2031, with a compound annual growth rate of 12.4%," he said.

"In Spain, 9.12 million foreign tourists who visited us last year stayed in apartments and tourist homes, generating an expenditure of 19.844 billion euros in the country. The average expenditure per tourist was 1,218 euros in hotel accommodation, compared to 1,574 euros for visitors staying in apartments and holiday homes," Lanzac added.

CEO of Turismo Costa del Sol Esperanza González said 75% of the province's offer is tourist homes and flats "which contributes to our destination being an example of alternative services and quality for the tourists who visit us".



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“WE OFFER A UNIQUE COMBINATION OF ESTABLISHED EXPERTISE AND BUSINESS MATURITY”



Manuel Matencio, Novasol Andalusian Supply Regional Manager

MÁLAGA

SUR. How is this year's tourist season looking for the holiday-rental sector?

This year's tourist season promises to be exceptionally favourable for the holiday-rental sector, especially for our Novasol owners. Initial indicators are very encouraging, as shown by an Easter Week with higher occupancy than last year. This positive trend is projected to increase into the summer season, where we anticipate surpassing previous years' bookings. This increase in demand suggests a marked recovery and a gradual return to normality in bookings,

marking a significant milestone in the post-Covid era for the holiday-rental industry.

What does Novasol bring to such a competitive sector?

We offer a unique combination of established expertise and business maturity. As part of the Awaze Group, Europe's leading vacation rental-management company, we bring a solid operational foundation backed by decades of industry knowledge and excellence. For owners, we represent a reliable partner that guarantees security and peace of mind at every stage of their partnership with us. Our team of industry experts is dedicated to maximising revenue for each property, providing strategic guidance and solutions tailored to each owner's individual needs. In short, Novasol not only offers exceptional accommodation options, but also provides a holistic experience that brings together quality, security and personalised attention for owners and guests alike.

What is Novasol's current turnover on the Costa del Sol?

Novasol's turnover on the Costa del Sol is significant, with an impressive portfolio of over 700 properties spread across the province of Malaga. From the charming coastal town of Nerja to the

picturesque village of Manilva, our properties offer a wide variety of options to suit the needs and preferences of our guests. This number adds to our presence throughout Andalusia, easily exceeding 1,000 properties.

What is Novasol's customer profile?

It mainly encompasses families looking for exceptional holiday experiences, marked by rest and connection with their loved ones in a relaxing environment. We specialise in meeting the needs of those who yearn to escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, giving them the opportunity to enjoy the perfect holiday in carefully selected destinations. Our main clients are foreign tourists, with a particular focus on those from Central European countries, Nordic countries and the British market.

What are Novasol's objectives for this season?

To constantly innovate, deliver exceptional service, optimise revenue for our owners and ensure unforgettable accommodation experiences for our guests. We are committed to excellence in all aspects of our business and eager to exceed the expectations of those who rely on us for an exceptional holiday and a year-round return for those who entrust us with their investment property.



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Community and civic leaders call for more trains on the Costa

All agree on how important extended rail services are and are willing politicians to cooperate and to work together to create them

A. M. ROMERO / P. MARTÍNEZ /
C. VALLEJO / M. STUBER

MALAGA. The voices are growing louder and each is saying the same thing. All elements of Costa del Sol society are increasingly coming together and urging radical improvements to Malaga province's train network to avoid a breakdown in public transport, which, they say, will hit the long-term development of the area.

Local business leaders, members of cultural and academic institutions, trade union bosses and heads of professional bodies, among others, have recently been telling SUR why it is so important to lobby central government to expand the train service beyond Fuengirola and do something about public transport the length of the Costa from Manilva to Nerja.

In a round of questions to gauge their opinion, SUR asked some 30 non-politicians representing different elements of civic life what the main things lacking were in the transport system in the province, which rail initiatives were priority and what the benefits would be for the people they represent of having more trains.



A local train on the existing line from Malaga to Fuengirola. SUR

Among the leaders asked in the province, Javier González de Lara, head of the CEM Malaga business owners association, pointed out that the Malaga area has the most companies in Andalucía and more train lines would significantly improve the business environment.

José Luque, president of the Costa hoteliers association, stressed a double track railway was needed to Estepona at least and that improvements to the busy A-7 coastal road were urgent, with the unlikelihood of scrapping the tolls on the

AP-7.

Marti Gómez, head of the Mijas traders association, called for more bus frequencies and longer timetables in his area as well as the coastal train.

As well as business leaders, Malaga University has shown its support along with Malaga province's influential associations of doctors and lawyers, among others, all agreeing how important extended rail services are and willing politicians to work together to build and create them.

WHAT LOCAL MAYORS SAY

Margarita del Cid
Mayor of Torremolinos

"We are at the point of no return with the coastal train: we have to do it. It has gone beyond political debate"

Ana Mula
Mayor of Fuengirola

"Together... we will have more strength to demand what we want, which is fair and seeks more effective transport"

Ana Mata
Mayor of Mijas

"For the Costa this would be a leap forward in excellence, as the airport extension or high-speed train were in their day"

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Political parties and mayors of Costa towns back demands for new rail services

The PP party is looking to the PSOE's central government to make a move while the PSOE blames the PP for not doing so when in power

A. M. ROMERO / H. BARBOTA

MALAGA. The growing clamour from community representatives and local society at large for better transport, especially rail links, on the Costa del Sol is receiving cross party support from local politicians.

However there is still confrontation between parties on the left and right over who should be driving forwards what everyone has said clearly they want.

With central government responsible for railway infrastruc-

ture and controlled by the Socialist party, the conservative Partido Popular (PP) regional government has blamed Madrid for not prioritising Malaga province for infrastructure investment. The Junta de Andalucía's Patricia Navarro claimed this week that central government was "marginalising" Andalucía overall, and that of about 50 strategic rail plans for Spain only three were in the Andalucía region.

The president of Malaga provincial authority, Francisco Salado, also of the PP, urged politicians to start talking and make real moves. "We need to look for financing from Europe, from central and regional governments and the private sector... Let's stop talking through the media and Twitter. What the people want is for the national transport min-

ister to speak to the regional minister or the prime minister to the regional president."

Central government's representative in Malaga, the PSOE's Javier Salas, while welcoming the opinion of civic leaders added that "it would have been more effective if it had come together in 2015 when a study for the coastal train was carried out. The PP put this a drawer for three years and it is now asking for what it did not do when it was

The Junta de Andalucía's Patricia Navarro claimed this week that central government was "marginalising" Andalucía

in power nationally."

On the tensions between the two main political parties, the head of the left-wing Izquierda Unida party locally, Toni Morillas, explained what she felt should be done.

"We need to stop the confrontation over this plan and channel it towards greater cooperation - the different governments have to support sustainable, integrated public transport that is effective. The only train that isn't profitable is the one that goes to constant confrontation, exasperation, irresponsibility and lack of real commitment," Morillas said.

Local mayors

Local mayors along the Costa del Sol have also been having their say and coming out in support of more trains along the Costa. Mayor of Marbella Ángeles Muñoz said, "It is impossible to understand why Marbella is the only place in Spain with a population over 150,000 that doesn't have a rail connection."

Ángeles Muñoz
Mayor of Marbella

"It is impossible to understand why Marbella is the only place in Spain with over 150,000 people that doesn't have a train"

José María García Urbano
Mayor of Estepona

"The transport minister knows very well the Costa del Sol and its needs so this plan should be among government priorities"

José Alberto Armijo
Mayor of Nerja

"It is urgent... to build this infrastructure, so important for the economic and tourism development of the Costa from Nerja to Manilva"



Landlords. Left to right. Araceli Caracuel, Francisco Estévez, Maribel Bascuñana, Teresa Gutiérrez, Virginia Robles and Javier Merino. **NITO SALAS**

Tenants or squatters? When they stop paying but stay put

Case studies. SUR tells the stories of three families who have suffered an ordeal of non-payments, litigation and have even had to resort to detectives to recover their properties

CHUS HEREDIA



The photo is taken in the district of El Ejido, just north of Malaga city centre. Francisco Estévez, a pensioner who has had to deal with a non-paying tenant in his property for two years, is accompanied by his wife, Maribel. Alongside them is Teresa Gutiérrez, who had serious problems with a flat that belonged to her father. Also there are Javier, Virginia and her mother. They have just put an end to a four-year ordeal.

Normally the focus on squatting is more on people who move into someone else's home by force or without permission. A different issue is that of tenants who start paying rent, but at a certain point the payments stop but they do not move out.

The landlords interviewed by SUR share a similar diagnosis. They have lost income, energy and morale along the way. In all three cases they complain that the authorities have failed to follow up claims of vulnerability of tenants. All three are in favour of measures to provide access to housing, but stress that landlords should not be used as a "social shield".

An association for property owners affected by squatters, the Pla-

taforma de Afectados por la Okupación, estimates that there may be as many as 80,000 people affected by non-payment in Spain. A government decree, issued following coronavirus, prohibits the eviction of people classified as vulnerable by social services. According to the association, many tenants are clinging to this situation to stay in their homes.

Francisco Estévez and Maribel Bascuñana

Francisco Estévez is retired. He thought he would buy a second property so his son had somewhere to live when he left home. "Now [my son] has to share a flat with three friends paying rent because I don't have the flat; it's been tied up for two years. It's a good thing I didn't put the electricity and water in my name," he says. At the same time he only sees the political route as a solution and that the future law should include non-paying tenants, rather than just squatters. On this point, he points out that the government has refused on more than 20 occasions to receive the Plataforma. Owners with non-paying tenants are the majority, but we are invisible. A large

area of impunity is being created. It is easy to be vulnerable. This is infringing property rights," he says.

Estévez has not been paid for two years and for one year he has had a court sentence in his favour but the tenant has a declaration of vulnerability. "The first two years they paid normally. What's more, I signed the contract through the municipal housing institute, and it paid half. But when they stopped paying, I went to the city hall and they just told me to report it. They already owe me 16,000 euros," he says.

He complains that the compensation provided by the Junta in cases of non-payment is partial, full of bureaucracy and takes a long time. "I know people who have even had to sell their homes under pressure from non-payment. It's a good thing I don't have a mortgage on the flat," he adds. The court has requested a new date for the eviction, but he is not optimistic.

Teresa Gutiérrez

Teresa Gutiérrez (not her real name) recounts an intricate odyssey: "My tenant left in February 2022 after two years of non-payment. The contract was in 2016

and was in the name of two people [she later discovered that one was never registered there]. It was a flat that belonged to my father; it was my home, a 52-year-old property. We rented it out to be able to pay rent for my father here in Malaga."

At the beginning, they paid, but not regularly. After three years, the end of the contract, I asked her if they wanted to extend it, but she was on her own. My father died in March of that year, 2019. She was working without a fixed salary, she told me. And her ex-partner is the one who had signed the contract. She told me that she was going to pay with the rental benefit," she adds. The aid never arrived.

From there began an ordeal of lawyers, contacts and litigation with the municipality in question (she prefers not to identify it). The non-payments began to pile up.

"There is impunity. It's easy to be vulnerable. This is infringing property rights," say the affected owners

The tenant went to work for the council and Teresa was reassured that she would pay. She lived with her two children, 18 and 17. "I went so far as to offer her the chance to leave without paying her debt of 9 months and giving her two months to look for an alternative. She refused. I had to sue. It was in October 2020. When the proceedings were activated, it was the second [Covid] state of alarm and everything had to be suspended. I had a trial in March 2021. She had moved faster than I did. She had a court-appointed lawyer and a vulnerability report. I provided the screenshot proving that she was working without a contract," she adds.

The story gets even more complicated from here. She had to hire two detectives and they discovered that the tenant was working and that the life she led, according to social media, did not correspond to being vulnerable. "We wrote to the judge with the detective's report, the standard of living and my unemployment certificate and my mother's 80% disability. She argued that she had paid me cash in hand, that she had made renovations.... The judge declared her not vulnerable," she continues, adding that there were also problems with the neighbours, including complaints of drug use. Meanwhile, it was Teresa herself who was paying "skyrocketing" electricity, water and community fees.

She was able to prove, after spending 2,000 euros on detectives, that this person was not in a vulnerable situation. She even received 1,000 euros a month in benefits and had a property in Zaragoza. The whole process cost Teresa more than 30,000 euros. And a destroyed flat.

Javier Merino and Virginia Robles

Javier and his wife Virginia finally breathed a sigh of relief during the making of this report. "I have just regained possession," Javier, a hotel and catering professional, told this newspaper. "We are in favour of aid but there is no follow-up. A lot of public money is being thrown away. And now the court-appointed lawyers know all the tricks," he says.

The debt of his tenants built up over four years and amounted to 20,000 euros. "This has been an ordeal and lawyers are of little help. I have had to be a detective and we have managed to unmask the vulnerability. I don't understand why social services don't follow this up. And tenants should inform them when they are no longer in that situation. There is public money being embezzled," he criticises.

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House prices continue to rise on the Costa del Sol, one of Spain's most active markets

Latest data shows the average price per square metre of a property for sale has soared to 2,412 euros, with rental prices also continuing to rise

JESÚS HINOJOSA



MALAGA. After a slight drop in the third quarter of last year, the price of housing has risen once again in Malaga province, the latest data shows.

In the first three months of this year, the average price per square metre of a property for sale in the province including the Costa del Sol climbed to 2,412 euros, according to valuation firm Gesvalt. It is 1.2% more than the figure recorded at the end of 2023 and about the same figure as a year ago, when the valuer's studies showed an average price of 2,419 euros per square metre. The data shows that the 4% drop in the prices of property for sale in Malaga province in the third quarter of last year was a one-off event.

Additionally, rental prices continue to soar in both Malaga city and throughout the province. According to Gesvalt data, the average rental price at provincial level is 14.32 euros per square metre, which is 13.5% more than a year ago and 3.2% more than three months ago.

However, the increase in rent is most noticeable in Malaga city, where the average cost has risen to 14.41 euros per square metre, 16% more than a year ago, according to the data.

In the city, the average price of housing for sale stands at 2,374 euros per square metre, which is 8% more than in the first quarter of 2023 and 2.5% more than in last year's year-end report.

Upward trend to continue

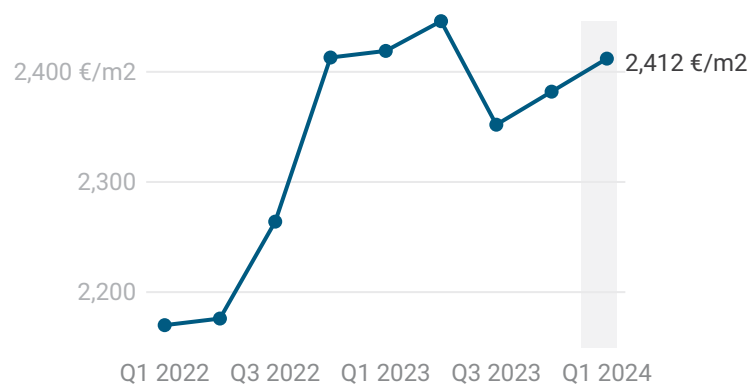
According to Gregorio Abril, Gesvalt's regional director for Andalucía and Extremadura, house prices in Malaga are set to continue "the upward trend of recent months, but at a more moderate pace than in recent years, tending towards stabilisation, after the slight slump in demand caused by successive interest rate increases and a general economic slowdown".

"Once this phase has been overcome, and with the prospect of upcoming interest rate cuts, demand has once again been reactivated in a market that

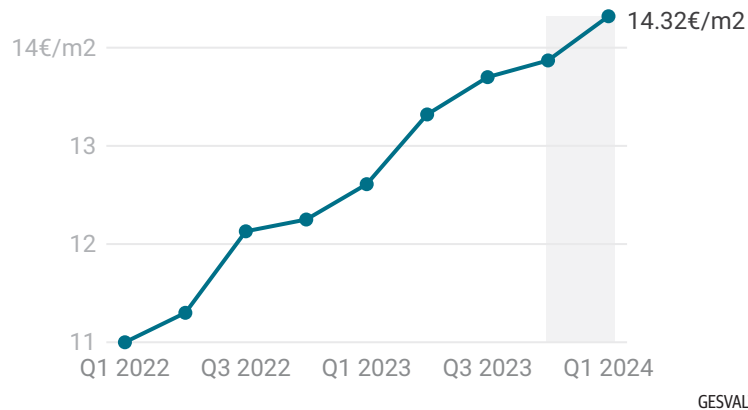


Work on the site of the Torre del Río development where luxury tower blocks are being built in Malaga. M. BÁEZ

Change in property sale prices in Malaga province



Change in rental prices in Malaga province



Price of property for sale and rent in the main Costa towns*

	Sale	Rent
Benalmádena	2,423	14.15
Estepona	2,183	14.62
Fuengirola	2,176	13.51
Marbella	3,202	18.84
Mijas	2,148	12.5
Torremolinos	2,231	14.55
Vélez-Málaga	1,391	7.53

* Population of more than 50,000. Euros per sq metre

the rental market, due to the number of house-hunters who are unable to afford to buy a home at current prices and decide to opt for renting. Our forecast is that the current trend will continue over the next few years," he added.

Costa rentals

On the Costa del Sol, Marbella continues to lead in rental prices with an average of 18.8 euros per square metre, 12% more than a year ago. Also noteworthy is the rise in rent in towns such as Torremolinos and Benalmádena, possibly due to the increase of prices in Malaga city leading to a rise in demand for rentals in these neighbouring towns.

In the case of Torremolinos, rent has risen to 14.6 euros per square metre and is now at the same level as Estepona, with a year-on-year increase of 12%, the data shows.

At the other end of the scale Vélez-Málaga offers rents at half of the average registered on the Costa del Sol, with prices around 7.5 euros per square metre.

remains under pressure, pushing prices up again," Abril said.

Malaga is one of the most active real estate markets in Spain, "the demand, both national and international is very active, compared to a supply that, despite the efforts of the city council and the great developer activity, is still insufficient to meet it", the real estate expert added.

"All these factors lead us to

believe that there will not be a change in trend in the coming months and it is not possible to foresee when price rises will slow," he said.

As for the unstoppable rise in rent, Abril pointed out that this is a "more common issue than that of buying and selling".

"While supply is more limited than for sales, there is a transfer of demand from the sales to

Malaga is the province with the most expensive average mortgage in Spain

CRISTINA VALLEJO

MALAGA. Malaga province has the most expensive average mortgage in the country, according to new data.

Figures released this Wednesday by Spain's national statistics institute (INE) show the average loan taken out in the province in February amounted to 234,777 euros, higher than the Balearic Islands, where the average loan was close to 187,000 during the same month.

Just a month earlier, the Balearics were at the top of the ranking, with an average mortgage worth just over 207,000 euros, while Malaga province was in second place, at 194,700 euros.

Just 12 months ago, Malaga was in fourth position with an average of 175,000 euros per loan and was overtaken by 177,000 euros in Barcelona, 203,000 euros in Madrid and almost 239,000 euros in the Balearics.

However, in the past year, Malaga has been the second province in which the average value of mortgages has increased the most: they have risen by more than 34%, a percentage only exceeded by Sorria, with an increase of 42%. In Spain, the average mortgage loan has fallen by 5.2%, from 143,555 euros in February 2023 to 136,145 this year, according to the data.

In the provinces that follow Malaga in terms of mortgage values, there has also been a significant drop. To begin with, in the Balearics the average mortgage has fallen by almost 22% in the past year, to 186,500 euros, while in Madrid the cut has been 12.7%, to 177,215 euros, a figure matched by Barcelona after its 0.25% drop.

Highest average home loans in Spanish provinces

Figures in euros. Feb. 2024 data.

Malaga	234,777
Balearics	186,499
Madrid	177,215
Barcelona	176,953
Guipuzcoa	160,856
Vizcaya	154,192
Girona	150,880
Melilla	145,676
Álava	143,486
National average	136,145

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Thousands take to the streets to say 'Canaries have a limit'

Protests against mass tourism took place across the islands and around Spain, as record figures push up costs for locals

EUROPA PRESS / SUR

MADRID. Tens of thousands of people joined simultaneous demonstrations across the Canaries on Saturday, calling for a new tourism model on the islands.

More than 57,000 people, according to the government (the organisers put the figure at well over 100,000) marched under the slogan "The Canaries have a limit."

According to the government office in the Canaries, the largest protest was in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, followed in size by similar marches in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Arrecife (Lanzarote), Puerto del Rosario (Fuerteventura), San Sebastián (La Gomera) and Valverde (El Hierro).

Protesters highlighted the paradox of record tourism figures be-

ing recorded in a region where the population at risk of poverty has risen to above 30 per cent.

They called for a solution to the housing problem as the local people can no longer afford to buy or rent due to tourist properties pushing up the prices.

Similar protests took place in Madrid and other Spanish cities in support of the appeal from the people of the Canaries.

In Malaga left-wing group Adelante Andalucía headed a protest behind a banner that read "Malaga with the Canary Islands. Andalucía also has a limit."

Protesters called for a freeze on tourist numbers and argued that mass tourism was making the cost of living unaffordable and environmentally unsustainable for residents.

"The people of the Canary Islands are suffering from mass tourism and depletion of their natural resources very similar to that suffered by the people of Andalucía," said Adelante spokesperson Luis Rodrigo.



Banners in the protest march in Fuerteventura on Saturday. EFE

Industry bosses call for a plan for a more sustainable tourism model

PILAR MARTÍNEZ

MALAGA. Tourism industry bosses have also expressed their concerns at the effects of mass tourism, following the protests in the Canaries at the weekend. Spain's Alliance for Excellence in Tourism (Exceltur) agreed that "tourism has a limit" and is calling for a roadmap which sets out a transition towards more sustainable tourism models.

The group, formed by the CEOs of Spain's 30 most relevant tourism firms, said a plan should be able to detail ways to contain mass tourism, while still promoting the industry in Spain, as it is a huge driver for the economy throughout the country. Exceltur's executive vice-president José Luis Zoreda spoke out against the sharp increase in private holiday rentals, which he says is creating housing problems for local people and called for "socially acceptable and sustainable strategies".

CREATORS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Marbella's first tech focused school will open in September

The new school has a British, STEM-based curriculum, focusing on mathematics, physics and computer sciences

BENAHAVÍS

SUR. Welcome to Creators International School, Marbella and the Costa del Sol's first tech-focused school that aims to become the launch pad for the next

generation of tech pioneers, innovators and world leaders. Opening in September 2025 in Benahavís, our British, STEM-based curriculum, with a focus on mathematics, physics and

computer sciences, aims not just to educate, but to ignite a passion for learning in young minds.

Creators School will offer education for students from Year 3 through to Year 13, with applications now being accepted for Years 3 to 10 (7 to 14 year olds).

Why Creators International School?

What sets Creators apart is our dedication to putting technology at the heart and soul of our mission. As the first school on the Costa del Sol to prioritise tech in the school curriculum, Creators is paving the way for a new era of education.

A dedicated tech education opens up a world of endless possibilities and empowers students to shape the future. In today's digital age, technology permeates every aspect of our lives, from education and entertainment to communication and commerce. By engaging with technology from a young age, children develop essential skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity.

Exploring tech also allows kids to unleash their imagination and curiosity, enabling them to innovate, create, and express themselves in new and exciting

ways. Whether they dream of becoming software developers, engineers, designers, or entrepreneurs, a foundation in tech sets students on a path towards success and fulfilment in a rapidly evolving world. One of the pillars of Creators' educational philosophy is our commitment to student well-being.

Located in the idyllic village of Benahavís, just a short drive from Marbella, Creators International School provides the ideal setting for students to thrive. The school's eco-friendly campus, surrounded by the stunning Andalusian countryside, offers a peaceful and natural environment conducive to learning, playing, and thriving.

September 2025

From September 2025, Creators will be offering day school as well as full and part-time boarding options for students, providing greater flexibility and convenience for families. Our boarding programme creates a nurturing and enriching environment where students can flourish.

To enquire about enrolment for September 2025 visit our website at www.creators.tech, email admissions@creators.tech or call (+34) 655 255 779.

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Proposed changes to UK Inheritance tax for Brits living in Spain

MARBELLA

Jeremy Ferguson. One of the hardest things I have to explain to a lot of clients who live here is what the difference is between residence and domicile. My objective is always to explain things in a way that makes sense and is understood, so typically endeavouring to simplify things as best I can, very often using analogies or examples that will help me get the point across.

Residence is simply where you reside, typically, where is your 'main' home? That answer will then normally determine your residence, so if you live in Spain, you will be a resident here. That will then normally (not always, but in the majority of cases) also determine where you will be paying tax.

Domicile however is something very different, but I always like to say that in most cases your domicile is simply determined by where you were born. So if you were born

in the UK, having spent a large part of your life there before moving to Spain, your Domicile will be the UK.

Over the years I have seen many articles published here about how you can do certain things to lose your UK Domicile, and they were always full of so many ifs and buts. Without going into detail, the reality is, it is really difficult to lose your UK domicile. However, the reason people would try and do this was focused around UK Inheritance Tax. This is the bit people have sometimes struggled to comprehend. If you are a UK domicile, you will pay inheritance tax on your assets outside of the UK, regardless of where you live. So 'clever' people would try and help you lose your UK domicile so you could avoid UK Inheritance tax in the event of your demise.

That could now all be a thing of the past, as the UK Government has recently proposed changes to

how IHT is calculated. Essentially, what they are proposing is that IHT in the UK is moved to a basis where residency, and not domicile, determine whether the estate on death is subject to tax in the UK or not.

Under these proposals to move to a 'residence based regime' from 2025, the estates of Britons living abroad will no longer be charged UK IHT on their estates globally, as long as they have lived outside of the UK for more than the last ten years.

This could have massive implications for the amount of tax levied on death on the estates of any Britons who have lived here in excess of the last ten years. For many people, this could be really good news.

Being the cynic I am, the question has to be asked, why would they do this? Well, as an example, currently the UK is a very attractive place to own property



Jeremy Ferguson. SUR

and be resident as a non UK domicile. This resulted in many tax breaks being afforded to these people. This is one of the reasons we hear of the huge swathes of property in London being owned by people from overseas.

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced in the Budget that generous tax breaks for non-domiciled individuals will be replaced with a "fairer system" from April 2025, with new arrivals to the UK paying the same tax as everyone else after four years. This of course meant if you are changing to a residence based test in the UK, then people who no longer live there would, or should be, treated in a similar vein.

So, retirement abroad could suddenly become a much more attractive prospect for many people as a result of this change, so fingers crossed it actually happens.

If you have any questions about being a Spanish resident and inheritance tax, please feel free to get in touch to see if I can help answer things in a clear and concise manner.

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PM considers quitting over accusations against his wife

Pedro Sánchez has emptied his public diary until Monday while he reflects on what to do next after writing an open letter to the Spanish people

SUR

MADRID. The future of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez at the helm of the Spanish government was left in the air on Wednesday evening after he said in a surprise letter posted on his personal X social media account that he needed to reflect on whether it was worth staying in the job. He said he was cancelling all public appearances until Monday while continuing to work behind closed doors.

The unusual move comes after his wife, Begoña Gómez, was put under the first stages of investigation following allegations of influ-

ence peddling and corruption in business due to her links to the PM.

"I need to pause and reflect," Sánchez said in his lengthy X letter. "I need to answer the question as to whether it is worth it," he wrote.

He said that right and far-right-wing groups were intent on creating a political mire and he needed to decide "whether I should continue at the head of the government or give up this high honour".

It was announced earlier on Wednesday that a Madrid court had opened the investigation after Manos Limpias, an organisation described as a right-wing pseudo-trade union, reported Gómez over the allegations.

These had been swirling around for weeks on right-wing news websites. Manos Limpias, which has made successful accusations against public figures in the past including the sister of

King Felipe, qualified its accusations against the PM's wife on Thursday, saying they were based on the press reports and it was up to the judge to prove them right or wrong.

In his letter, Sánchez said his wife was taking legal action against "false" claims. He accused Spain's right wing political groups of a strategy designed to "harass" and "bring down" the couple that has been going on for months. He added that he was "deeply in love" with his wife who had to live with "mud being slung at her day after day".

Reaction

Spain now waits to see what Sánchez will decide over the weekend and announce on Monday.

Reaction to Sánchez's letter, which reports said was a personal initiative that few close to him had advance warning of, has divided along party political lines.

High-profile members of the PM's PSOE party queued up on Thursday to offer support and urge him not to stand down.

Deputy PM and finance minister María Jesús Montero criticised "the campaign to undermine, delegitimise and dehumanise the PM has had to suffer personally since taking up office".

The head of public prosecutions, a government appointee, called on the investigating court to dismiss the case against Gómez.

Meanwhile politicians on the right said Sánchez had made an antidemocratic move to generate public sympathy. Leader of the opposition Partido Popular, Albert Núñez Feijóo, called Sánchez's action a "teenage show", adding that the PM "could not govern on compassion".



Sánchez with Gómez in a file photo on a visit to the Vatican City. REUTERS



Imanol Pradales celebrates his victory on Sunday evening. EFE

PNV wins Basque vote in spite of left-wing EH Bildu surge

LOURDES PÉREZ / SUR

BILBAO. Separatist left-wing party EH Bildu won 27 seats (32.5% of the vote) in the Basque Country's regional election last Sunday. It was a record result for the political group associated with historic ETA convicted terrorists, however it was still not enough.

The PNV centre-right Basque nationalist party also won 27 seats but with a slightly higher share of the vote. This means

that the party, under candidate for regional president Imanol Pradales, is expected to repeat its coalition government with the PSE Basque Socialist party.

The results from 21 April, where the left-wing coalition won six more seats than in 2020, confirms that EH Bildu - headed by Arnaldo Otegi - has emerged as a possible strong alternative to the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) in the future.

Catalan election campaign starts today with Socialists leading the polls

SUR

BARCELONA. Campaigning for the Catalan regional election starts officially today (April 26).

The vote is on Sunday, 12 May. The regional president, Pere Aragonès, of left-wing republicans ERC, called the vote early after failing to get his 2024 budget past Catalan MPs. The Catalan Socialist party under Salvador Illa are favourites in opinion polls with ERC currently expected to slip to third place in number of seats, just behind separatist party Junts, lead by self-exiled Carles Puigdemont.

THE EURO ZONE
MARK NAYLER

Out of control



Spain's anti-tourism movements gained momentum last week, staging large protests in the Canary Islands and Malaga. Their participants resent having their home cities overrun, year-round, by visitors, and for being priced out of local housing markets by holiday rentals. Both in the Canaries and along the Costa del Sol, the annual influx of tourists outnumbers the resident

population by around ten million people.

Actually I was wrong, in the preceding paragraph, to refer to the organisations that arranged last week's protests as being 'anti-tourism'. What locals here and in the Canaries want is some way of controlling the extent to which their resources and lives are affected by mass tourism. Similarly, political parties that campaign for restrictions on

migration flows aren't 'anti-immigration' - a label that seems to imply that a country's borders should be permanently unmonitored.

Any government that tries to address these concerns faces a tricky problem: namely, how to effectively control tourism without sending an off-putting message to potential visitors, thus prompting them to spend their money elsewhere. Other European countries provide ideas on how to try and do this - and how not to do it.

Amsterdam, for example, is trying to shed its reputation as a playground for tourists seeking oblivion through sex, drugs and booze. Its discouragement campaign is aimed specifically at British men aged 18-35

looking for a 'vacation from morals', as the city's mayor rather sternly put it.

You can understand residents not wanting to see tourists urinating, brawling and vomiting in public, of course; but what about British men aged 18-35 who treat the local environment and residents with respect? Why shouldn't they - or indeed anyone else - enjoy a 'vacation from morals' in the Dutch capital, if it harms nobody? Hedonism, a desire to cut free from usual restraints, is one of the motivations for any trip abroad. Cruise liners are now also banned from docking in Amsterdam; surely that would be a step too far in Malaga, which is home to one of the most important ports in the Mediterranean?

Slapping fines on visitors who commit pseudo-offences is also mistaken. It conveys a fussy, patronising message, much like all those Covid 'safety' regulations did. In Rome you can be fined 250 euros for sitting on the Spanish Steps, while on one beach in Venice fiscal penalties are imposed on anyone subversive enough to build a sandcastle.

Perhaps the best idea is some kind of tourist tax - but how much? Too little and it won't make a difference, too much and it will unfairly punish budget travellers. A moment's consideration of this problem reveals that it is much easier to attend a protest in favour of controlling tourism than to control it in practice.



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LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR

Animal abandonment

In a feature on animal abandonment in last week's SUR in English, it was with incredulity that I read the comments of the president of the Andalusian Hunting Federation. Trump, in his prime, is the only president in my living memory that could match him for lies and half truths. Just a few of his fairy stories: the hunter owners do not abuse their dogs. I am the owner of two ex-hunting galgos, beautiful dogs. One wouldn't come near me for a week and the other after eighteen months of loving care is still afraid of men. Señor Mancheno states that should abuse occur then the full weight of the law should be applied. Hasn't he noticed that the government excluded protection for hunting dogs under its Animal Welfare Law? Hasn't he heard of the long held custom that the more painful and lingering death the hunter inflicts on his unwanted dogs the better luck he will have in the next season? Hence dogs tied to or hung from trees to starve to death, quite kind when compared to other methods. The overall article promoted sterilisation to combat the large number of abandonment and I totally agree, however the first on my list wouldn't be a dog.

GEORGE HEADEN

A bad start to our holiday

Arriving in Malaga Airport from London on the 17 April I had 40 minutes queuing for EU immigration (only one person checking) and my wife, as a UK passport holder, had over 90 minutes (two police checking); none of the

new automated E-gates were in use. We are both over 76 years old and thank God we had a suitcase to sit on. How can the airport authority not have more police on duty? Having an experience like this at the start of our holiday is not good for tourism if nothing is done.

GIOVANNI TANTILLO

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Flat chance

This week I've embarked on an epic journey to hunt down a pink unicorn dressed in a purple tutu and sporting a fetching trilby on its bonce.

Actually, I've begun looking for a reasonably priced apartment to rent in the centre of Malaga, but it's tantamount to the same thing - in both cases the chances of success are infinitesimal, although the possibility of discovering the unicorn probably just edges it.

Only yesterday I called a number I'd been given to enquire about a one-bedroom flat that was rumoured to be available.

"Good afternoon. I'm calling about the small apartment I'm told you have to rent in the centre of town."

"Yes, yes - we do have one that's currently free."

"How much is the rent?"

"900 euros per month."

"Sorry, I think there's some-

thing wrong with the line. I thought you just said 900 euros per month. Tee-hee. Imagine that. Tee-hee."

"I did."

"Dear Lord above. Thank you. Goodbye."

It's well documented that vast swathes of the city's accommodation are now dedicated to tourism rentals and the few apartments that remain for long term let are so scarce, the owners feel at liberty to ask for outrageously high rents seemingly chosen at whim.

On the one hand, it can be argued that it's simply a question of market forces and that there are people who are prepared to pay such prices. On the other hand, those people are rarely, if ever, from Malaga and certainly aren't locals earning a humble wage in a supermarket or bar. Thus, most of the workforce that binds Malaga city centre together find them-

selves living a good distance from town and spending a fair proportion of their wage on transport to and from their home. It seems a bit unfair.

Of course, this isn't a problem which affects only Malaga - many other cities are faced with the same conundrum: how to enjoy the economic fruits of a tourism boom without disenfranchising the locals. As far as I'm aware, nobody yet has found a satisfactory answer.

In the end, I'll probably end up moving out of town and commuting too which wouldn't be the greatest hardship in the world but would be something of an unwelcome inconvenience.

Anyway, must dash - I need to call a number I've been given. It's being whispered around town that it corresponds to a reasonably priced flat. Or was it a unicorn? I can't honestly remember - it all gets a bit confusing...

IDÍGORAS



SUR in English

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Parallel universes

The other week I was at a "soirée" attended mainly by the foreign community on the Costa del Sol. These kinds of events always fascinate me as they give me an opportunity to people watch and delve into a parallel reality.

At the top of the food chain were the Swedish, the majority, next came the Dutch, further down the pecking order, and then the assorted other English-speakers; an assorted menagerie of races who, depending on where they were from, considered themselves to be superior to other nationalities. And then finally the Spanish.... ostracised in a corner where they were either expected to talk amongst themselves

or occasionally forced to speak in English and bring the colourful, local element to the party.

I knew I was in Spain because I had used Google Maps to find the venue, but apart from that there was no further reference to the country. Spain's influence was lacking from the opening time, the food, the drink, the clothes and the people there. In the conversation, Spain was alluded to as some kind of unreachable mythical deity; however its people, the Spanish, when mentioned, were definitely not considered part of the crowd and relegated to a stereotype, a caricature or a gross generalisation.

The general supposition that every-

body has to speak English (in Spain) is also disconcerting and the belief (prejudice) that a person's IQ is based on how well they speak that language is patronising. At least the Swedish and the Dutch were speaking another language, why were the native English-speakers, who usually didn't speak a word of any other language, so smug? Finally, I also found it tremendously rude that nobody actually made any attempt to speak in Spanish or enquired whether any of the Spanish could or wanted to speak English in their own country.

When you ask the Spanish about the "foreigners" and the way they behave, you usually get a roll of eyes, a smirk and an Obelix-style "están locos, estos guiris". Thankfully, they usually take the whole lack of speaking Spanish and integrating into the local lifestyle light-heartedly.

A neighbour recently had a visit at her home from a clerk from the local law court,

trying to get her to sign some documents. The story was recounted as a "strange" Spanish man who appeared at her door. According to her, his English was quite good, however he wasn't able to explain to her satisfaction the intricacies of the paperwork and, of course, she refused to sign the documents because they were all in Spanish. This story was told to me without an iota of irony or realisation that legal documents are in Spanish in Spain and that the "strange" Spanish man, who came to her door, was under no obligation to speak to her in English.

We really are so fortunate to be living in such a welcoming and accepting county as Spain. I doubt if a group of immigrants, who moved to a small town in Sweden, the Netherlands or the UK would be treated with the same level of care, consideration and humour as Spain treats its "guests", especially if they refused to have anything to do with the locals, their customs or their language.



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IN THE FRAME

'La vida loca' of a fairground worker is no easy ride

Culture. Grace McNabola has written a book about her and husband Gordon's madcap adventures on the 'ruta de ferias' in Andalucía

JENNIE RHODES



After selling their villa in Estepona where for five years they ran a B&B catering to golfers, Grace McNabola and her husband Gordon invested in two virtual reality pods with which they travelled around Andalucía's ferias.

As she says in her new book, *La Vida Loca: Memoir of a Crazy Andalusian Adventure*, which looks back at the couple's experiences, it was "not one of the paths suggested" to her by her school careers officer. As travelling fairground workers their lifestyle was itinerant and challenging: no easy ride, if you'll pardon the pun.

The book talks of bureaucracy, temperamental machines, tricksters and tackling the language of deepest, darkest Andalucía as they followed the 'ruta de ferias' from April to October. On the plus side though, Grace says that they became "part of a family" and "had an insight into a culture not usually seen by foreigners".

Grace, who is originally from St Albans, Hertfordshire and Gordon, from Edinburgh, had come to Spain in 2009 having run a small hotel in St Andrews which also catered to golfers. They wanted to "retire to the

sun" but knew they needed to carry on working for a while, so they bought the villa in Estepona and ran the B&B for five years. However, Grace admits that running a large villa was "getting expensive" and the golfing season is short - mainly spring and autumn - so they sold it in 2015.

The couple tried working for other people, but "found it hard" having been self-employed for many years. It was Gordon, a retired pilot, who hit upon the idea of buying a motion platform "like the type of simulator that pilots do part of their training on". Only Gordon thought it would be good to show people drone footage of hard-to-reach places and bring popular tourist destinations, such as the Tajo in Ronda to those who couldn't get there themselves.

They started looking around for the type of thing he had in mind but found that in Europe especially, they were impossibly expensive to purchase. Someone suggested looking in China, and in early 2016 two "giant dinosaur egg-shaped platforms" slowly made their way to Spain by boat.

All ready to go with their new equipment, the couple set themselves up near a shopping cen-



Gordon and Grace with other fairground workers in front of their virtual reality pods. **SUR**

tre in Estepona. People weren't quite sure what the dinosaur-egg-like things were and would walk on past, until one day some friends brought their two children to have a go and it was the father of the two little boys who suggested that Grace and Gordon try the local ferias. "So we made them mobile, started going to the ferias and that's how it all started," Grace explains.

Strange looks

The book's chapters reveal the challenges of Spanish bureaucracy, understanding the language, understanding the taxman (or not), queue and crowd control, the art of the ticket office and a long list of the madcap adventures of these two brave Brits.

The couple travelled around Andalucía going to local village ferias and large indoor ones in cities like Granada and Cadiz.

"Travelling around Andalucía as a fairground worker was not one of the options suggested to me by the careers officer at school"

Not speaking much Spanish and even less so the version spoken among 'feriantes' (fairground workers) they were in for a steep learning curve.

They would do 12 or 13 ferias a year, with the main season running from April to October. Grace says that they were the only non-Spanish people working at the ferias and admits that they received some strange looks at the beginning, but as the season went on, the years went by and they started to go

back to the same ferias, they "got to know other feriantes" and were eventually accepted "like family".

The couple have now retired, as have the machines, which currently live at the bottom of the garden at their home in Chiclana (Cadiz). Grace does say that they have "had requests from neighbours to open them up in the garden" and she says they "might get them running in summer, have a party and invite people round", but is quite certain that they "won't start charging people again like a business".

This is Grace's first published book and she says there are two more in the pipeline, one of which is based on her experience of being a hotel landlady in St Andrews.

The book can be found on Amazon.es

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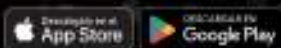
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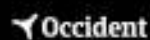
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One of the coast's newest bands, Midnight Hour, is returning to local live music venues with its show, *The Sound of The Commitments*, a performance based on the 1991 musical drama, *The Commitments*. The band recreates the music of this cult film, which focuses on a young music fanatic who assembles a group of working-class youths to form a band in the tradition of 1950s and 60s African-American recording artists. As with the box-office smash hit movie, which resulted in two soundtrack albums released by MCA Records, the band's show includes music by some of soul's most celebrated artistes, such as Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett and Otis Redding, to name a few.

The ten-piece band, which formed last summer, perform classic soul tracks like *Mustang Sally*, *In the Midnight Hour*, *Chain of Fools*, *Mr Pitiful* and *I Can't Stand the Rain*, among others. SUR in English caught up with Nik Prescott, the band's guitarist, prior to their two gigs at the Salón Varietés Theatre in Fuengirola next month.

Born in 1971, Nik studied jazz at the Leeds College of Music, although he grew up listening to rock bands like Metallica, Nirvana and Iron Maiden. The 53-year-old guitarist, who says he has had a "bizarre music career", came to live permanently on the coast in 2009, and began working as a sound and light technician at the Salón one year later. He has also worked as a music teacher at the British School in Marbella, where he was employed for three years.

Along with Andy, a local saxophonist, Nik helped find suitable members to form the band, which was no easy task considering they were trying to recreate the songs of one of the most exciting periods in modern music, and the voice of Andrew Strong, one of the most natural soul singers of his generation. Strong was only 16 years of age when he landed the role of Deco



Midnight Hour performing *The Sound of the Commitments* on the coast earlier this year. SUR

The iconic sound of Afro-American soul

Midnight Hour. *The Sound of The Commitments* is based on the cult movie that features hits by artists such as Aretha Franklin and Otis Redding

TONY BRYANT



Cuffe in the movie, for which he and the cast received a nomination for the Grammy Award for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals.

"We began talking about the project about a year ago. I pulled in some musicians that I know, and Andy brought in some of those that he knew. It took quite a while to get the lineup right, but eventually we put the core of the band together. We began rehearsals at the end of August, but because most of us are involved with other music projects, it was

a bloody nightmare getting everyone together at the same time," Nik says, bursting into laughter.

One of the most difficult roles was that of the vocalist, which was filled by Christian Wilkins, a non-professional singer from the UK who now lives on the coast.

"We began playing *Commitments*' songs and the show kind of evolved from there. We found three excellent female backing singers, then we came across Christian. He had not performed professionally before, but he had

"Anyone who comes to see the show can expect an energy-packed night of great entertainment and dancing"

CONCERTS

► **Fuengirola.** Salón Varietés Theatre. Friday 10 and Saturday 11 May. Show starts at 7.30pm both nights.

► **La Cala de Mijas.** The Cazbah Live Lounge. Friday 31 May. Show starts at 9.30 (doors open at 8pm). Tickets cost ten euros in advance and 12 euros on the night.

such a good vibe, and a great attitude, which made us want to work with him. Some of the people we tried may have been more established than Christian, but for us it was a no-brainer. We all get on and we click as a band, which is very important for a ten-piece," the guitarist says.

Nik, who describes the ensemble as "the hardest working band on the coast (a reference to the movie)", says that all the members "are in it for the music and not for the money",

"We all really enjoy performing this show. The reason the band has worked out so well is because we are very democratic. Anything that needs discussing is put to the vote, which is the only way to do things when dealing with ten different musicians," he explains.

Rave reviews

The band's previous shows have received rave reviews from audiences on the coast, many of whom comment on the quality of the music, and the professionalism of the band, which Nik says, "offers a great show that recreates the incredible sound of *The Commitments*".

"Anyone who comes to the show can expect an energy-packed night of great entertainment and dancing. It is a very visual show, and, of course, with all the iconic tracks, along with some classic soul greats," he concludes.

Tickets for the performances at the Salón Varietés, which start at 7.30pm each night, cost 20 euros and are available from the theatre's website, or from the box office Monday to Friday between 11am and 2.30pm. The band's previous performance at the theatre earlier this year sold out, and tickets for the upcoming shows are selling fast, so early reservations are advised.





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Celebrating a decade of art and cultural connections in the Axarquía

Lieuwke Loth decided to open Galería Luz de la Vida after a visit to a friend in Arenas and organising the town's first Art Walk in 2014

JENNIE RHODES

CÓMPETA. Cómpeeta has a long history of attracting artists and many have settled here, making it an international cultural melting pot. "The town is known for its attraction to artists, poets, writers and musicians, I think because the energy is special," says Lieuwke Loth, owner of Galería Luz de la Vida which this year is celebrating its tenth anniversary.

Lieuwke, who is originally from Holland, is organising special events at the gallery in May to celebrate the milestone. On Saturday 4 May from 11am to 5pm and Sunday 5 May from 1 to 5pm Lieuwke will be creating drawings with live music by Roberto Bellatalla on double bass and didgeridoo.

At 7pm on Saturday 4 May there will be a celebration toast with ta-

pas to mark the anniversary and on Sunday 5 May the gallery will be offering meditation, a sound bath and a concert by Neeltje Donkers and Roberto Bellatalla from 10.30am to 12pm.

The anniversary events continue on Sunday 19 May with live music by Eric Peachy on percussion, Roberto Bellatalla on double bass and Mark Hewins on guitar. Doors open at 4.45pm.

Lieuwke, 46, says that she decided to open a gallery in Cómpeeta when visiting a friend in nearby Arenas: "I just loved the experience here in Andalucía, the sun, the peaceful life, the inspiration, the nature, the sea, the friendly people, the easy flow. I felt my life could change so much if I dared to take the step to Costa del Sol."

Her first step to becoming a gallery owner was when she set up Cómpeeta Art Walk in 2014. However, she had no space to show her own art. She was offered a space for a month and was told that if she liked it, she could continue to rent it. "This made me start with the gallery," Lieuwke explains.

She went on to run the Art Walk



Lieuwke Loth outside Galería Luz de la Vida in Cómpeeta. SUR

for five more years and the last one she was behind took place in 2019. However, after the pandemic she handed the reigns to other artists in the town who have taken over.

Lieuwke also set up the International Art Symposia Luz to which she would have between 10 to 12 artists coming from all over the world for just over a week to "create their own art work and gain in-

spiration from others". The event would culminate in an art exhibition "with the gallery full of oil paint smells and the artist group as one tribe", Lieuwke recalls.

The pandemic changed a lot for Lieuwke and with the uncertainty of how long the gallery would be closed to the public for, she had time "for contemplation". After some trial and error, she eventu-

ally decided to give the gallery "new life" and invest her energy, talents and skills "to make it a special place again". She has kept the name of the gallery, 'Luz de la Vida' (light of life) as she says "it's still a place where the light has an important role".

As well as an art space, the gallery has been Lieuwke's office and the place where volunteers got together to plan the Art Walks and Symposia. "All posters and flyers have been distributed from here, interviews have been given from here, and from here many collaborations started. With each art event we've had great exhibitions in the gallery as well."

In 2023 Lieuwke set up Cómpeeta Cultural Hub along with a team of people, bringing together local businesses, residents, artists, B&Bs, hotels, the tourist office and the town hall. "People who are interested in art and culture can receive information about what's happening in the cultural field, but can then also support projects and events," explains Lieuwke.

The gallery owner is "thankful" to all the people who have helped organise the various events she has been involved in and "grateful for the support and help I have received to be able to continue with the gallery", which she hopes to do for the next 10 years.

Further information :

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D. ANDREWS

Coraxalia choir offers international concert in iconic Nerja square

Axarquía-based Coraxalia Choir delighted both locals and tourists recently with an open-air concert in Nerja's Plaza de España. Directed by Celia Varo Aragón, the international choir gave a recital of well-known popular and classical songs in English and Spanish in the concert sponsored by De Cotta Law. Coraxalia perform in the provinces of Malaga and Granada and raise funds for the Buen Samaritano charity at their Christmas concert in the San Miguel Church in Nerja.

Marbella history lesson for international media members

SUR IN ENGLISH

MALAGA. How Marbella has developed as a tourist destination over the years was the theme of an evening organised by the Costa Press Club on Monday. President of the Costa del Sol Hoteliers' Association (Aehcos) and CEO of Fuerte Hotels José Luque illustrated these changes through the history of Hotel El Fuerte, which was established after his father, a former chocolate factory owner from Estepa, bought

the site in 1954. When he died, his widow successfully adapted from being a housewife to running a hotel while their five children completed their studies. All then joined the business.

After a tour of the hotel, club members moved on to another recently upgraded establishment, Öbal Urban Hotel, which was formerly known as the San Cristóbal. Owned by the Parra family, this hotel has been an iconic part of Marbella life for many decades.



José Luque (c), Louise Cook-Edwards and Neil Hesketh. K. SMALLMAN

DENISE BUSH



GARDENING

Calpurnia aurea

Calpurnia aurea is a multi-stemmed shrub or small evergreen tree with open canopy and graceful arching branches.

Its common name is wild laburnum, and it does look similar to laburnum, with compound leaves made up of up to fifteen leaflets and dangling racemes of yellow flowers.

The genus Calpurnia has around 16 species, half of which are native to southern Africa. Calpurnia aurea is the most prolific of all of them and is found growing in forest or on its margins, in clearings and on hillsides.

A member of the Fabaceae (legume) family, the typical pea-like flowers are a sunny yellow and form on loose racemes that hang gracefully.

It flowers best after rain although sporadic flowering will take place all-year-round. It is drought resistant once established but will benefit from regular watering during the hottest



Calpurnia aurea. WIKIMEDIA

months. It can be grown in full sun or partial shade but will flower best in full sun. It will cease flowering during periods of extreme heat but resume again as soon as the temperatures drop.

The fruits are long, thin pods up to 12cm long and containing around eight seeds. The pods turn brown and papery when ripe and are easy to propagate.

The wild laburnum is named after the Roman poet Calpurnius who is said to have styled himself on the poet Virgil. Since another genus, Virgilia is named after Virgil and is very similar to

Calpurnia, it was decided to name the tree after Virgil's imitator. The specific epithet 'aurea' is Latin for 'golden'.

In various regions of southern Africa, Calpurnia aurea is used medicinally to treat a range of illnesses from lice infestations to stomach complaints and maggot removal. The Zulu word for this plant (umkhipham-pethu) means just that, maggot extractor.

Calpurnia is a fast grower but keeps a relatively slender profile so is ideal for patios and can also be grown in containers.

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 they are out and about. Why not share them with others?

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JAVIER MÁRQUEZ

It may seem that equestrian tourism has always been around. There is no rural destination we might go to where we do not find a company offering 'horseback riding routes through...'. However, that is like saying that taking a walk in front of the façade of several museums is cultural tourism. In other words, equestrian tourism is not 'just' horseback riding. In recent years, companies across Spain are taking seriously the development of this type of tourism that allows you to enjoy getting to know regions of great natural beauty and historical value accompanied by one of the noblest and most interesting animals.

In addition, experts agree that horse riding has both physical and psychological benefits. It improves balance, neuromotor coordination and body posture for example, as well as strengthening the body's musculature. It helps to reinforce self-esteem and individual confidence, improves attention, concentration and self-control, in addition to raising awareness of respect for animals and nature.

In the Parque Nacional de Guadarrama in Madrid, the Club Deportivo Jarahonda (rutasacabalomadrid.es) has been offering a wide range of equestrian proposals for all ages and levels of difficulty for more than a decade. Just 45 kilometres from Madrid, this group of horse riding enthusiasts, which ended up becoming a club in 2010, offers everything necessary for those who want to enjoy an unforgettable day or even for those who decide to take it more seriously and train to become more proficient.

Thanks to its wonderful surroundings, immersed in the mountains but close to cultural sites such as San Lorenzo de El Escorial or Segovia, the club's experienced equestrian tourism professionals ensure that the route is both interesting and safe.

The club is not an equestrian centre, it does not have stables, dressage arenas or any other type of facilities; it is a group of enthusiasts who have sporting experience, having participated with great success in competitions of different equestrian disciplines.

From two hours

The club's proposals are divided into both short and long routes. The former range from two hours, for beginners, to six or seven hours, which require a medium or high level. The long routes take at least two days on the trail and are the most attractive if you want to enjoy a truly immersive experience



Exploring the Sierra de Guadarrama on horseback. CLUB DEPORTIVO JARAHONDA

Sightseeing... on the trot

Madrid. Ride through idyllic landscapes, discover old castles and even enjoy the stars. Equestrian tourism in the Sierra de Guadarrama is not lacking in charm



Rides on horseback. CLUB DEPORTIVO JARAHONDA



Horse riding is an enjoyable way to see the countryside.

Wonderful surroundings of great natural beauty and historical value can be experienced on horseback

rience in a natural setting.

An example of this type of route is the Puerto de la Fuenfría, which leaves Navacerrada in the direction of Valsain (Segovia), crossing the aforementioned pass in the middle of the Parque Nacional de Guadarrama. The Puerto de la Fuenfría is a mountain pass that crosses the mountain range joining the provinces of Segovia and Madrid. It has an altitude of 1,796 metres and it crosses the Roman road, the so-called 'carretera de la República', the forest track of La Calle Alta and trails that ascend to nearby mountains.

The main path follows the aforementioned 'carretera de la República', also called 'carretera Puricelli', originally used by the Spanish kings to travel from Madrid to Segovia and restored during the Second Spanish Republic (between 1931 and 1939) to create a route between the two cities. Ernest Hemingway quotes it in his classic 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'.

The journey continues to Valsain, where King Felipe II built the palace known as the Casa del Bosque on the foundations of an old hunting lodge. The night is spent there before returning the following morning.

The long routes on offer do not all run through the mountains of Madrid. They are other equestrian tourism routes through the Reserva Natural de Saja (Cantabria), Los Montes Universales (Sierra de Albarracín) and the route that follows the steps of Emperor Carlos V on his journey to the Monasterio de Yuste, where he spent the last years of his life, and which begins in the town of Barco de Ávila (in the Sierra de Gredos).

Equestrian astrology

But if history is not our forte, horses can also accompany us in another type of equally exciting and even more original experience. This is the case of equestrian astrology. In the Sierra de Guadarrama, several equestrian centres (such as hipicapradosmonteros.com or losciruelos.es) offer the possibility of nighttime riding routes to reach ideal places for observing the celestial vault.

These experiences include a fun dinner under the stars, as well as guides who help both in dealing with the horses and in the observation and identification of the stars overhead.

THE STORY BEHIND A PLACE NAME

San Roque
'Well beloved' town
loyal to King Felipe V

The area was first settled in prehistoric times, but San Roque was founded in 1704 by Gibraltarians during the War of the Spanish Succession

(Cadiz) is only a little more than 300 years old, as the town was created by Gibraltarians fleeing the Rock during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714).

Situated in the district of Campo de Gibraltar, the area around San Roque has been settled since the prehistoric period, as the remains of the Phoenician trade post, Carteia, demonstrate. The area around Carteia was rich in cereals, fruits, lead, iron, copper and silver, and it was also popular for dyes, especially imperial purple, which was made from rock snails.

Carteia was rediscovered by a British Army officer in the early 18th century, who noted



The modern port of Sotogrande in San Roque (Cadiz). SUR

it was located on a hill known as El Rocadillo; this was repeated by English writer Richard Ford in his book, A Handbook for Travellers in Spain.

The settlement was taken by the Romans in 206BC and was named Colonia Libertinorum Carteia. It was occupied briefly by the Visigoths, while in the early 8th century, it became the beachhead of the invasion of Tariq ibn Ziyad's troops.

The town was retaken by Christian forces in the 14th century, although its current name was not registered until the 18th century. The town was named after the patron saint of dogs, invalids, falsely accused people and bachelors, among other things, and his shrine dates back to 1508, which predates the foundation of the town.

The first settlers from Gibraltar arrived in the area of San

LANGUAGE
FOOTNOTE

Sucesión	Succession
Guerra	War
Huir	To flee
Comarca	District
Gibraltaíneo	Gibraltarian
Fruta	Fruit
Hierro	Iron
Plomo	Lead
Cobre	Copper
Plata	Silver
Tinte	Dye
Exiliado	Exile
Púrpura	Purple
Ejército	Army
Colina	Hill
Soltero	Bachelor
Leal	Loyal

Bilingual crossword inside back page



TONY BRYANT

Unlike most place names in Andalucía, the name of San Roque

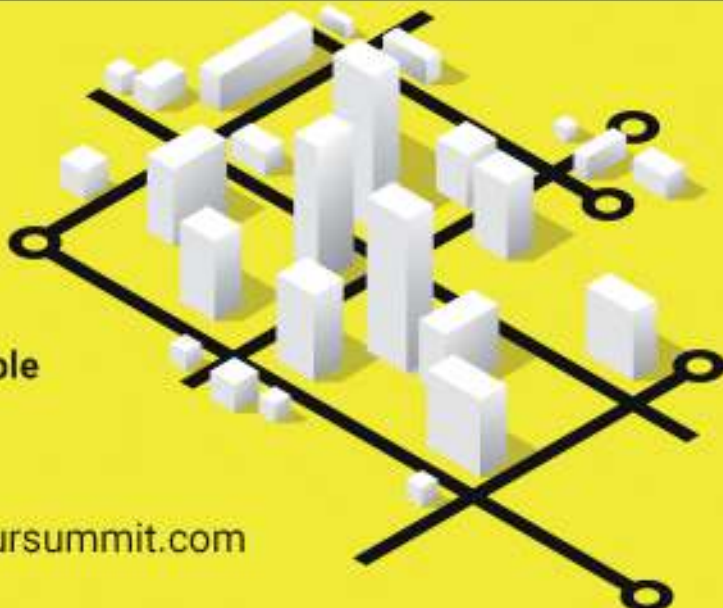
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EXHIBITIONS

Museo Ralli

MARBELLA. *Urb Coral Beach, Río Verde.*
The Ralli Museum of Marbella collection contains works of contemporary art of mostly Latin American and European origin. Permanent exhibitions: Surrealisms. From Giorgio de Chirico to Francis Bacon; Contemporary art in Oaxaca. Vanguard, Myth and Tradition; Figurative art in Contemporary Latin America. Temporary exhibition: American Abstraction. Carlos Mérida. Free entry. www.museoralli.es

Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo
MARBELLA. *Until 30 April. C/Hospital Bazán.*
The museum is exhibiting 30 works by selected artists which demonstrate many different techniques including marbling and using recycled materials as canvases. www.mgec.es

Ramón Muñoz
MARBELLA. *Until 12 May. Galería Yusto Giner, C/Madera.*
A Soga y Tizón is the title of this exhibition by Ramón Muñoz.

Museo Picasso Málaga - MPM
MALAGA. *Calle San Agustín.*
María Blanchard. *From 30 April until 29 September.* This new exhibition presents a chronological record of the different creative stages of the life of Spanish artist María Blanchard christened the 'dame of Cubism'.
Pablo Picasso: Estructuras de la Invención. La Unidad de una Obra. *Until spring 2027.* The new permanent exhibition at the MPM is a remodelling of the 140 works in the collection. www.museopicassomalaga.org.

Museo Picasso Casa Natal
MALAGA. *Plaza de la Merced.*
La Imagen de Picasso. *Until 28 April.* To mark the fiftieth anniversary of Picasso's death, the Casa Natal is holding an exhibition which marks the various stages in his life. It includes paintings,

drawings, ceramics and sculpture as well as photography.

Illustrated codices
MALAGA. *Until 18 May. Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de Málaga.*
The exhibition, which celebrates the art of illustrated manuscripts includes ancient texts, books, manuscripts all beautifully illustrated by hand. Many are conserved documents from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Free entry.

Museo Ruso
MALAGA. *Edificio Tabacalera, Avda Sor Teresa Prat.*
Images Cities. *Until 5 May.* A photograph exhibition by Russian photographer Anastasia Samoylova which includes not just photos of her birthplace (Moscow) but also of many other cities around the world.



Centre Pompidou Malaga
MALAGA. *The Cube, Muelle Uno.* <https://centrepompidou-malaga.eu/>
Carlos Cruz-Diez. *Until 29 September.* El Color en Movimiento is a selection of works by late Venezuelan artist Carlos Cruz-Diez who researched the scientific anomalies of colours, especially two main optical effects. Chromatic induction which corresponds to alterations in hue and clarity that the eye experiences when simultaneously viewing different colours and the "afterimage," which corresponds to the appearance of colours that occurs

Dutch community to paint the town orange for Koninginnedag

A party will be held in Torremolinos on Saturday in recognition of King Willem-Alexander's birthday

TONY BRYANT

TORREMOLINOS. The Dutch community of Torremolinos and others along the Costa del Sol will come together on Saturday 27 April to celebrate Koningsdag, or King's Day, the national holiday of the Netherlands.

Held in recognition of King Willem-Alexander's birthday, the event is organised by the cultural department of the town hall and the Voom Voom Club, and will include a street market offering Dutch handcraft products, such as ceramics, embroidered garments and handmade wooden clogs, among other things. There will also be food stalls with traditional Dutch cuisine, including the popular braadworst sausages, meatballs and herring, along with an array of artisan beers brewed in the Netherlands.

The event is held in Plaza Chiriva in La Carihuela between 1pm and 8pm, and



The Dutch enjoy last year's King's Day in Torremolinos A. PIOVESAN

visitors will also enjoy live performances by Dutch artistes, along with plenty of children's activities.

Hundreds of Dutch nationals, many wearing orange items or complete outfits in their country's colour, arrive from all along the coast and from inland towns to attend this event, the only one of its kind on the Costa.

According to the director of the Voom Voom Club, Bianca Meivogel, it is the only official Koningsdag party in Europe outside of the Netherlands.

The holiday was initially observed on 31 August 1885

as Prinsessedag, or Princess's Day, the fifth birthday of Princess Wilhelmina, then heir presumptive to the Dutch throne. It has since been held on the birthday of the reigning monarch.

Torremolinos has in excess of 700 registered Dutch nationals, which the town hall said has seen a growth of 20 per cent in the last 12 months.

It is for this reason that the council recently approved that one of the backstreets in the district of La Carihuela will be called the Kingdom of Holland.

after having viewed others .

CAC Málaga.
MALAGA. *Centro de Arte Contemporáneo. C/ Alemania.*
Günther Förg. *Until 26 May.* The Legacy of Modernism is the title of this exhibition that concentrates on the works by the late German minimalist artist, Günther Förg.
Theresa Chromati. *Until 2 June.* The

works of this American artist explore the traditional boundaries of painting through fragmented forms and abstract figuration through various layers of femininity using bright colours and vibrant textures.

Noé Martínez. *Until 28 April.* The audiovisual work Hasta Cuarenta Cuerpos Fueron Trocados Por un Animal de Carga by Mexican artist Noé Martínez, focuses on a deep investi-

gation of the legacies of his indigenous ancestors. He provides a moving symbolic representation of the exchange of people for animals in the 16th-century slave markets.

CAC La Coracha
MALAGA. *CAC Málaga - La Coracha.*
Saltamontes y Miel Silvestre. *Until 23 June.* Seville artist Javier Parilla reflects

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La Continua Idea de Enredarme en el Pelo. Until 23 June.

Artist Mar García Ranedo has created organic drawings using thin black lines of ink (hairs) that interact with the whiteness of the paper.

Revello de Toro y Sus Maestros

MÁLAGA. Until 28 April. *C/Afligidos.* A total of eleven works make up this temporary exhibition which demonstrates the artists who influenced the Malaga painter. They include Manuel Benedito, Federico Bermúdez Gil, Fernando Labrada, Enrique Martínez-Cubells, José Nogales Sevilla and Julio Moisés.

www.museorevellodetoro.malaga.eu

Ateneo

MÁLAGA. *Ateneo, C/Compañía, 2 Sara Sarabia.* Until 31 May. The exhibition *Inhóspita* has been created specifically for the Antesala del Ateneo de Málaga. It can be defined as the image of a place that does not offer the necessary conditions for human survival and includes photos and sculptures by the artist.

Marino Amaya

RONDA. Until 30 April. *Fundación Unicaja, C/Sor Ángela de la Cruz.* The Pastor Que Quiso Ser Un Sculptor (the priest who wanted to be a sculptor) is the title of this exhibition of works by Marino Amaya.



The Silver Beats, Da Bruno Marbella.

Ulla-Marie Lindström

RIOGORDO. Until 31 May, *Ethnographic Museum.*

Visual and media artist Ulla-Mari Lindström employs photography, moving images and natural materials as tools in her new exhibition, *Hybrid Herbarium*, which is on display at Riogordo's Ethnographic museum. www.ulla-mari.com

MUSIC AND DANCE

La Cochera Cabaret

MÁLAGA. *Avda de los Guindos.*

26 April, 10pm. Metalmania.

27 April, 10pm. Pedro Pastor.

28 April, 7pm. Jenny and the Mexicats.

30 April, 7.30pm. Inter-school party.

3 May, 10pm. Vancouver Band.

4 May, 9.30pm. Armenian and Like a Stone.

Tickets: www.lacocheraentra-

das.com/

Clarence Jazz Club

TORREMOLINOS. *C/Danza Invisible.*

26 April, 10pm. Jaume Miquel Trío

27 April, 10pm. Sense of Values Quartet.

30 April, 10pm. The Leaning-In Underground Feat. Paula Bilá .

1 May, 10pm. Blues Jam Session.

2 May, 10pm. Jazz Jam Session.

3 May, 10pm. Raspa García & The Electric Mood. Boogie-woogie, New Orleans.

4 May, 10pm. Alber Solo Blues Band.

8 May, 10pm. Blues Jam Session.

9 May, 10pm. Jazz Jam Session.

Ventana Abierta Jazz Club

NERJA. *C/ Granada, 3.*

3 May, 8pm. Rubén Lara and Daniel Andrades Trio, jazz and flamenco fusion. Call 690073871 or email: ventana.abierta.acp@gmail.com

Web: www.ventana-abierta.es

La Posada

MÁLAGA. *Vincci Posada del Patio, Pasillo de Sta Isabel.* 8.30pm every Friday.

26 April. Imane & Javier. www.tallerblues.es

Malaga Philharmonic Orchestra
MÁLAGA.

26 April, 7pm. Auditorio Edgar Neville. Mozart, Édouardo Lal, Béla Bartók and Camille Saint-Saëns.

2, 3 May, 8pm. Teatro Cervantes. Beethoven, Elgar, Carl Nielsen.

9, 10 May, 8pm. Teatro Cervantes. Paul Dukas, Francis Poulenc and Claude Debussy.

Brassarquía

TORREMOLINOS. *Molina de Inca Botanical Gardens.*

26 April, 7pm. Ensemble Vartanian, chamber orchestra.

Festival Bach-Marbella

MARBELLA. *Iglesia de Ntra. Sra de la Encarnación, Pl. de la Iglesia.*

26 April. Christian Bischof - Organist at the Parish Church of St Margaret in Munich (Germany).

Series of Jazz Concerts

MÁLAGA. *Sala Unicaja de Conciertos María Cristina.*

27 April, 8pm. Antonio Lizana and Tony Romero. Flamenco and contemporary jazz.

4 May, 8pm. Denise King and the Jon Urrutia Quintet. The golden era of

jazz.

11 May, 8pm. Bassist Gal Maestro and pianist Jose Carra play classical and traditional music.

Tickets: www.unientradas.es

Da Bruno

MARBELLA. *Da Bruno Sul Mare. Paseo Marítimo.*

1 May, 8.30pm. Silver Beats tribute to The Beatles.

To book a table call 95290 3318 or make a reservation online: www.dabruno.com/es-sul-mare

New Tricks band dates

VARIOUS.

New Tricks are a four-piece band playing rock, pop and Britpop covers from artists such as The Who, The Rolling Stones and Status Quo to Oasis, Blur and The Stereophonics.

27 April, 9pm. The Boma, Alhaurín el Grande.

www.facebook.com/newtricksspain
www.instagram.com/newtricksspain

DJ Honey Dijon

MARBELLA. *5 May, Mogli Marbella.*

Av. del Prado, 37, Nueva Andalucía. Honey Dijon, the American DJ, producer, and electronic musician has performed at clubs, festivals, galleries and fashion events all over the world and has produced for Beyoncé on her 2022 album *Renaissance*. The line-up for Babylon's Events' opening night includes Spegga, Mick Willow and Balsamo. Tickets: www.skiddle.com/e/38220723.

AGE CARE

Age Care needs new volunteers on the Costa del Sol and inland

AGE CARE. Costa del Sol. Over twenty years ago the charity Age Care Association was founded with the aim of helping those vulnerable, mainly-elderly, English-speaking residents living full time on the Costa del Sol. Its aim was, and is, to provide a social environment where the lonely can meet up regularly to talk and have some fun. Over the years this has developed into more than just a "coffee morning". Age Care now provides assistance in all manner of ways; from arranging doctors' appointments, to driving to hospital appointments and providing translators and translations of medical and social services reports. Age Care guides members through obtaining their Spanish residencias, help with sourcing care, whether in-house or finding a suitable home, and getting assistance through the local Spanish social services.

All of these services are made possible by the unpaid volunteers who

give their time freely to help their local community. It is fully funded by the Age Care charity shop in El Zoco in Calahonda, as well as generous donations. We hold an annual fashion show where the clothes, jewellery, shoes, hats and bags are modelled by the volunteer "girls and boys" to showcase the fantastic array of goods sold in the shop. These are later sold off at the end of the day.

Since its small beginnings, Age Care has developed into a large community of volunteers working mainly in the Calahonda - La Cala de Mijas area, but with branches in Coin, Alhaurín el Grande, and Fuengirola. The member numbers have now grown to nearly 400 with not just British and Irish, but also Dutch, Danish and German members who are English speaking. We are constantly growing because there is a constant need for the services we provide. It is surprising how many people are living on their own and how many of

our volunteers have joined following attending one of our regular coffee mornings.

Age Care works closely with local social services, in the areas where we have centres, to help obtain care and sometimes financial help for those in need.

Some time ago Age Care helped set up an Alzheimer and dementia charity. This is now an independent charity desperately needed as the number of affected families is growing fast.

One of the ambitions the original volunteers held was to open a day centre. Now, after twenty years, this has become a reality. The charity has been able to purchase a property in the El Chaperal area, one which will, over time, be able to be open all day, providing the activities which the members so love to participate in: Spanish lessons, yoga, painting, etc. Plans are afoot, once the day centre is completely up and running, to introduce new activities



such as photography, cookery classes and bridge. It is hoped that the centre will be able to open by the middle to end of May 2024.

Age Care is run solely by volunteers, these original volunteers are getting older (many the same age and in many cases older than members they look after!) as with all such charities Age Care needs new volunteers - younger, more active and able-bodied - who are able to take wheelchairs and "zimmer frames" in and out of car boots! We have a need for volunteer drivers in the areas of Coin, Monda and Cártama where we have a grow-

ing membership.

If, when reading this article, you feel you would like to join as a volunteer in any capacity, think you have skills that Age Care can use, or know of a friend or neighbour who might need our help, please get in touch.

Age Care

Helpline: +34 635 407 255

E-Mail: info@agecarecostadel-sol.com

Web: www.agecarecostadel-sol.com

Facebook: Age Care Costa del Sol

MUSIC AND DANCE

Marbella Arena
MARBELLA. Marbella Arena.
Zemfira. 28 April, 9pm. Russian rock singer Zemfira in concert.
Tickets: <https://marbellaarena.com>.

La Serranilla
ALMUÑECAR. 26 April, 7pm. Casa de la Cultura.
With the Irene La Serranilla flamenco company. Tickets: www.bravoentradas.es

THEATRE, BALLET AND OPERA

Salon Varietés
FUENGIROLA. 7.30pm daily, 7pm Sunday. The Salon Varietés Theatre, Calle Emancipation.
Heroes and Theatrical Digs: Until 28 April. An evening of comedy theatre with two one-act plays.
A Night at the Musicals: 1-5 May. A show that encompasses the greatest Broadway and the West End musicals. Box office: 952 474 542 or book online www.salonvarietes.com

An evening of Spanish Zarzuela
MALAGA. 4 May, 8pm. The English Cemetery, St George's Church.
An evening of Zarzuela with Elena Ramos (soprano) and Tania Moya (piano). Information/reservations: www.stgeorgesmalaga.com

LECTURES

The Arts Society

ESTEPONA. 30 April, 7pm. Centro Cultural Padre Manuel.
Picasso and Modern British Art. Lecturer Paul Chapman. Tickets cost 10 euros for members and 15 euros for guests.

Advice on electricity bills
TORRE DEL MAR. 10 May, 1pm. Lux Mundi Ecumenical Centre, Avda. Moscatel.
Energy Lab is giving a talk on the electricity market with advice on how to read an electricity bill, how to change to another company, your rights and the services provided with the best tariff according to your personal use.

CHARITY

ACE sale and open day
LA CALA DE MIJAS. 4 May, from 11am until 3pm. C/Patrice Lumumba 59, Ctra de La Cala a Entrerriós.
On sale will be second hand and nearly new clothes, jewellery, furniture, bric-a-brac, cakes, soft and alcoholic drinks and live music with singer Joe C. Entry fee is a bag of dog or cat food.

Dog walk for ADANA
ESTEPONA. 11 May, from 12pm. Avda de España boardwalk.
Camerata Sotogrande choir have found a new way to support ADANA (Association for the Rights of Abandoned Animals), they are organising a dog walk, from Avda de España, 1 to the port and back. Support Adana and buy a bandana for your dog (10€) and join the walk. A musical 'treat'



Adana dog walk, Estepona.

for participants after. Contact: sing@camaratasotogrande.org

Walking tours for Alzheimer's MIJAS.
Discover the history and secrets of Mijas Pueblo on a three-hour tour led by Alan Boardman. The route is easy with only one flight of steps which can be avoided. A minimum donation of 5€ is required with all the money going to charities. Dates in May: 3, 7, 13, 17. Book by Whatsapp: 610 522 605

FIESTAS AND FAIRS

Spring Fair and Livestock Market CÁRTAMA. Until 28 April.
Held in honour of the town's patron, Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, the Andalusian fair will be installed in the town's cultural auditorium while the day fair events will take place in Calle

Rey Juan Carlos I and Parque Santo Cristo.

Día del Perro
FUENGIROLA. Until 28 April, 10am.
Organised by the town hall, the day will begin at 10am in Plaza de España, where the residents of the town and their four-legged friends are invited to take part in a parade to the grounds of the Sohail Castle, where a variety of activities will be held.

Cívitats Yoga Festival
PUERTO BANÚS. Until 28 April. Cívitats Puerto Banús.
The II Festival Internacional de Yoga is expecting to surpass the 5,000 visitors it had last year, all who are eager to practise this ancient Indian discipline. Over the three days there will be yoga classes, guided meditation, workshops etc, in Spanish and English. www.puerto-banus.com/festival-internacional-de-yoga

Día de la Morcilla
CANILLAS DE ACEITUNO. 28 April.
Coinciding with the Fiesta celebrating the village's patron saint La Virgen de la Cabeza, there is an annual food festival which honours the local speciality, blood pudding.

Día de la Haba
VILLANUEVA DE LA CONCEPCIÓN. 28 April.
The harvest of the first broad beans is celebrated with many of the bars and restaurants making the vegetable the main ingredient in a variety of

dishes. There is also live music from verdiales (folk music) bands and a free sample of cooked broad beans at lunch tim in the Plaza de Andalucía.

Día del Esparrago
SIERRA DE YEGUAS. 28 April.
Stalls selling freshly picked spears of asparagus as well as other local produce, cooked meats, cheeses etc. There are also tastings and the bars and restaurants will be offering dishes made with this seasonal vegetable.

Benagalbón Cultural Week
BENAGALBÓN. From 26 April until 5 May.
A varied programme of events are planned for the Semana Cultural including workshops, conferences and talks (in Spanish); charity market, exhibitions and all genres of music (folk, pop, rock, flamenco...)

Feria Internacional de los Países
FUENGIROLA. From 1 until 5 May. The fairground.
Celebrating its 28th year, the gathering offers visitors the chance to immerse themselves in the traditions, culture, folklore and cuisine of more than 30 countries. These include the UK, Ireland, Brazil, Belgium, Greece, Spain and Morocco, among others, while the Republic of Lebanon will make its debut at this year's event.

MORE IDEAS

Eco-market

Benalmádena welcomes spring with colourful Hindu Holi festival

Around 600 people are expected to attend the celebration that aims to be a "blend of cultures" with colour, music, and Hindu cuisine

LORENA CÁDIZ

BENALMÁDENA. Sunday, 28 April, the Hindu community of Benalmádena will come together to celebrate one of their great traditions, Holi, a celebration in which Hindus, mainly from India and Nepal, commemorate the arrival of spring. They do so with an event that is already known worldwide for its use of colour. The event will take place around the temple located on Avenida Gandhi; there, six marquees and ten bars will be set up, expecting to attract around 600 people, not only Hindus but also locals and tourists, explained one of the organisers, Ravi Tharani. "We are a group of friends from the community who have taken on the organisation of the events we celebrate, a task that our parents used to do and



Participants at last year's Holi Festival. SUR

that has now passed on to us," he said. The entrance fee is 1.5 euros, and participants will be able to find both Hindu cuisine and music, as well as a zone for games and entertainment. All proceeds from the celebration will be donated towards the maintenance of the temple, which is funded by various donations received from community members and proceeds from events of this nature. Among other traditions, this festival is characterised by the importance of colour. All par-

ticipants can enjoy music, dance, and food while literally dyeing themselves with brightly coloured powders. A whole range of colours laden with symbolism. Holi represents a way to celebrate spring, to move from darkness to light, the triumph of good over evil, and hence the prominence of colours, which is also a means to eliminate social differences. In addition, each colour holds a meaning: red signifies love and marriage; blue, the god Krishna; and green, new beginnings.



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ALMUÑECAR. 28 April. Plaza de Marruecos.
The market will be held the last Sunday of every month and will consist of stalls selling ecological and sustainable products. There will also be a meditation workshop Finding Balance (in English) at 11am. At 12pm there is a workshop on reflexology (in Spanish).

Book Fair
VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Until 5 May. Plaza de Las Carmelitas.
Book stalls, children's activities, workshops and live music.

Lux Mundi
TORRE DEL MAR. Lux Mundi Ecu-
menical Centre, Avda Moscatel. 952
543 334, email: luxmundi@lux-
mundi.org.
Taize Prayer. 26 April, after mass at
the Parish Church of San Andrés,

Torre del Mar.
Trip to Gaucín. 14 May. Visit Gaucín
and Quesos Sierra Crestellina, Castillo
de Águila etc.

Stand-Up Comedy in English
CRUZ DE HUMILLADERO. 27, 28
April. 4, 11, 12, 18 May.
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Vitur Summit 2024
MÁLAGA. 8, 9 May. N H Málaga
Hotel.
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tions to establish business perspec-
tives, innovative content, and future
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congress, high-level speakers and
panelists will participate, offering

innovative content, multiple business
opportunities, and networking for
companies worldwide.
<https://www.vitursummit.com>

O. V. FILMS
SUR in English advises calling cine-
mas 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.
Dune Part 2: 12.50 (Sun).
The Fall Guy: 13.00 (Sun); 16.30 (Sat,
Sun); 19.05, 21.40 (Fri-Sun, Tues).
Challengers: 12.10 (Sun); 17.00
(Tues); 18.55 (Fri-Sun, Tues).
Civil War: 12.30 (Sun), 21.30 (Fri-Sun,
Tues).

Yelmo Cines, Rincón



RINCÓN DE LA VICTORIA. C/
Arroyo Totalán. Tel: 902220922.
The Fall Guy: 18.35 (Tues).
Challengers: 17.00 (Tues)

Yelmo Cines, Vialia
MÁLAGA. Centro Comercial Vialia.
Tel: 902220922
Civil War: 12.50 (Sun); 20-25 (Tues).
Dune Part 2: 12.35 (Sun).
The Fall Guy: 13.00 (Sun); 15.55 (Sat,
Sun); 20.30 (Sat-Tues).
Challengers: 17.00 (Tues), 18.20 (Fri-
Sun, Tues).

Cinesur Miramar
FUENGIROLA. Avda de la
Encarnación. Tel: 952198600.
The Fall Guy: 12.00, 17.00, 19.30,
22.00 (Sat, Sun); 17.15, 19.50,
22.20 (Fri, Tues); 18.00, 20.30 (Mon);
Civil War: 17.00 (Sat, Sun); 17.15,
19.30 (Fri, Mon, Tues),

Challengers: 19.15 (Sat, Sun); 19.25
(Fri, Mon, Tues).
Dicks: The Musical: 21.40 (Sat, Sun);
21.45 (Fri, Mon, Tues).
The Palace: 17.15 (Fri-Tues).
Kung Fu Panda 4: 11.45, 15.45 (Sat,
Sun); 17.15 (Fri, Tues).
Opera: Carmen: 19.45 (Wed).
Forest Gump: 20.00 (Tues).

Cinesur Ingenio
VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Avda Juan Carlos,
1. Tel: 667773187.
Challengers: 11.50, 17.15 (Sat, Sun);
17.40 (Fri, Mon, Tues).
The Fall Guy: 18.45 (Fri, Mon, Tues);
18.50 (Sat, Sun).
Civil War: 21.25 (Fri, Mon, Tues);
21.55 (Sat, Sun).
Opera: Carmen: 19.45 (Wed).
Forest Gump: 20.00 (Tues).

Cine Albéniz
MÁLAGA. C/ Alcazaba, 4. Tel:
902360295. www.cinealbeniz.com
One Life : 22.00 (Fri-Tues,Thurs).
La Chimera: 17.00, 19.30 (Fri-Tues,
Thurs).
Joan Baez: I Am A Noise: 21.00 (Fri-
Tues, Thurs).
The Chase: 18.30 (Mon).

Kinepolis La Cañada
MARBELLA. Crta Ojén. La Cañada
Centro Comercial.
Challengers: 12.05, 20.15 (Sun);
21.20 (Mon, Tues); 20.20 (Fri, Sat).
Ballet: Swan Lake: 16.15 (Sun).
The Fall Guy: 12.15 (Sun); 21.00
(Mon, Tues); 21.15 (Fri-Sun).
Civil War: 19.30 (Mon, Tues).

Nerja's foreign societies promoted at Residents' Day

The town's annual day for residents is taking place on Plaza de España on Sunday with 20 stalls and entertainment

JENNIE RHODES

NERJA. Nerja's Plaza de España is hosting the town's 22nd residents' day on Sunday. The event is an opportunity for the different clubs, organisations, companies and media outlets run by both Spanish and foreign residents to get together and promote their activities.

The event starts at 12 noon with a concert by Nerja's municipal band. This will be followed by violin and guitar with dancing by John Mitchell and Sofie Jonsson at 12.30pm, Chilean music at 1pm, magician Rich Marotta at 1.30pm, Narixa choir at 2pm, Ecuadorian music at 2.30pm and Klaus Liebetanz and Pablo Alcazar on flute and guitar at 3pm.

La Llama Viva will be pro-



Members of Nerja's 41 Club at last year's Residents' Day. J. RHODES

viding Latin American music at 3.30pm, traditional Irish music with Ciarán Ó Cuinnegáin on at 4pm and the Zumba Dance School at 4.30pm. The Master of Ceremony, in English and Spanish, is Dr Paula Anthony and the day will finish at around 5pm.

There will be more than 20 stands representing the town's various foreign asso-

ciations and groups and there will be a special tribute to an association of residents, although the recipient(s) will be revealed on Sunday during the day. The councillor just said that they are "an association of volunteers who do great work" in the town.

For further information visit: www.nerja.es.

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on 604 458 786. Or email karenagecare@gmail.com

Over fifty top chefs take part in event to raise funds for autistic children

Some 55 chefs from Michelin-starred restaurants took part in the seventh Chefs for Children initiative to raise funds for Autismo España

MARÍA ALBARRAL

BENAHAVÍS. The laughter of the 150 or so children from local schools and from Autismo España was matched by the smiles from the 55 chefs from Michelin-starred restaurants who gathered on Monday 22 April at the Anantara Villa Padierna Hotel in Benahavís to participate in the cooking workshops organised by the Chefs for Children charity project.

Fun and charity were the order of the day with activities to teach the importance of healthy

eating at a young age and to help the children who need it most.

"Being able to cook with all these children is a 'gift' and one of the really nice things that happen in this profession. You leave here much fuller, fatter and laughing and saying 'how fantastic'," described chef Ramón Freixa on the sensations that these top chefs feel in this initiative.

One of the new participants in this event is the television chef Alberto Chicote. "I am one of the latest additions to this great family. We have shared many experiences over the years and this is one of those that we are proud to be part of," said Chicote, who added that "it is not only having the opportunity to spend a day with our colleagues, to attend this call, in this case for Autismo España, but it is one of those moments that you always remember as having been

a pleasure to be part of".

Chefs for Children is a charity project that raises funds for Autismo España (Autism Spain), a group of more than 180 entities that provide services to autistic people and their families. During the event there were various workshops and it finished with a gala dinner where the assistants could share a table with these top Spanish chefs.

Autismo España

"Obviously, as a leading entity in autism in our country, we are the ones who have the ability to fight and achieve a fairer, more equitable and friendlier society for people with autism, but we know that we cannot do it alone, that we need the support of society, the support of the companies and the support of sectors such as the one we have here today, which is the hotel and catering sector. For us, the support



More than fifty chefs took part in the Chefs for Children event. JOSELE

of the public is essential," said the communication director of Autismo España, Amparo Rey.

This is the second consecutive year that Benahavís has hosted this event and the town's mayor, José Antonio Mena, pointed out that "we are delighted to support this type of initiative and we will continue to do so because we are proud of it".

Another of the hosts, the Ho-

tel Anantara Villa Padierna, made its facilities available to Chefs for Children for the occasion. "Anantara has a big heart. We are not a team here, we are a family and as such we are proud to be able to do our bit, in this case, for children with autism. It is really important to us," said the hotel's director, Jorge Manzur.

Pilar Candil, director of Lima Comunicación y Eventos, the agency that organised the pro-

TIPI TAPA RESTAURANT



The best meats in a unique setting, Tipi Tapa's distinctive feature

This restaurant in Fuengirola has a menu designed for fans of good food, and shows to entertain you during your meal

MÁLAGA

SUR. Specialists in grilled meats, Tipi Tapa Restaurant have been working with the best national and international cuts for more than 20 years to satisfy the tastes of the most discerning customers.



Their national meats include Galician IPG, Cádiz Retinta and Galician Ox, and their international meats include Sashi from Finland and Simmental from the Swiss Alps. "All of our pieces selected from the international market come with their identity card," explains Juan García, the restaurant's manager. Traceability always guarantees the best flavour and maximum quality.

There are also other dishes perfect for sharing during a chat and a laugh, such as Burgos black pudding with red wine reduction, cod in crispy black tempura, assorted croquettes or grilled vegetables from the Guadalhorce gardens, among many other options.

Those with a sweet tooth will enjoy desserts such as carame-

lised goat's cheese and almond crocanti, Tipi Tapa flan with caramel topping or brownie with vanilla ice cream.

All this in a pleasant setting and also with the chance to enjoy authentic flamenco shows on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 7.30 pm. The shows are performed by five top artists, with guitar, singing and dancing by Manuel Alcaide and his company, one of the most renowned on the Costa del Sol.

As García assures us, the most important thing for Tipi Tapa is to enjoy the trust and loyalty shown year after year by their customers, as, according to the manager, "this is the most valuable reward for a restaurant whose goal is the pursuit of excellence."



The chefs and the children during one of the workshops. JOSELE

ject, highlighted the importance of collaborating with this charity and gave as an example a case close to home.

“One of my best friends has a child with autism. I have seen how she had many questions and needed someone who could explain to her how she could treat her child and how they could improve his integration into society. That work is very important and we are here today to rein-

force it,” she said.

The Chefs for Children project culminated with the traditional gala dinner. The Malaga chefs prepared the menu for this special occasion. José Carlos García, Mario Cachinero, David Olivas, Mauricio Giovannini, Diego del Río, Benito Gómez, Dani Carnero and Diego Gallegos were in charge of surprising the diners.

The project also had a wide

range of sponsors including the Vocento group (publisher of SUR), the provincial authority through Sabor a Málaga, Porsche Marbella, Le Cordon Bleu Madrid and Fundación La Caixa, among others.

“This initiative is growing every day. As our motto says ‘eating healthy is fun’ and we will continue to educate and help children with this project,” concluded Candil.

Meadow wine

ANDREW J. LINN



What is Spain’s best wine?’ is a recurring topic when like-minded aficionados get together for a few ‘copas’. Very few will know that the most likely candidate’s name translates as ‘Sicilian meadow’ in English (referring to the original owner’s origin). But if the question refers to the most expensive, then there is no contest. Few names evoke the same veneration and aura as Vega Sicilia.

At prices that are out of the reach of ordinary mortals, it is a collector’s item which started off as a unique product that was rationed and only sold on allocation. From the Ribera del Duero region, it has ascended to legendary status, captivating oenophiles worldwide with its extraordinary qualities. Allegedly it was one of Winston Churchill’s favourite tipples, even though back then it was hard to find outside Spain.

The original vines were brought from France, and by merging the best of Bordeaux

techniques with the unique terroir of Ribera del Duero, this landmark wine was born. However, it was not until the 20th century, under the ownership of the group that also owns Codorniu cava, that it really took off. The basic grape variety is Tinto Fino, as it is known in this region but more usually referred to as Tempranillo, occasionally blended with a little Cabernet Sauvignon.

Happily, the original allocation system is powerless against today’s internet, and a brief search will reveal hundreds of offers of Vega Sicilia in its varied forms: Único Gran Reserva and Único Reserva Especial, the two principal products, along with the bodega’s lower-priced Valbuena and Alión range.

WINE OF THE WEEK

Alión: Vino Tinto Ribero del Duero
Probably the best value-for-money wine from the Vega Sicilia stable, though not particularly cheap. Made from the Cabernet Sauvignon grape. Twelve months in oak, and once tasted never forgotten. Around 120 euros for 2019 vintage from Carrefour online.



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Five exercises to avoid cognitive decline

Keeping active. Memory and other cognitive training can help recover and then maintain brain function, slow down cognitive decline and even spot any downturn a year ahead

SOLANGE
VÁZQUEZ

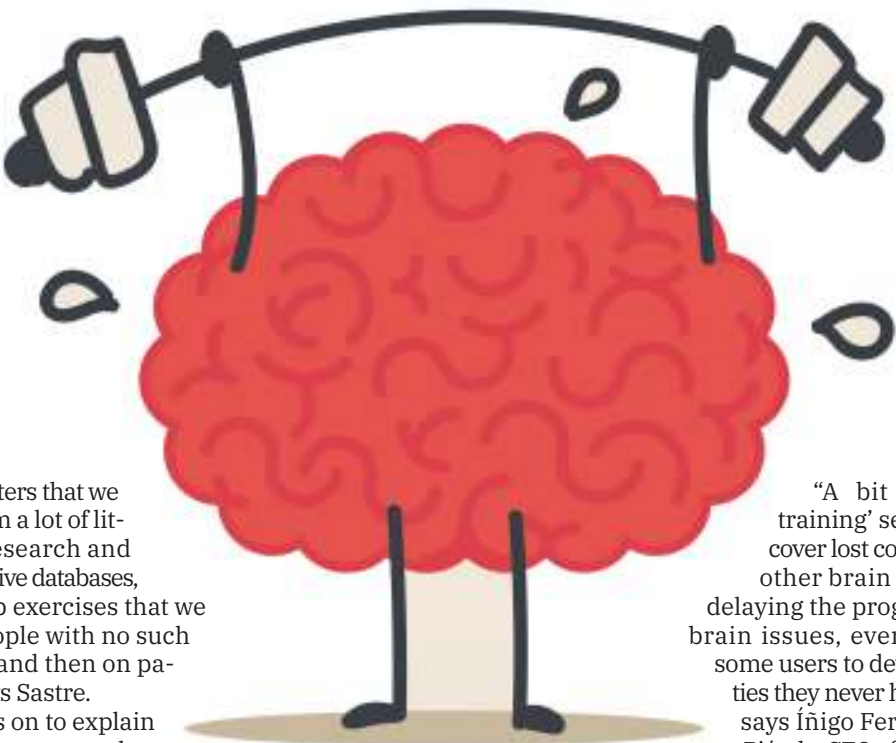
Let's just stop and think about this: don't we spend at least half our lives investing so much effort and energy into things – or people, feelings, problems – that are by no means the most important? Well, we do the same with our bodies. We take care of our skin, our hair, our weight, if we see that we are losing elasticity or mobility over the years we look for a remedy to keep what we have in the best possible condition... “But the brain, since it cannot be seen and does not embarrass us, we neglect it,” says the plain-speaking neuropsychologist Carolina Sastre. She works on the creation of

specific activities to train cognitive function on the NeuronUP platform, a tool that supplies exercises to hospitals, universities and associations in over 30 countries, helping those affected by different ailments and disorders of the brain. Her work consists of designing specific activities and exercises to improve different cognitive functions. Such exercises have to be tailored to the ailment as preparing material for multiple sclerosis patients is not the same as that for stroke patients or for people losing their memory or thinking speed due to age. “We break down what aspect we want to act on and, based

on parameters that we collect from a lot of literature, research and very extensive databases, we develop exercises that we test on people with no such problems and then on patients,” says Sastre. She goes on to explain that they try to ensure that these activities to get the brain in shape are related to real life. Also, that they are accessible to everyone so that the user's motivation does not decline, as sometimes happens with physical ac-

tivity. Although these exercises are designed for people with cognitive problems, Sastre makes the point that training the brain is always a good idea for everyone.

“A bit of ‘brain training’ serves to recover lost cognitive and other brain functions, delaying the progression of brain issues, even allowing some users to develop abilities they never had before,” says Íñigo Fernández de Piérola, CEO of NeuronUP, who is keen on the term “brain plasticity”. Yes, the brain can be trained and toned up, just like any muscle can. Furthermore, it is so malleable that, if the risk of cognitive decline



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is predicted a year in advance (something that is also uncovered by these exercises), you can take action to delay, or alleviate, the onset of diseases such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

To sum up, there are brain exercises for pretty much everything. Here are five simple exercises created by these experts to prevent cognitive decline:

1. Stay alert

Staying focused is the basis of any activity. If we are unable to pay attention to a task for the required time, we will never be able to finish it successfully. How to train for that? Simply by copying something. If we drift off, then we will make mistakes, we will skip things or it will take too long to finish, if we manage to finish at all. In older people with cognitive impairment, it has been shown that their capacity to maintain attention on a task is progressively reduced but, with the exercise of copying something (a sentence, an array of letters or paragraphs, depending on the case), they can improve.

2. Improve attention

In our daily lives it is key for us to be able to find one or more elements among a whole set of things (spotting a friend in a crowded bar, your child leaving school, your car in the car park, a spoon mixed up with several forks...). For this, selective attention is an essential attribute. It is affected when cognitive decline begins due to age or some disease. How to train this ability? With small matching games (paired cards, coloured chips...).

3. Speed up brain processing

A task that may seem as simple as waiting for luggage to appear on the airport carousel requires several simultaneous cognitive

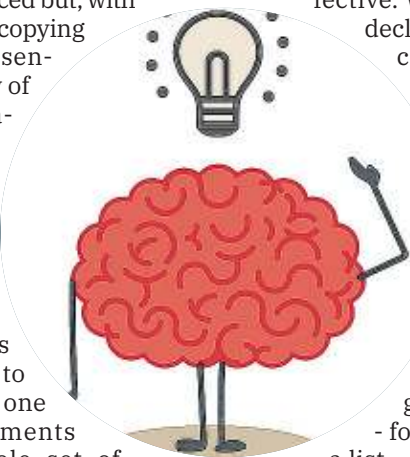
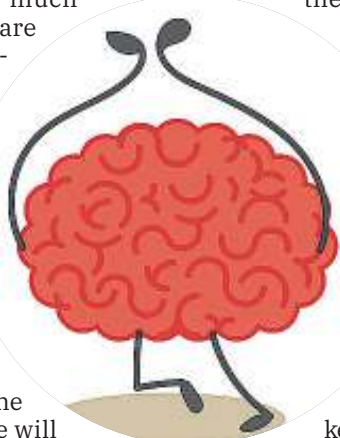
skills: sustained attention to look at each suitcase, selective attention to identify ours, and processing speed to make sure we pick it up in time as it's about to pass in front of us. The same thing can happen to us when queueing at the fishmonger's and they call our number, and so it goes on in other common situations. When there is cognitive impairment, however, a slowing down in general processing is usually observed. How to keep that in check? By taking advantage of these everyday situations to jog the brain.

4. Plan out that work

This is also a fundamental task in our daily lives. To do anything we have to organise the steps to achieve it. Better still if we optimise the ordering as this will help us be more efficient and effective. When cognitive decline starts, it becomes evident that that person's organisation of their routines and tasks is worsening. How to stop it? Put all activities in order, organised by steps - for example, with a list.

5. Shape up your memory

Doing calculations in our head should be a basic skill. Not only to calculate how much a purchase is costing us, but also for the amount of food we will have to buy, the space available in a room when buying a piece of furniture... All this is done thanks to working memory and it has been proven that, in cognitive impairment, all these mental calculations are seriously affected. How to work on this function? By giving ourselves problems with linked actions.



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New Costa project to further help those affected by dementia

Age Concern Fuengirola is seeking the participation of other charities to create a dementia alliance along the Costa del Sol

TONY BRYANT

FUENGIROLA. Age Concern Fuengirola/Mijas/Benalmádena is about to launch a new project to develop further help for people along the coast affected by Alzheimer's and dementia. The driver of the new project is the association's secretary, Michelle Greenwood, who hopes it will promote a dementia friendly community along the coast for the over-50s, English-speaking community. The programme aims to support the development of, and access to, creative workshops and dementia training, respite activities and a research library with accessible information, which the charity hopes will be achieved by creating a dementia alliance.

To do this, Greenwood is hoping to attract the support and participation of other charities and



A new project is being launched to help people with dementia. SUR

groups along the Costa del Sol and inland, because, as she points out, "other than the excellent work offered by the La Cala Lions support group", there is no English-language support further along the coast in towns like Fuengirola, Benalmádena and Torremolinos.

"I know there is a lot of work regarding dementia in La Cala de

Mijas. However, in other areas on the coast there is no support. There are absolutely loads of people in the Benalmádena area suffering from dementia. We get inquiries on a daily basis: you wouldn't believe the demand. A lot of these people need support but cannot get to the meetings in La Cala," the secretary told SUR in English.

The programme, which Greenwood said is "ready to roll", will offer a training course to volunteers of Age Concern and to those from other charities. Greenwood, a qualified trainer, is using a World Health Organization (WHO) designed course that has been used in the UK.

The new venture already has the support of the Jasmine Care home in Alhaurín de la Torre; and Greenwood and her supporters have also recruited a physiotherapist, a physiologist, nutritionist and a multidisciplinary team.

"I can see there are gaps in the service available here on the coast and I just want to be able to offer a little extra help to those who need it. We don't want to step on anyone's toes. We just want to take some of the good practice that they are doing and hopefully fill a few gaps that we have identified," she said.

Age Concern will hold an open day at St Andrew's church in Fuengirola on 22 May to highlight the project and to seek the support of other charities and organisations.

"We are holding the event to try to get as many groups and associations involved as possible. It's a collaboration meeting to learn about what each one is doing, and how we can maybe better the services that are already available. We need to learn what other groups offer," she said.

Charities come together to aid British resident found wandering the streets

T. BRYANT

MIJAS. Earlier this week, Age Concern was made aware of a case concerning an elderly British resident in Mijas who is in the late stages of dementia. The lady, who was found wandering the streets, was being looked after by neighbours, but her condition has deteriorated and she now needs professional help.

The charity is now arranging for her to be taken to the Jasmine Care home for one month, which will give it time to organise assistance from the Spanish health service.

"Our welfare team has been trying to resolve the situation, but the nice thing is that Age Concern, Age Care and the Mijas Lions have come together to donate funds to help this lady. This is a nice example of everyone working together. If we can continue like this in the future it will be fantastic," Michelle Greenwood said.



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Taker of world's most famous penalty replicates the magic in Fuengirola

Antonín Panenka repeated his famous dink down the middle during half time of a veterans' game in Los Boliches

NACHO CARMONA

FUENGIROLA. Antonín Panenka, famous for his legendary penalty kick dinked straight down the middle to win the 1976 European Championship final against West Germany, brought the magic of that moment to Los Boliches football field in Fuengirola on Saturday.

Panenka was a guest of honour for a match between Slovakian legends and the Spanish champions, the Fuengirola Veterans' Association (featuring former Malaga player Jesús Gámez and coach Antonio Tapia).

The legend, now 75, didn't participate in Slovakia's 4-2 win,



Panenka in a replica of the 1976 Czechoslovakia shirt and, inset, taking the penalty. N. C.



choosing to enjoy a coffee with some fellow legends on the sidelines instead.

However, during the half-time break, he took part in a penalty shootout where he recreated the iconic moment, sending the goalkeeper the wrong

way.

"If I was paid for every time I was asked about that penalty, I'd be a millionaire," he said.

He denied there was anything improvised about it: "I'd been practising it for two years so I knew it would work out fine.

"During my career I took 30 penalties like that and I only ever missed one."



The current squad wearing the new strip. SUR

Benalmádena Ladies Walking Football Club unveil new strip

SUR

BENALMÁDEN. In a bid to further bolster their ranks and continue their remarkable journey, Benalmádena Ladies Walking Football Club have unveiled a fresh kit and extended a warm invitation to new players.

The club, which sprang into existence in November 2020 under the stewardship of Cath John, emerged from humble beginnings. Initially formed for a charity match, the women's team quickly gained traction. Such was the success that the club officially took shape a few months later.

In the past year, the team clinched victory in the Cómputa Tournament and proudly repre-

sented Spain in walking football tournaments held in Morocco and France.

The unveiling of the new kit, sponsored by Specsavers Ópticas in Fuengirola, marks another milestone in the club's journey, signalling their readiness for upcoming endeavours, including a Portugal tour in May and a home tournament in November.

Now boasting a squad of 25 players alongside 15 social members, Benalmádena Ladies Walking Football Club is a beacon of inclusivity. With an open-door policy, the club welcomes newcomers regardless of experience.

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Wasteful Malaga forced to settle for third home draw in a row

The hosts, who finished the game with 10 men, had plenty of chances but were ultimately left clutching at straws and hoping for a late penalty

MALAGA	0
MURCIA	0

DARYL FINCH

MALAGA. Malaga's chances of a second-place finish received yet another blow on Sunday afternoon as Sergio Pellicer's side dropped two points at home for the third game on the bounce. A goalless draw at La Rosaleda against Real Murcia was perhaps not the outcome the hosts' attacking endeavour deserved. However, the visitors, who showed very little going forward, got exactly what they came for: a point against all odds thanks to a determined defensive display.

As you might expect, Malaga started the game on the front foot but nonetheless found Murcia hard to break down. Their first real chance came via Genaro's shot from long range which was held low by keeper Manu García. Víctor García, who had delivered a number of dangerous balls from the left until that point, then forced the keeper into an excellent reaction save to put his free-kick out for a corner.

The game continued in the same vein after the break, until Pellicer lost patience and made a triple change with half an hour left to play, bringing on winger David Ferreiro, midfielder Ramón and forward Dioni.

This sparked an increase in intensity and Kevin was left calling for a penalty after a coming together in the area, but the referee gave only a goal kick. Shortly after whistling an effort wide of the post, Ferreiro hit the crossbar with his second am-



Víctor García rues a missed chance during Sunday's game. NITO SALAS

bitious shot from outside the area. But despite several threatening attacks and set-piece opportunities, the home team couldn't find the net.

Controversy

After Víctor García's penalty appeal was also rejected, the home crowd went livid when Ferreiro

was sent off for a second yellow card when he clearly played the ball, leaving Malaga to see out the remaining 13 minutes with a numerical disadvantage.

This handed some momentum back to Murcia who did an excellent job in stifling the hosts and seeing out the game to claim the point they so desperately wanted.

Antequera secure mathematical safety with decisive away win

BORJA GUTIÉRREZ

MALAGA. Antequera secured another season in Spain's third tier on Sunday as a resounding 3-2 victory away in Algeciras made relegation mathematically impossible.

With just five games left to play, Antequera's win, combined with results elsewhere from the 33rd match day, propelled the Malaga side to 50 points (eighth place), establishing a comfortable 15-point cushion above the relegation places and a favourable goal

difference over San Fernando, currently in the drop zone.

Despite achieving safety, a remarkable feat considering their promotion just last season, Antequera remain ambitious and still have their sights set on securing a play-off spot for promotion to the Segunda.

However, this won't be easy: they currently trail fifth-placed Ceuta by six points and have a challenging run-in with games against high-flying Ibiza, Ceuta, Murcia, Malaga and Melilla left to play.

Vélez's relegation is confirmed with Rincón set to join them

JUAN RAMÓN PADILLA

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA. Vélez's terrible season reached its inevitable conclusion this weekend as the struggling side finally suffered relegation to Tercera RFEF.

The Axarquía-based club, which recently changed ownership amid severe financial difficulties, lost their battle against the drop on Sunday with a 1-0 defeat at home to league leaders Sevilla Atlético sealing their fate.

Despite their struggles, their fans, who have been supporting the players through charitable donations, applauded the young team off the pitch.

Elsewhere, Marbella (third) secured a 1-0 win against Yeclano to boost their promotion hopes, while neighbours Estepona (sixth) faced a setback in their play-off push with a 0-0 draw against Antoniano.

El Palo's hopes for survival, meanwhile, remain alive after a 1-0 win against Racing Cartagena,

with Juanma's goal keeping them just four points off the relegation play-off place.

Rincón facing the drop

In the division below, leaders Juventud de Torremolinos edged closer to automatic promotion after a hard-fought 3-0 victory over Huétor-Vega.

Torre del Mar (fifth) and Málaga City (13th), meanwhile, played out a goalless draw, with Torre del Mar unable to capitalise on their chances.

In another local derby, Atlético Malagueño (third) defeated Rincón (17th) 2-1, virtually sealing Rincón's relegation to the sixth tier.



A LOOK AT LA LIGA
ROB PALMER
Commentator, ESPN

Tebas sparks debate as Xavi commits to Barça

The lack of goal-line technology and Tebas reopening the debate on taking La Liga matches to America nearly overshadowed Xavi's decision



What is the biggest headline? Xavi stays? La Liga goes to America? Goal-line technology in Spain never existed? The title is sorted with six games to go?

It has been a busy old week in Spanish football. In normal circumstances, the inquest on the 'clásico' would dominate discussion - but that is far too mundane.

The biggest initial talking point was the 'ghost goal'. Barcelona thought they'd scored. Real disagreed. The linesman wasn't so sure and the ref was surrounded by players tapping imaginary watches.

It was obvious that Barça's players were unaware that their league hasn't invested in goal-line technology as they waited for a bleep from the wrist of the official.

In Spain they decided that it was an unwanted extra when they brought in VAR. It was reasoned that the multitude of cameras wouldn't find a decisive angle.

League president Javier Tebas cited a malfunction of the technology in a Sheffield United v Aston Villa Premier League game three years ago for not investing in the option. That was a one-off; this was the biggest and most decisive match in the Spanish season with a global audience. As the officials couldn't confirm the ball had fully crossed the line, no goal was given - and Tebas was unrelenting.

Señor Tebas created more debate when he reopened the case for taking Liga matches to America. For transparency, my main job is commentating on La Liga for the US and Canada on ESPN, so I know how popular the league is over there.

It isn't a new story. Tebas tried just over five years ago - but too many legal obstacles were placed in the way. Here in Spain it has created a minor stir in comparison to England where there was outrage. There are far more American owners in the Premier League who would like to monetise their "product". I guarantee you that they'll be secretly angry that Tebas appears to be a step ahead. I also guarantee that it is



Javier Tebas. AFP

at the top of the agenda in board meetings as they try to find a way to make it happen.

If they can take the Spanish Super Cup to Saudi, we can take the Community Shield to Miami", they'll say. It will be the cross-Atlantic race for the yankee dollar.

Normally, any news about a Barcelona coach would lead debates for a whole week. But this week, Xavi's decision to reverse his decision to leave in the summer has fought for space in the newspapers, radio phone-ins and podcasts.

I've touched on the reasons in previous columns: he was at his wits end when he offered his resignation with injuries, too much boardroom meddling and some poor decisions by Xavi himself.

Since January, he's almost been demob happy (apart from the weekly blasts at referees). He's managed his way and results have improved. There's no obvious replacement, nobody knows the incredible emerging talent better than Xavi, and next season they will be back in front of a renovated Camp Nou - and so it all makes sense.

Now, I've run out of space to talk about 'El Clásico'. Congratulations to Real Madrid for strolling La Liga. "Ya no hay Liga."

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Crime report	902102112

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Age Care	952933409
Age Concern (Estepona)	722606347

ANDALUSIAN HEALTH SERVICE

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(Doctors' appointments and advice)

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Taxi Service	952802900
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Town Hall	952801100
Foreign Residents Dept.	952809031

FUENGIROLA

Bus Station	952475066
Taxi Service	952471000
Tourist Office	952467625
Town Hall	952589300
Foreign Residents Dept.	952589440

MALAGA

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Railway Station	902240202
Taxi Service	952345693
Tourist Office	951926020

MARBELLA

Bus Station	955038665
Taxi Service	952774488
Tourist Office	952768760
Town Hall	952761100
Foreign Residents Dept.	952768760

MIJAS

Town Hall	952485900
Town Hall Las Lagunas	952473125
Taxi	952478288
Tourism Office	952589034
Foreign Resident Dept.	952589010

NERJA

Bus Station	902422242
Taxi Service	952520537
Tourist Information	952521531
Town Hall	952548400

Foreign Resident Dept.	952548401
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TORREMOLINOS

Bus Station	902143144
Taxi Service	952380600
Tourist Office	952371909
Town Hall	952379400
Foreign Residents Dept.	952374231

BENALMÁDENA

Bus Station	902450550
Taxi Service	952441545
Tourist Office	952442494
Town Hall	952374231
Foreign Residents Dept.	952442494

VÉLEZ-MÁLAGA

Bus Station	952503162
Taxi	952540016
Town Hall	952559100
Tourist Office	952541104

GIBRALTAR

General emergency	199/112(mobiles)
Fire/ambulance (emergency)	190
Tourist Office	(00350) 20074950
Taxi	(00350) 20070027

MALAGA PORT INFORMATION

CRUISE SHIP MOVEMENTS (SOURCE: MALAGA PORT AUTHORITY)

Ship	Date	From	Next port	Docks	Sails
Celebrity Ascent	25/04	Cadiz	Barcelona	08.00	18.00
La Belle Oceans	26-29/04	Tangier	Cartagena	06.00	13.00
Star Flyer	26/04	-	-	07.00	22.00
Star Clipper	26/04	-	-	07.00	22.00
MSC Orchestra	27/04	Marseille	Cadiz	08.00	19.00
Scenic Eclipse	27/04	Marbella	Cartagena	08.00	19.00
Hanseatic Nature	27/04	Ibiza	Casablanca	08.00	23.59
Silver Dawn	29/04	Valencia	Cadiz	08.00	23.00
Marella Voyager	29/04	Cadiz	Cartagena	12.00	21.00
Le Champlain	29-30/04	Cartagena	Marbella	13.00	01.00
Costa Diadema	30/04	Barcelona	Cadiz	08.00	19.00
Hebridian Sky	30/04-01/05	Cartagena	Tangier	13.00	21.30
Odyssey ot Seas	01/05	-	-	08.00	18.00
Laustral	02/05	Cadiz	Valetta	07.00	20.00
Oasis ot Seas	02/05	-	-	08.00	18.00
Scarlet Lady	02/05	Funchal	La Palma	09.00	22.00
Star Pride	04/05	-	-	07.00	16.00
Seadream II	04/05	Funchal	Cartagena	08.00	18.00
Costa Fascinosa	04/05	Savona	Funchal	14.00	20.00



CONSULATES

Austria	Alameda de Colón 26, Malaga	646060972
Belgium	Avda Ricardo Soriano 20-3C, Marbella	951516019
Canada	Plaza de La Malagueta, Edif. Horizonte, Malaga	952223346
Denmark	C/ Córdoba 6 404, Malaga	952211797
Finland	C/ Córdoba, 6, 4-401 Malaga	952212435
France	C/ Salvago, 2, Malaga	600751029
Germany	Mauricio Moro Pareto 2, Malaga	952363958
Great Britain	C/. Mauricio Moro Pareto 2- 2. Málaga	952352300

Greece	Dr Manuel Perez Bryan, Malaga	95225689
Holland	Avda Palma de Mallorca, 57, Torremolinos	913537500
Ireland	Avda. Los Boliches, Fuengirola	952475108
Italy	Alameda Principal, 35, Malaga	952365593
Morocco	Urb Los Capanes de Golf, Las Brisas, Benahavís	951272862
Sweden	C/ Córdoba 6, Ofic 501, Malaga	952604383
Ukraine	C/ Maestranza, 23, 1º, Malaga	952220615
USA	Av. Juan Gómez 8. Ed. Lucía 1-C. Fuengirola	952474891

THE STARS



Aquarius
January 21st - February 19th
As Venus settles into Taurus, your gaze may be turned towards the home, inspiring makeovers of spaces and of spirits too.



Pisces
February 20th - March 20th
Your negotiation skills turn to gold, and you'll find it easier to create meaningful connections that are also materially rewarding.



Aries
March 21st - April 20th
As Venus enters Taurus you'll blend the courage of a warrior with the Midas touch, bringing passion and the chance of prosperity into your life.



Taurus
April 21st - May 21st
Get ready to bask in an attractive glow, as Venus enters your sign enhancing your natural allure and magnetism. You may experience a surge in confidence as you radiate charm.



Gemini
May 22nd - June 21st
With Mars charging into Aries and igniting your social sphere, you'll also be keen to get out. It urges you to be proactive in the social arena.



Cancer
June 22nd - July 23rd
Venus enters Taurus, so if you're a social butterfly you'll mix and mingle with renewed energy. Your warm and encouraging approach can net you new friends or a potential romance.



Leo
July 24th - August 23rd
Next week your charm becomes your ladder, and each rung brings you a step closer to reaching your ambitions. Your friendly nature could be a passport to connecting with the right people too.



Virgo
August 24th - September 23rd
As Venus glides into Taurus your appetite for life can grow and find you craving new experiences with zest. Each day can bring a menu of endless possibilities.



Libra
September 24th - October 23rd
Your focus turns to the finer things in life. Your financial instincts sharpen, enabling you to zero in on opportunities with your well-honed instincts.



Scorpio
October 24th - November 22nd
Venus' entrance into Taurus is a soothing balm over the rough patches in your relationships. Misunderstandings are resolved and opportunities to create deeper connections are revealed.

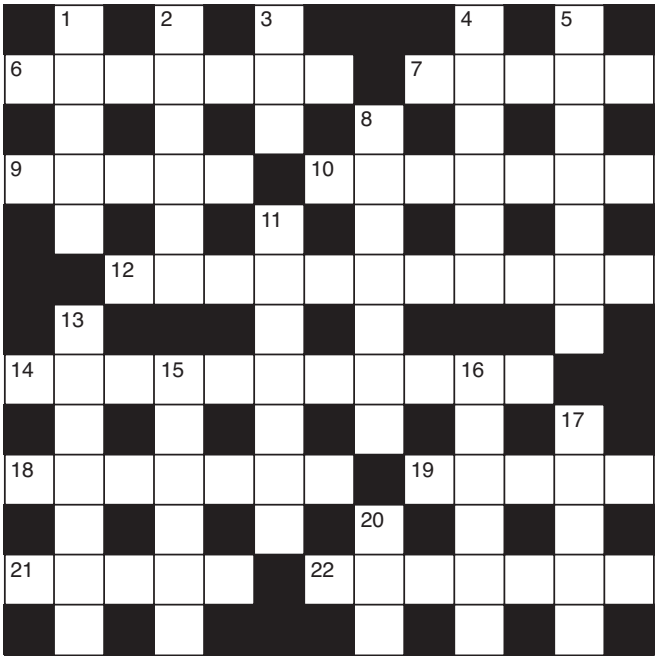


Sagittarius
November 23rd - December 21st
Mars dashes into Aries, enlivening your adventurous spirit and encouraging you to embrace competition. The thrill of the game calls, turning every challenge into an opportunity.



Capricorn
December 22nd - January 20th
Mars barrels into Aries, igniting a firestorm of activity in your domestic sphere. Decluttering becomes not just a task, but a mission to transform your living space.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD N° 11619



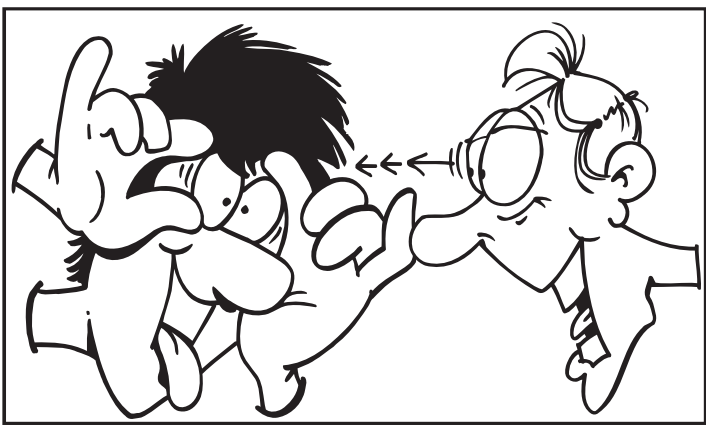
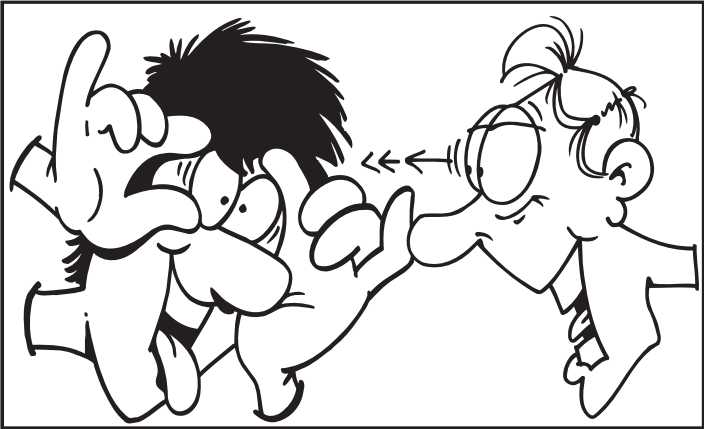
Across

- 6. Strange domain with the first of the caravans continually on the move (7)
- 7. Glued and graded (5)
- 9. In Chinese no recognised title (5)
- 10. Refrigeration equipment for prisons (7)
- 12. Relinquishment of office showing calm submission (11)
- 14. Tar mixture, we hear, is a source of uranium (11)
- 18. First-class scholars (7)
- 19. Don't run into a vacuum (5)
- 21. Metal pinchers do it, one hears (5)
- 22. Had to pay for being loaded (7)

Down

- 1. Exemplary style by a learner (5)
- 2. Conditional release in which father takes part (6)
- 3. From a bush I pluck the fruit (3)
- 4. French girl has the last of succulent piece of fish (6)
- 5. Castigation about substantiated evidence (7)
- 8. One of the original members to collapse (7)
- 11. Tasty morsels the birds chewed inside (7)
- 13. The first of the logs to light for fuel (7)
- 15. Search for a cooling drink (6)
- 16. Sundry submarine operators (6)
- 17. Mean one to show endless despair (5)
- 20. The pitch is reserved (3)

THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



SUDOKU

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

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

THE WORDPUZZLER

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

Can you identify the radio code words for the letters listed below? You'll find the answers in the grid written either vertically or horizontally.

- 1. E
- 2. G
- 3. S
- 4. H
- 5. B
- 6. O
- 7. T
- 8. R
- 9. K
- 10. V

CODEWORD

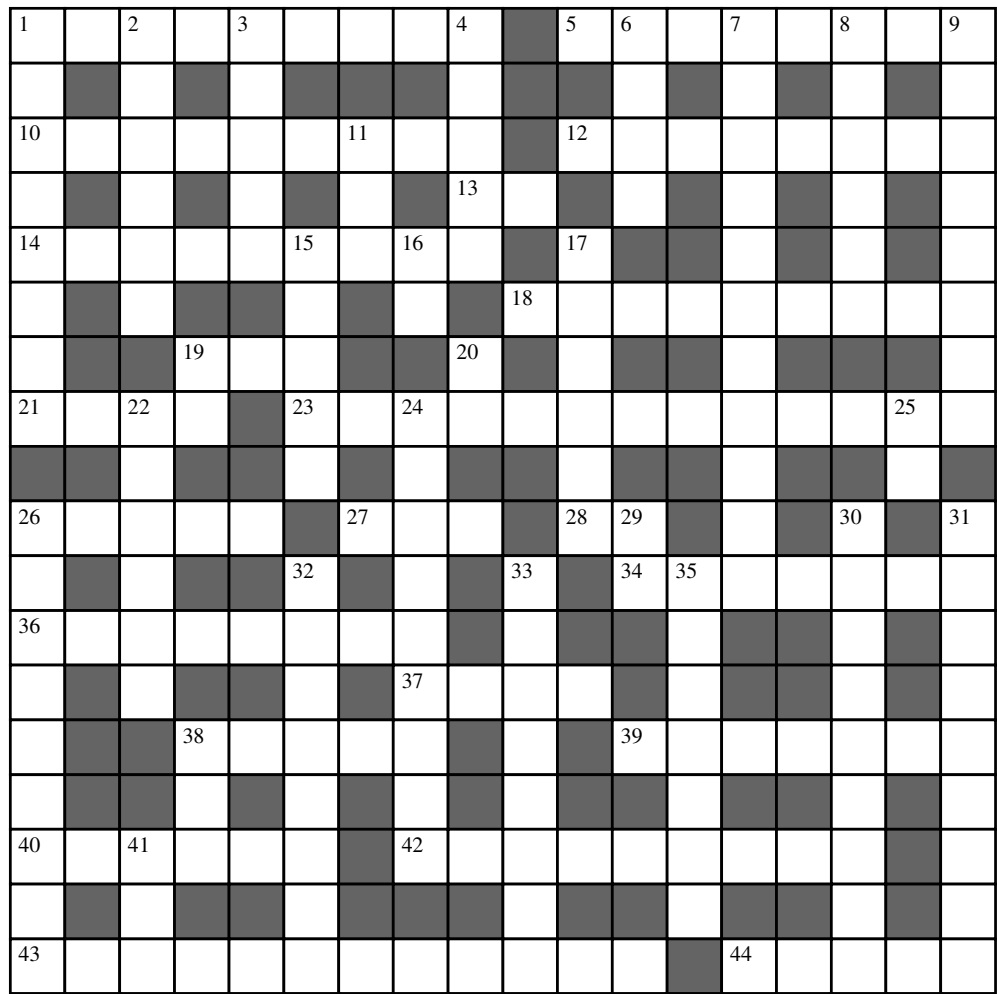
	6			11		2	4	12	8	1	13	16	11	
22	24	23	16	E			13		17		15		16	
	12			10	G	3	5	5	7	14		23	15	18
2	8	15	17							12		11		15
			16			8	17	15	23	2	19	16	17	
4	15	20	16	2			12		10		24			8
13		15				15	10	16			3			16
12		23			9		13		26	15	2	16	11	
2	16	10	7	16	23	8	2			8				
18		15			2					8	15	7		16
16	15	17			2	8	15	23	25	15		5		
17		5			16		21			1	15	9	16	
2	13	5	24	3	11	16	17			20		16		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Instructions

Each number in the codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have two letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares. As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

LANGUAGE CROSSWORD FILL IN THE SPANISH WORD



- Across
- Down
- 1) Snails (9)

5) Cereals (8)

10) Juggling (9)

12) Tropical (8)

13) Ace (2)

14) Memories (9)

18) To prove (9)

19) He reads (3)

21) Mushroom (4)

23) Gibraltarians (13)

26) Where (5)

27) Thousand (3)

28) Her (2)

34) To falsify (7)

36) Army (8)

37) Crazy (m) (4)

38) Fruit (5)

39) Purple (7)

40) Hill (6)

42) Exiled (pl) (9)

43) Officially (12)

44) Silver (5)
- 1) Districts (8)

2) It shines (6)

3) Copper (5)

4) Bland (f.pl) (5)

6) I roam (4)

7) Corporate (11)

8) Reader (m) (6)

9) Bachelors (8)

11) Net (3)

15) Irrigation (5)

16) You (pl) (2)

17) Loyal (pl) (6)

19) The (f) (2)

20) To go (2)

22) Dyes (6)

24) DIY (9)

25) I heard (2)

26) Eighteen (9)

29) Phew! (2)

30) Answer (9)

31) British (f) (9)

32) Entitled (f) (8)

33) Succession (8)

35) Some (f.pl) (7)

38) I went (3)

41) I read (3)

On this day in 1478 a plot failed to overthrow which powerful Italian family?

1. Orsini 2. Medici
3. Borgia 4. Pazzi



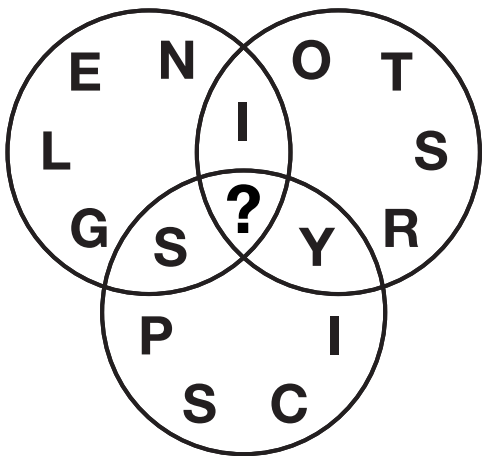
What poison is Lucrecia Borgia said to have used to kill her victims?

1. arsenic 2. hemlock
3. strychnine 4. taxane (yew)

Which rich Italian family ruled Mantua for 400 years?

1. Medici 2. Pazzi
3. Farnese 4. Gonzaga

CIRCLEGRAM

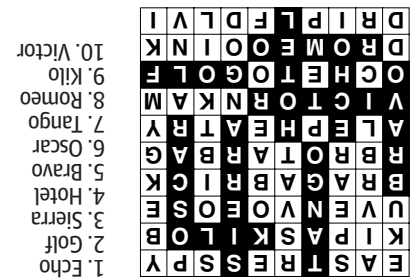


Instructions
Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters in each circle can be arranged to form words, names or terms on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?

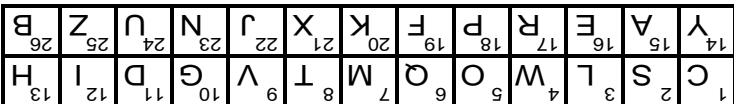
ANSWERS

Quiz answers
the Holy Roman Empire.
queen and two empresses of
10 cardinals, 12 bishops, a
richest) families of their time.
one of the most powerful (and
Of interest: The Gonzaga were
Answer: Gonzaga.
another compound.
a mixture of arsenic and
and brother using 'cantarella',
carried out by Lucrecia's father
legend, most poisonings were
Of interest: Contrary to
Answer: Arsenic
the papacy.
This led to a two year war with
the other, Lorenzo, escaped.
kill one of the Medici brothers,
Pisa, the family managed to
pope and the archbishop of
Medici. With support from the
Florentine ruling family, the
was the arch-rival of the
Of interest: The Pazzi family
Answer: Medici

Wordpuzzler solution



Codeword



Language Crossword





THE EXHIBITION

► **Title.** Womankind

► **Artist.** María María Acha-Kutscher.

► **Where and when.** La Malagueta Cultural Centre (in Malaga bullring, Paseo de Reding, 8), until 11 July 2024.

A new voice for women of the 20th century

Exhibition. La Malagueta exhibits more than 500 images and photo collages created by María María Acha-Kutscher to show women and tell their stories

FRANCISCO
GRINÁN



Halfway round this exhibition is an image of a woman with a mischievous look on her face having taken down a portrait in oil of a distinguished gentleman while her accomplice finishes putting the painting of a young woman in its place. We do not know who they are, nor does it matter, but this work clearly illustrates the spirit of Acha-Kutscher's Womankind exhibition. This is a collection of secret, hidden, unpublished and suppressed portraits of women from the 20th century that have been salvaged by this artist, María María Acha-Kutscher (born in Lima, 1968). It is a review of feminine thinking made from real photos published in magazines or encased in family albums retrieved by the artist and then transformed by her to give

them a more contemporary look. The result is a subversive and stimulating exhibition that runs until 11 July at La Malagueta cultural centre in Malaga.

"There have always been female photographers who have reflected their world through their work, but this exhibition puts women at the centre of history with these fictitious, documentary-style images that re-imagine the world of women if truly free," stated the Madrid-based Peruvian artist at the launch of the show in Malaga. This is a project she has been working on for fourteen years. More than 500 photo collages make up the displays, exhibiting everything from postcards, such as that of a woman looking at the imposing skyscrapers towering overhead, to gigantic montages

up to three metres high, like the one of a female farmworker carting the head of the Statue of Liberty in a wheelbarrow. Women: empowered, serene, readers, contemplative, hard-working, warrior-like, assertive, solitary, relaxed, fun-loving and modern - women who are captivating because of their unpredictability, but also because of their powerful aesthetic appeal.

By firstly taking images from old books, posters, magazines and even private portrait photos, the artist reinvents these originals by transforming them into digital photographic collages that make up "a fictitious but credible archive that tells stories about the silencing of women in history", explained exhibition curator Sema D'Acosta, describing Acha-Kutscher as a "pioneering

artist for Spanish feminism". This iconographic review of the 20th century in terms of gender is bordered by two key dates in women's history, from the suffragette movement for voting rights for women to the introduction and wide availability of the contraceptive pill in the 1960s.

Black and white to colour

Three quarters of Womankind fall into this timeline, following the life and times of women depicted in black and white. The anthology is completed, however, with several series in colour that correspond to the most recent work by this Peruvian artist. The final pieces in this show are the most autobiographical of María María Acha-Kutscher's work, directly addressing ageism, growing old and the menopause, "also

suppressed topics", said the curator while following the extensive exhibition through the galleries of the city's bullring, alongside the artist and the culture delegate at the provincial Diputación, Manuel López Mestanza.

"I wanted to show my own ageing process, which I consider to be more like my femininity growing," said María María - not a typo, her double name is a tribute to her parents' names, María and Mario. She uses images of women from different posters, torn from walls, leaving behind worn faces and bodies that for the artist are a metaphor for the passage of time. Amid her latest work, one photo collage stands out: I Remember the Nights When I Used to Sleep (2023). In this series the artist openly confronts our thinking about the menopause through some of its most characteristic symptoms: sleep disorder, insomnia and hot flushes. Also, with the polyptych It Took Years to Get a Head Full of Silver Strands (2024) - several panels joined together like an altarpiece showing a woman's greying hair as a vindication of what is just a natural process.

Silver hair was not only an artistic choice, but also a personal one as the digital creator herself gave up dyeing her hair when she was still young and began to whiten it. The message to accept oneself and view growing older as something positive, not a decline, is what closes this exhibition. She seeks not only an aesthetic, but also an emotional connection with the onlooker in the final series, fresh from her studio: Deep Within the Mirror Old Age Lies In Wait For Me (2024). A simple invitation to take a proper look at ourselves in the mirror and accept the image that looks back at us.

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