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# Apocalypse wow

## Saharan dust brings eerie glow



**OUT OF THIS WORLD:** Saharan sands over the Bay of Almeria turned skies reddish-brown.

By Greg Kirby

ALMERIA transformed into a Martian landscape after winds from Cadiz lifted Saharan sands and dumped them on the province.

The sandy skies were a 'calm, dark, brownish' but don't affect health, according to the State Meteorological Agency (AEMET) offi-

cial José María Sánchez.

This week's dry storms are a common atmospheric phenomenon which bring lightning because of "violent vertical movements," but little rain, said Sanchez.

"The main problem is that it's dirty," he added.

The Plaza de la Catedral's white marble floor made the storm's orange aftermath

more striking, according to Spanish media.

Town cleaners had to hose it down in time for the Almeria Book Fair, starting the following day.

Two neighbours chatting as they walked down the paseo (promenade) de Almeria said: "Thank goodness that I did not put the washing machine on," Spanish

media reports.

It was an isolated depression over the Gulf of Cadiz which whipped up winds strong enough to carry the sands to southern Almeria.

The rainstorms - even if they were only minor - brought the dust down from the skies and onto the streets and cars, Sanchez added.

## To shell and back

GUARDIA CIVIL investigators are hunting for the culprit of a crime against endangered species.

The probe comes after the force's nature protection arm SEPRONA received a phone call from a concerned citizen in Nijar, who reported that someone had anonymously dumped a box of live tortoises on her doorstep.

And when officers headed to the address they found that the four animals - three adults and a juvenile - were the native and protected spur-thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*).

The endangered reptiles were taken to a specialised vet for a check on their health before being released back into the wild, with Almeria one of the species' last remaining natural strongholds in Spain.

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# Shock decision

## Judge 'freezes' expat murder plot probe

### EXCLUSIVE

By Matt Ford and Karl Smallman

THE family of missing mum-of-one Lisa Brown have spoken of their shock after a Spanish judge shelved his probe against the prime suspect in the case.

Javier Garcia Ramila made the sensational decision just a week after Simon Corner, 35, was held at London's Heathrow Airport on a European Arrest Warrant.

Speaking exclusively to the *Euro Weekly News*, Lisa's stunned sister Helen Jordan said: "We are still shocked that this decision has been made after all the hard work but it's not over by any means."

"We were actually speechless when we heard the news."

"We don't take anything for granted but we didn't expect this."

Helen added, "This is a set-back but won't stop us, the investigation will still be continuing to find the truth."

"We're thinking positively... we have to or we would have given up long ago."

The judge reportedly made the move after state prosecutors requested that the two-and-a-half investigation be 'frozen.'

At the Court of Investigation in San Roque, Cadiz, he said in a 10-page written ruling: "This court has serious doubts Simon Corner is the person responsible for the crimes of homicide or unlawful detention being in-

vestigated.

"That is because of the testimony of the witness who says she saw Lisa Brown driving her Ford Focus near her home on the morning of November 6, 2015 [two days after police believe she was killed], and because there was no mater-

ial evidence he actively participated in Lisa's disappearance has been obtained despite multiple inquiries against Simon over the past two and a half years."

He added that he was legally obliged to take into account a "lack of concrete proof" and that the enquiry was "at a point of no return," although it can be reopened if fresh evidence comes to light.

Corner - who has never been formally charged - has now been freed from a London jail where he had been held since his arrest after stepping off a flight from South America.

He was expected to be extradited on charges of conspiracy to murder before facing trial in Spain after going on the run for a second time.



CASE CLOSED? Simon Corner and Lisa Brown.

Originally from Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, Scottish expatriate Lisa vanished from her Costa del Sol home in Guadiaro on November 4, 2015.

The alarm was raised when she failed to collect son Marco, then aged eight, from school.

Lisa worked in Gibraltar and detectives have said a 'violent episode' appeared to have taken place, but her body has never been found.

Five other Britons who have been quizzed on suspicion of obstructing justice over the alleged incident have also had their bail conditions lifted.

Liverpool-born yacht dealer Corner was held in Denmark in May 2016 on a European Arrest Warrant and extradited to Spain after fleeing the country in the wake of Lisa going missing.

He was released from an Algeciras prison on bail in April 2017 but he broke the terms of his agreement by failing to present himself at a Costa del Sol police station last month.

Lisa's family last month flew to Cadiz and offered a £100,000 reward in an appeal for new information at a press conference attended by Britain's ambassador to Spain Simon Manley.

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ALL THE LATEST CAR NEWS PLUS OUR WEEKLY TEST DRIVE

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## 'Drugs and guns' raid

TWO brothers aged 39 and 31 who allegedly ran a marihuana growing operation in the Los Almendros area of Almeria City have been arrested. Police claimed they found 197 plants at the site, as well as 40 kilos of the processed drug and a rifle and 43 cartridges of ammunition.

## Mine revamp

A CANNING plant packaging products made from snails and other food is set to open this October on the site of an old mine in Cuevas del Almanzora. The plant, which will create around 25 jobs, is the result of a project from the Los Guiraos Agrarian Society of Transformation.

## Worker hurt

A 25-YEAR-OLD man has reportedly been seriously injured following an accident at a recycling plant in Almeria City. Emergency services were called out to the site and found the worker with wounds to one of his arms resulting from an incident involving machinery at around 9.30am on Saturday.

## New flats

ALMERIA'S city council has granted Suncrest Desarrollos Inmobiliarios planning permission to build the first of two 15-storey tower blocks on the site of the old Toblerone mineral silo. The company behind the project will reportedly be allowed to build on two of the four plots there over the next 36 months.

## Strike warning

THE UGT farming trade union said it would call on its members to walk out of workplaces if a deal on pay could not be struck with company bosses. The union, which represents around 30,000 workers, said 11 meetings held so far on the issue had yielded no results.



Photo credit Ronaldo Schemidt/World Press Photo Contest

**WINNING SHOT:** Ronaldo Schemidt's powerful image.

# The year in focus

THIS is the incredible image that has bagged the 2018 World Press Photo of the Year gong.

It shows Jose Victor Salazar Balza, 28, on fire during violent clashes between Venezuelan protesters and riot police in May 2017, amid protests against the Venezuelan president, Nicolas Maduro.

Taken in capital city Caracas by local photographer Ronaldo Schemidt, 47, the shot was described by judges as 'instantly'

emotional and symbolising the idea of the country 'burning.'

The dramatic scene came after a motorcycle petrol tank exploded.

And the snapper explained how he acted on instinct as he said: "I felt the explosion behind me and I felt the heat, and at that moment I turned around, already shooting, but without seeing what was going on."

Competition organisers said that Salazar survived the incident with first and second-degree burns.

The humanitarian crisis sparked by President Maduro's authoritarian 'Bolivarian Revolution' in Venezuela has triggered a surge in asylum-seekers fleeing the South American country. Spain received more than 4,300 applications from January to July last year, up from 596 in the whole of 2015.

Winning images from the 61st annual staging of the prestigious contest were chosen from 73,044 images taken by 4,548 photographers from 125 countries.

## PLUS THE REGULARS

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# 131

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- 2010 I Love Marbella - Professionalism award
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# Petal power



**BLOOMIN' LOVELY:** The festival is an underrated gem.

THERE is no better way to celebrate the arrival of early summer than with a visit to Cordoba.

And preparations are in full swing as the historic city once again gears up to show its true colours during its dazzling patios festival.

The annual event features stunning flower displays as the doors swing open on more than 200 private patios - or courtyards - in a colourful contest backed by the council for almost 100 years, during which green-fingered residents battle to put on the most show-stopping display.

A typical feature of Cordoban homes, the courtyards tend to be the central feature around which each house is built, and normally have a fountain or well in the middle to collect rainwater.

This is a Roman design aimed at easing the oven-like summer temperatures typical of inland Andalucia, and was later adapted by Moorish conquerors who added features including a direct entrance from the street and

vast arrays of flowers planted in beds or pots to bring freshness.

The latter tradition has been continued ever since, with fabulous floral displays offering flashes of colour alongside stone mosaics, water features, antique furniture and ceramic decorations, mixed with the fragrant aromas of orange blossom, jasmine, and countless other flowers.

And in typical local style, the contest is soundtracked by enthusiastic live performances from renowned flamenco artists and other musicians throughout the city, while local wine and tapas are consumed en masse.

There are a number of different parts of the city to visit, each with a unique look and feel, with a map available at <http://patios.cordoba.es/en/patios>.

Entrance to the courtyards is generally free, but there is often a collection box for tips by the door. This year's extravaganza takes place from May 1-13, with visiting hours 11am-2pm and 6pm-10pm.

## POLL OF THE WEEK

**Should holiday rental websites do more to clamp down on false listings?**

**LAST WEEK'S POLL:**

Was UK Prime Minister Theresa May right to order air strikes in Syria without consulting Parliament?

Yes **51%**

No **49%**

## EWN online this week

**147,914 Page views**

**TOP 5 stories**



**EASYJET:** An earlier flight on the ground at Gibraltar airport.

- 6,804** views: Hundreds of angry passengers stranded as easyJet diverts flights to Spain
- 6,269** views: Strike warning as low-cost airline pilots call for four days of action
- 3,748** views: Summer strike threat by air traffic controllers in Spain
- 3,644** views: Three 'lapdancers' fight over booze on flight to Spain
- 3,461** views: Squatters refuse to leave expat's Spanish home

*\*For week 16 - 23 April 2018*

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Email: [editorial@euroweeklynnews.com](mailto:editorial@euroweeklynnews.com)

# Stabbing sentence

A 35-YEAR-OLD on trial for attempted murder over the alleged stabbing of a man following an argument has pleaded guilty and accepted a three and a half year prison sentence.

The court in Almeria ordered the defendant to pay €13,820 in compensation to the 66-year-old. It also ruled the 35-year-old must not go within 300 metres of the victim.

The court heard the defendant was arguing with the man in the Cal de San Pedro area of the Cabo de Gata natural park in the early hours of the morning. He then pulled a knife out and stabbed him in the abdomen area.

The 35-year-old then fled before emergency services arrived and evacuated him in a maritime rescue helicopter and took him to Torrecardenas Hospital. The helicopter was needed due to the stabbing taking place in a remote area.

The 66-year-old was taken to hospital where he remained for 45 days. He was unable to live a normal life for more than three months after being stabbed.

Officers arrested the defendant after he was found to be hiding in the area, police said.



**SENT DOWN:** The 35-year-old defendant was handed a three and a half year prison sentence by the court in Almeria.

## OUR VIEW

### Our thoughts go out to family after cruel twist

THE decision by a Spanish judge to put the Lisa Brown murder investigation on ice has shocked the expatriate community.

Our thoughts are with her family at this difficult time as their unswerving efforts to achieve closure over the heartbreaking affair appear set to go on for some time yet.

The distress must be overwhelming, yet they continue to act with dignity and determination, and for that they deserve the utmost respect.

**Shock decision - page 2**

### Be wary of rental cons

A BRITISH bride-to-be was duped out of several thousand Euros over a bogus rental scam.

And her ordeal should serve as a warning to those seeking cheap holiday accommodation, since if she had paid via the online portal where she first came across the Ibiza property the fraudsters responsible would never have got their hands on her cash.

Official means should always be used when paying in advance, and rental properties MUST have an official registration number from their local councils. Put simply, if they don't have it, don't book it.

**Aisle be damned - page 20**

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## Denise ripe to shack up again

SHE recently revealed she is to move in with her boyfriend.

But TV personality Denise van Outen, 43, took some time out after making the announcement on ITV show Loose Women as she headed to Spain for a fashion shoot.

The actress was pictured in a figure-hugging one-piece floral swimsuit as she posed for retail brand Matalan alongside S Club 7 singer Rachel Stevens, 40, and ex-Pussycat Dolls star Ashley Roberts, 36.

Sharing a snap of the photo session on Instagram, the former Big Brother presenter wrote: 'Summer season @shopmatalan spain #theshow.'

It comes after Denise spilled the beans on her plans with partner Eddie Boxshall, who she has been dating after breaking up with ex-husband Lee Mead, with who she shares her seven-year-old daughter Betsy.

She told the Loose Women panel: "After four years finally me and Eddie are moving in together. It's happening!"

**SMITTEN:**  
Gorka and Gemma in Alicante.



**LOOSE WOMEN:** Denise on her Spanish Matalan shoot.

Photo credit Denise van Outen/Instagram

## Strictly on hols

THEY confirmed their budding romance on Valentine's Day.

And Strictly Come Dancing stars Gorka Marquez, 27, and Gemma Atkinson, 33, showed they are still going strong during a romantic stroll in Barcelona.

The couple were on holiday with friends from the popular show, including AJ Pritchard, 23, and Dianne Buswell, 28, plus English actor Anthony Quinlan, 33, with the group seen earlier in Alicante.

Photo credit Gemma Atkinson/Instagram

### The show must go on

SHE has reportedly been axed as a judge on UK show The X Factor.

But American singer Nicole Scherzinger, 39, appeared carefree during a break in Catalan city Barcelona.

The Don't Cha hitmaker was spotted wandering around the regional capital's sights in the wake of rumours that Simon Cowell is set to shake up his talent contest to boost ratings.



**AXE FACTOR:**  
Has Nicole been dropped?

Photo credit Nicole Scherzinger/Instagram

## Brit comedian in a league of his own



**JACK THE LAD:** Whitehall with co-star Rosie Perez.

Photo credit Jack Whitehall/Instagram

BRITISH comedian Jack Whitehall has been filming scenes for the new season of Bounty Hunters in Spain.

The 29-year-old co-writes and stars the Sky 1 series, with American actress Rosie Perez also a cast member.

And the pair were spotted filming scenes for the show in the Pescaderia neighbourhood of Almeria City.

The show follows the misadventures of

bookish Briton Barnaby Walker (Whitehall), who finds himself in trouble after taking over the family antiques business when his father falls into a coma.

At the start of the comedy drama, he handed over a stack of cash for a pair of statues looted from war-torn Syria, leading his sister (English actress Charity Wakefield) to call on her friend Nina Morales (Perez), a bounty hunter from New York.

### Sister act

FASHION designer Lauryn Goodman and her Ex On The Beach star sister Chloe have been topping up their tans in Gran Canaria.

The curvaceous pair flaunted their enviable physiques while being pictured in a series of skimpy bikinis as they frolicked in the shallows while soaking up the sun.



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**NEWS EXTRA****Special memory**

IN a move to boost Almería's official heritage, its tourism promotion committee will place a plaque in the central market to pay tribute to Marie Curie, the double Nobel-prize-winning scientist who was taken by the city during a visit with her daughter in 1931.

**Hate drill**

ALMERIA Law School has inaugurated an anti-hate-crime training course to teach lawyers how to better deal with discrimination cases including racist and xenophobic attacks, 80 per cent of which go undeclared, said inspector Rafael Madrona.

**ETA apols**

PARTIDO POPULAR official and Almería congressman Rafael Hernando has responded to an apology from Basque Country's ex-terrorist group ETA saying, 'it is a good step' but that it should stop differentiating its victims.

**Bid open**

A PUBLIC service charter flight operating between Almería and Sevilla and funded by the regional government has been put up for an €8.9 million tender, having operated since 2009, according to sources at the regional development ministry.

**Boss moan**

SOMOS Mojocar town group has lodged a complaint against its mayor - Rosa Maria Cano - for 'atrociously' failing to hold municipal meetings at least once every two months as required by law, preventing opposition councillors from holding her to account.

**Mine again**

REGIONAL authorities have allowed Spain's first mining heritage firm, Sadim Engineering, to begin converting a Roman-age 'mirror stone' mine, which finally closed its shafts in the late 19th century, into a tourist museum in Arboleas.

ARE you thinking of a festival in the sun, a clubbing holiday, rest and relaxation on the beach or a foodie city break in Spain this summer?

If so, the Beeb is looking for groups of best pals, flatmates or uni crews, aged between 18-25 for a summer travel show on BBC Three.

BBC Three controller Damian Kavanagh said,

"This series is all about the excitement of that first holiday with friends and will be part coming-of-age saga, part travelogue.

"We will follow them around numerous Spanish

**Casting call!**

cities to learn about relationships between young friends and observe as they immerse themselves in the best the country has on offer.

"They'll get to check out the culture, the shopping,

the bars and the beaches."

Casting producer, Farrah Solim, who describes herself as a 'great people finder' has worked on TV hits such as Four In A Bed and The Only Way Is Essex, says, "Maybe they've never been abroad, maybe

they love travelling.

"Know anyone who might be interested?"

"You need to be available for one month of filming between mid-June and August this year."

To apply to be part of the Spanish summer adventure email [bbcthree.spain@bbc.co.uk](mailto:bbcthree.spain@bbc.co.uk).

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# Father arrested over ‘stabbing son’

A FATHER who allegedly stabbed his son to death has been sent to prison, by the Andalucía’s high court (TS-JA).

The suspect, of Romanian nationality, called emergency services to tell them he had killed his nine-year-old-son.

The father stabbed the boy after he had ‘hurt his mother,’ according to sources at the Andalucía high court.

By the time ambulance services arrived they were unable to save the child’s life.

When Guardia Civil arrived at the house, on Calle del Mar in Balerma near El Ejido, the suspect handed himself in.

Emergency services then took the victim’s mother and 12-year-old brother who was suffering from anxiety attacks to the El Ejido’s Western hospital.



Image Credits: Diputación de Almería

**STABBED:** The Almeria local government held a minute’s silence for the victims.

The events happened in the early afternoon of last Friday - when the suspect was at home with his two sons - while the mother was out working in a greenhouse.

In addition to the murder charge, the man is accused of abusing his partner and

crimes against the moral identity of his other son.

Even though the victim was a child, the court is demanding the case be treated as gender violence.

This marks the fourth case of its kind, so far this year, according to Spanish media reports.

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# Expatriate stab horror

## Brit convicted for brutal attack

by Matt Ford

A BRITISH man could be sentenced to 13 years in a Spanish prison after being found guilty of a horror stabbing on the Costa Blanca.

Benjamin Da Costa, 30, was convicted of killing former army medic Scott Waring in the wake of a trial in Elche.

Prosecutors told a jury of

nine people the dad-of-one, 40, died soon after being attacked with a 'glass or pint jug' following an argument with Da Costa.

Expatriate Simon Williams, landlord of the Hub Sports Bar in Villamartin Plaza, Orihuela Costa, has also been found guilty of trying to cover up the attack.

He cleared away the broken glass and told investigators that the incident happened outside his establishment "to help Da Costa and hinder the investigation," the court heard.

The victim, who earlier completed four tours of Northern Ireland, was working as a chef and had a three-year-old daughter at the time of his death.

Scott's mum Susan reportedly told local media that



'COVER UP': The attack took place in Villamartin Plaza, Orihuela Costa, victim Scott Waring (left) and bar owner Simon Williams (right), who was found guilty of 'hindering the investigation.'

her son had spent nine years in the army and described him as a "troubled soul" who underwent counselling to help him cope with what he had seen on tour.

"He was an extremely

kind person and never aggressive," she added.

"He idolised his daughter and couldn't do enough for her.

"I think he was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Neither of the two men was sentenced at the end of the four-day hearing, with a judge expected to deliver his verdict shortly.

Mr Williams is likely to receive a suspended prison sentence if he receives two years or less, while Da Costa faces up to 13 years behind bars for homicide.

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Pensions are often the key to long-term financial security, so take extreme care to do what is right for you. Start by understanding the options for different pension types.

#### 'Defined contribution' or 'money purchase' pensions

Members of these schemes, such as personal and Self-Invested Personal Pensions (SIPPs), can usually do the following from age 55:

- Take the whole fund as cash – 25% will be tax-free in the UK.
- Make cash withdrawals when you want – a quarter is usually free of UK tax each time.
- Take regular income through 'flexible drawdown', leaving the remainder invested.
- Take a regular income for life through an annuity.

Expatriates can also transfer to a Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme (QROPS). Doing this can be tax-efficient and unlock more estate planning and currency flexibility.

Transfers to a QROPS based in the EU or EEA (European Economic Area) – including Gibraltar – are currently tax-free. However, a 25% UK charge applies

# What can expatriates in Spain do with their UK pension?



By Gerald Turner,  
Partner,  
Blevins Franks

on transfers to QROPS outside the EU/EEA (unless you are resident in the same jurisdiction). Some speculate that the UK may start taxing Britons transferring within the EU/EEA post-Brexit.

Consider acting now, but take personalised, professional advice to establish if transferring is suitable for you and navigate the complex options.

#### 'Defined benefit' or 'final salary' pensions

Here, your employer promises a proportion of your salary for the whole of retirement.

While you cannot usually withdraw cash, you can transfer benefits to a defined contribution scheme or QROPS. Traditionally, this has been considered less attractive than drawing a guaranteed pension for life. However, today some providers are offering 'transfer values' of up to 40 times the annual benefits due at retirement. A generous one-off sum could potentially provide a retirement income that exceeds the original annual payment, but it is crucial to fully understand the consequences before giving up a lifetime income.

Whatever type of pension you have, there are other issues to consider.

#### Taxation

While 25% of cash withdrawals can be taken tax-free in the UK, they are

usually taxable in Spain for Spanish residents.

Income from most UK pensions is taxable only in Spain, but UK government pension income – including teachers', local authority, army, police and civil service pensions – remains taxable in the UK only.

Most expatriates with Spanish residency will therefore escape UK taxes on pension income, but are subject to Spanish income tax rates. However, in certain circumstances – for example, with lifetime annuities – it may be possible to receive up to 92% tax-free in Spain.

#### Making your money last

Having the freedom to withdraw or transfer your pension does not mean that you should. If you do take your benefits as cash, make sure you have a reliable plan to fund your long-term financial future.

Beware also of pension scams and unregulated companies offering

pension services, as they provide no recourse if things go wrong. Generally, if an investment sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Make sure your adviser is regulated through the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and has cross-border experience to understand the tax implications in both the UK and Spain. They should evaluate your needs, objectives, personal circumstances and risk appetite to find the most suitable solution for you.

While you should take the time to get it right, keep the Brexit countdown in mind. With some of today's freedoms likely to change post-Brexit, now is the time to review how to secure a prosperous retirement in Spain.

*Tax rates, scope and reliefs may change. Any statements concerning taxation are based upon our understanding of current taxation laws and practices which are subject to change. Tax information has been summarised; individuals should seek personalised advice.*

Keep up to date on the financial issues that may affect you on the Blevins Franks news page at [www.blevinsfranks.com](http://www.blevinsfranks.com).

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Blevins Franks specialises in cross-border wealth management and can provide personalised, UK regulated pension advice, including QROPS. If you are thinking of transferring your pension out of the UK, you may wish to take action now in case the UK extends its 25% Overseas Transfer Charge post Brexit. We can help you with all your pension options, including the tax implications in Spain.

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# Paedo freed by UK judge

A CONVICTED British paedophile who went on the run to Spain will not be jailed after a judge ruled that he has 'resolved his issues.'

Alan Grundy, 59, was given a 14-month suspended sentence at Bradford Crown Court after pleading guilty to three charges of creating offensive images and videos and one of failing to notify police of a change in address.

The case comes in the wake of his recent arrest and extradition to the UK on a European Arrest Warrant. He reportedly fled after 87 indecent images and two videos featuring children were found on his computer almost three years ago.

In 2012 Grundy, of no fixed address, was found guilty of 21 offences of making images of a paedophilic nature.

He was told at the time that he must register any changes of name or address with police.

But he vanished after being held and refused to comment when investigators seized a computer from a Bradford property where he had been living on June 26, 2015.

Prosecutor Paul Nicholson told the court that when police returned to the residence "his mother said he had not lived at the address since he had been arrested.

"It turned out that he had taken himself abroad and gone to Spain."



Photo credit Keith Jacobsen/Twitter

**ON THE RUN:** The trial took place at Bradford Crown Court after the accused was held in Spain.

Lawyer Tom Rushbrooke, defending, argued that Grundy had been suffering from depression and had turned to alcohol at the time of his first arrest. "While he was in Spain he had no access to computers at all," he added.

The court also heard that he 'slipped the net' of a rehabilitation programme for sex offenders which he was told to attend when sentenced to a community order in 2012.

Judge Jonathan Durham Hall QC described the latest images as "disgraceful material," but added: "The running away to Spain, on the one hand was reprehensible, but on the other hand, it seems you have used that time to resolve many issues."

Grundy has been ordered to complete 250 hours of voluntary work and attend the rehabilitation programme, and has been handed seven-year sexual offenders and notification orders, local media confirmed.

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# ‘There’s no way’

**EXCLUSIVE**

by Matt Ford

A FRIEND of an expatriate man being hunted by Spanish police claims a Costa del Sol horror accident has been misreported.

According to Spanish media, the Briton leapt to safety seconds before the car he was driving plunged 30 metres off the A-45 dual carriageway, rolling several times before landing on its side in the Guadalmedina River.

He managed to walk to a

hostel in the nearby village of Casabermeja and was driven to Carlos Haya Hospital in Malaga City with minor bruising, but allegedly failed to tell medics that a 42-year-old man from Riogordo, Axarquia, was still inside the vehicle.

The Spaniard was freed five hours later after a passing motorist spotted the wreckage, with rescue workers later describing his condition as ‘critical.’

But by that time the unnamed driver had already discharged himself.

And a mutual acquaintance, who wishes to remain anonymous, exclusively told the *Euro Weekly News* that the two men are “the best of friends,” and “there’s no way that ‘he’ would have abandoned Ricardo.”

The source pointed out other inaccuracies in the story before admitting: “I have talked to him.

“He says he can’t remember anything and just woke up in hospital asking what happened.

“He’s a really good guy and is trying to decide what to do.”

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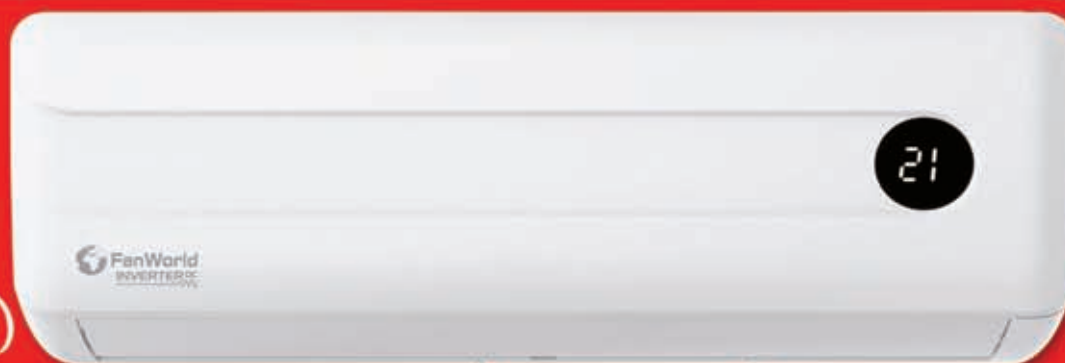
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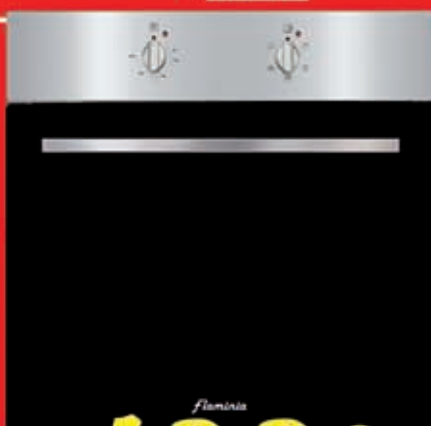
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# Brit fugitive caged

A BRITISH drug dealer who fled to Alicante has been sentenced to spend 12 years in prison, almost four years after he received the initial sentence.

Scott Woods, aged 29, received a 12-year sentence in June 2014 after failing to attend his sentencing having been found guilty of two charges of conspiring to supply a Class A drug.

Woods, had initially been arrested in October and November 2012 along with five other men after an investigation by Dorset Police's Major Crime Investigation team unveiled a comprehensive conspiracy to supply Class A drugs across the country.

Almost four years after his initial trial, Woods was picked up in Alicante last month and was extradited back to the UK after a European Arrest Warrant was executed.

Appearing at Bournemouth Crown Court on Friday, April



Credit: Dorset Police

**SENTENCE: Woods was sentenced to 12 years in prison.**

20, his 12-year sentence was activated while he was also sentenced to a further four months for absconding during the trial.

Woods was also ordered

to pay back €243,426 (£213,185) he had made through criminal activity in 2014 and now faces a further three-year sentence if he fails to repay the funds.

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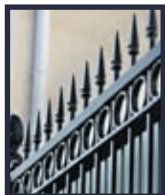
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# Suicide shock

## 12-year-old boy found hanged

by Matt Ford

A 12-YEAR-OLD Moroccan boy who was found hanged at his Murcia home may have been the victim of a macabre online game, investigators have confirmed.

The news comes after detectives probing the case concluded that the boy was popular at school and not a victim of bullying.

They now believe he could have become embroiled in the notorious 'blue whale' suicide game after several parents said that classmates at his school had mentioned it.

One mother told Spanish media: "Yesterday his friends were crying, and they said the blue whale game was to blame."

The child - whose name has not been revealed for legal reasons - was found by members of his family at their duplex flat in the town of La Union after he failed to respond to calls for din-



Photo credit: Twitter

**CHILLING CHALLENGE:** Police say the death could be linked to the sinister 'blue whale' game.

ner. Medics managed to resuscitate him three times but he later died at the Santa Lucia hospital in Cartagena.

A post mortem examination has been performed, and his family reportedly wish to take his body to Morocco once it is returned to them.

La Union mayor Pedro Lopez

said that the entire community was "in shock" over the death.

The blue whale game has been linked to the deaths of hundreds of children as cases continue to be reported from around the world.

Players supposedly report to an administrator, who assigns a series of increasingly gruesome

tasks over a period of 50 days, typically involving self-harm or watching horror videos at unusual hours.

Photographic or video evidence must be provided to the curator as each task is completed, with the sleep-deprived, psychologically-depressed player eventually encouraged to commit suicide to 'win' the game.

In Spain, incidents have been reported in Cataluña and the Basque Country, with the youngest victim allegedly just 12-years-old, although there have been no deaths reported.

Those responsible are said to be using advanced psychological profiling tools to target vulnerable children.

However, while police and schools in a number of countries have issued warnings to parents, cyber-bullying experts and fact-checking websites say that the existence of the game remains unproven.

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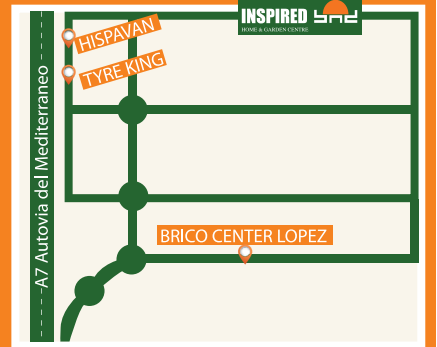
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by Matt Ford

A BRITISH bride-to-be who paid more than €3,400 to book a non-existent honeymoon villa in Ibiza has exposed the plot online. Expatriate hairdresser Daizie Kerr, 27, who now lives in Australia after emigrating from Retford in Nottinghamshire booked the property via United States-based holiday

rentals website HomeAway.

And she revealed how she had been scammed in a lengthy Facebook post.

# Aisle be damned

## Brit bride-to-be falls for rental con

Due to wed fiancée and welder Thomas Myers, 27, in September, Ms Kerr wrote that when she tried to reserve the luxury property, a person posing as the owner told her she was eligible for an early booking discount if she paid direct.

But the messages dried up after she sent the money via bank transfer, before the website notified her that the property could be fake.

"I know that people aren't always as stupid as I have been but I just wanted to remind the

public to always be cautious," she wrote.

"I recently went on HomeAway to search for a villa to stay at in Ibiza after our wedding. I inquired about a place and received a message from the owner, saying because I was booking so far in advance he could give us a discount and asked me to email his private email to sort his calendar.

"I then emailed him asking about the discount and minutes later I received a reservation request from what I believed to be HomeAway.

"The email looked legitimate and my app said the same as my other emails from this website at the head of their emails. It gave me a bank account to transfer the balance to in order to complete the booking request.

"The payment was sent and happy days we had a fabulous villa booked for our honey-

moon with our friends! I kept in contact with the owner who was very helpful and communicated well.

"Once the payment had left the bank two days later I emailed to see if he'd received it and he no longer replied.

"The next day I received an email from HomeAway saying they believed a listing to be fake and that if we had made any bookings to get in touch.

"I called them straight away and they said it states somewhere on their website that no payments should be made outside their website, however my fake email looked like their website so I didn't think anything of it.

"So please be aware of the big websites having fake listings, never personally email anyone and never ever bank transfer money online, even if the place is amazing and only offers bank transfer, choose somewhere else.

"We now have to try and replace that money to pay for our wedding because I was stupid."

HomeAway confirmed that to avoid problems all payments should be made via its website.



SCAM ALERT: The victim has posted online in a bid to warn others.

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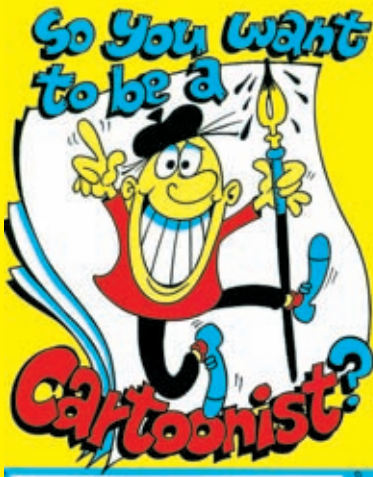
## A fayre price

THE Anglican Church will be holding a fayre on Saturday at the Levantes Car Park (opposite Price Brown) beside Mojácar Playa.

The fayre will run from 9.30am to 1pm and there will

be many stalls there, so plenty of bargains! Non-church stallholders are welcome for a small fee of €10. Admission is free to the fayre. For more information, please contact Tony Noble on 634 303 807.

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# The lady is a dame

THE Dames Association in Huerca-Overa recently donated a cheque for €1,000 to the Autism Spectrum Disorder Foundation (ASTEIA) in Huerca-Overa. This money was raised through numerous lotteries, raffles and events organised by this group of women.

The mayor, Domingo Fernández, and the councillor for Social Welfare, Emilio Pérez, received the donation. The Dames Association is a group of British ladies who raise money for local charities. If you would like more information, please contact Pam on 677 273 736. Alternatively, you are welcome to attend one of their meetings held at the Pepper Tree in Huerca-Overa on the third Wednesday of each month from 10.30am to 12.30pm.



LOVELY LADIES: The Dames Association with the mayor.

THE Valparaíso Foundation, in collaboration with Mojácar Council, recently welcomed four new residential scholars who had the opportunity to work on individual projects whilst getting to know about the town and its special places of interest.

Linda Laino, an American painter who was directly supported by Mojácar's Culture

## Painters and poets

Department, was joined by the Irish painter, Beatrice O'Connell, along with two poets, Rafael Morales and Helen Farish, from Spain and the United Kingdom respectively.

All had been granted scholarships by the organisation to allow them to enjoy their time

in the town and develop their own work.

All four scholarship holders put together an exhibition of the work they had developed during their time at Mojácar's Valparaíso Foundation and like all the artists who have been on similar stays, the

magnetism, peace and charm of their surroundings provided an added bonus to their work as well as on a personal level.

Their residence in the town coincided with Mojácar's spectacular World Gathering of the famous musical University Tunas, adding even more colour and spectacle to an already very special experience and visit.

Credit: Dames Association in Huerca-Overa



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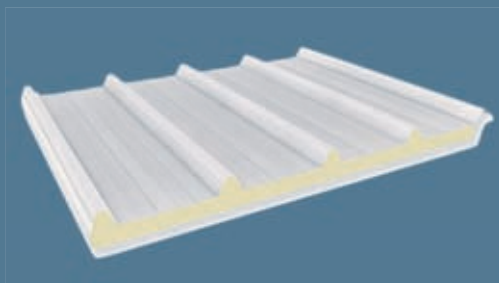
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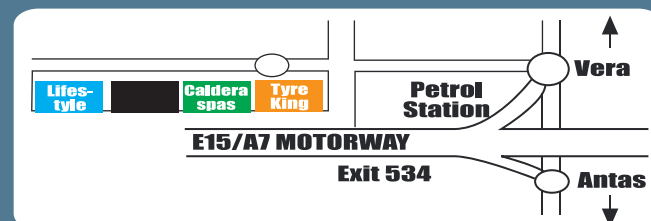
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## Dirty cash fear sparks inquest

THE Spanish High Court has revealed that it is probing the country's third-largest lender Caixa-bank.

A written ruling said that employees and directors at 10 branches of the Valencia-based institution are suspected of helping criminals to transfer €99 million of dirty money to China and Hong Kong between 2013 and 2015.

It added that the cash was moved under an agreement with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, already under investigation for alleged recycling of dirty money in Madrid.

## EC chief backs Brexit veto

A SPANISH construction firm has been accused of holding Australian city Sydney to ransom over a €1.25 billion light rail project.

It comes as New South Wales (NSW) Transport Minister Andrew Constance revealed that the disastrous scheme, scheduled to open in March 2019, is now running a year behind schedule.

And he blames Madrid-based subcontractor Acciona, which he claims is deliberately delaying work as it remains locked in a €750,000 legal battle with the NSW state government.

"We will ensure as best as possible

by *Matt Ford*

that they ramp up their activity - they are on a 'go slow,' anyone walking the city can quite clearly see," Mr Constance said.

"They have construction zones where there is no workforce on the ground doing the work."

Acciona has filed a Supreme Court lawsuit against Transport for NSW, which it argues has behaved in a 'misleading and deceptive' way, claiming it entered into the contract under a 'false premise.'

The fiasco has brought traffic on one

of the east coast city's busiest thoroughfares to a standstill, and NSW Labor deputy leader Michael Daley said the government must share responsibility.

"They are going slow in this project because things are seriously wrong and they have been wrong from day one," he said.

But Mr Constance disagreed, as he replied: "ALTRAC [the consortium responsible for the bungled project] and Acciona need to meet the requirements of the contract, and the NSW government will not be held to ransom."

## No pipe dream for gas guzzler

DOUBTS have been raised about the economic viability of a giant gas pipeline project between France and Spain.

The €3 billion Midi-Cataluña (Midcat) project has been backed by the European Commission and Spanish EU Climate Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete, with French gas grid Tenega and Spanish counterpart Enagas keen to invest.

But an independent analysis of Midcat's first phase concluded that it is unlikely to be cost effective, with critics having long questioned the need for it.

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### Quote of the Week

*"It's an honour for me to lead a candidacy to recover Madrid from the mafia."*  
Iñigo Errejón of left-wing party Podemos launches his campaign to replace Madrid regional leader Cristina Cifuentes, accused of faking her Master's degree.



## Amazon primed in redundancy battle



**WAREHOUSE OF HORRORS:** Inside the firm's Madrid facility.

E-COMMERCE giant Amazon has been slammed for firing more than 100 employees who were striking for improved working conditions.

The firm claims that the decision not to renew temporary contracts was due to a lack of consumer demand, but the CGT labour union accused the company of victimising staff at its biggest Spanish warehouse in San Fernando de Henares, Madrid.

The workers have been organising strike days since March in protest at proposed new employment terms, which are set to see salaries for existing staff frozen indefinitely and sick leave payments slashed.

Spain's largest online retailer usually gives notice when contracts are not renewed, but those laid off told Spanish media that they were informed by email the same day their existing agreements expired.

### » BUSINESS EXTRA

## Remark stirs probe doubt

THE Spanish Supreme Court judge probing the Catalan independence referendum has asked Spain's finance minister to clarify why he said no public money was used to fund the poll when ex-leader Carles Puigdemont is under investigation for misuse of state funds.

## What a catch

VALENCIA-BASED supermarket chain Mercadona has opened its first commercial office in the UK in Harrogate, Yorkshire, which is set to manage purchasing of North Sea fish and negotiate deals with new British suppliers.

## Payback time

SPAIN'S Official Credit Institute has returned €1 billion borrowed from German public bank KfW in 2013 and 2014 to finance small and medium-sized businesses as they emerged from the financial crisis, with the repayment five years ahead of schedule.

## Gib firms set to rock on?

A SPANISH mayor has offered to help more than 60 insurance firms based in Gibraltar to remain in the European Union (EU) single market post Brexit.

Juan Franco of La Linea de la Concepcion, which borders the Rock, has invited firms to set up offices in his town so they can continue to serve EU clients after Britain leaves the

bloc in March next year.

And he has indicated that the council is willing to take unusual measures to do so.

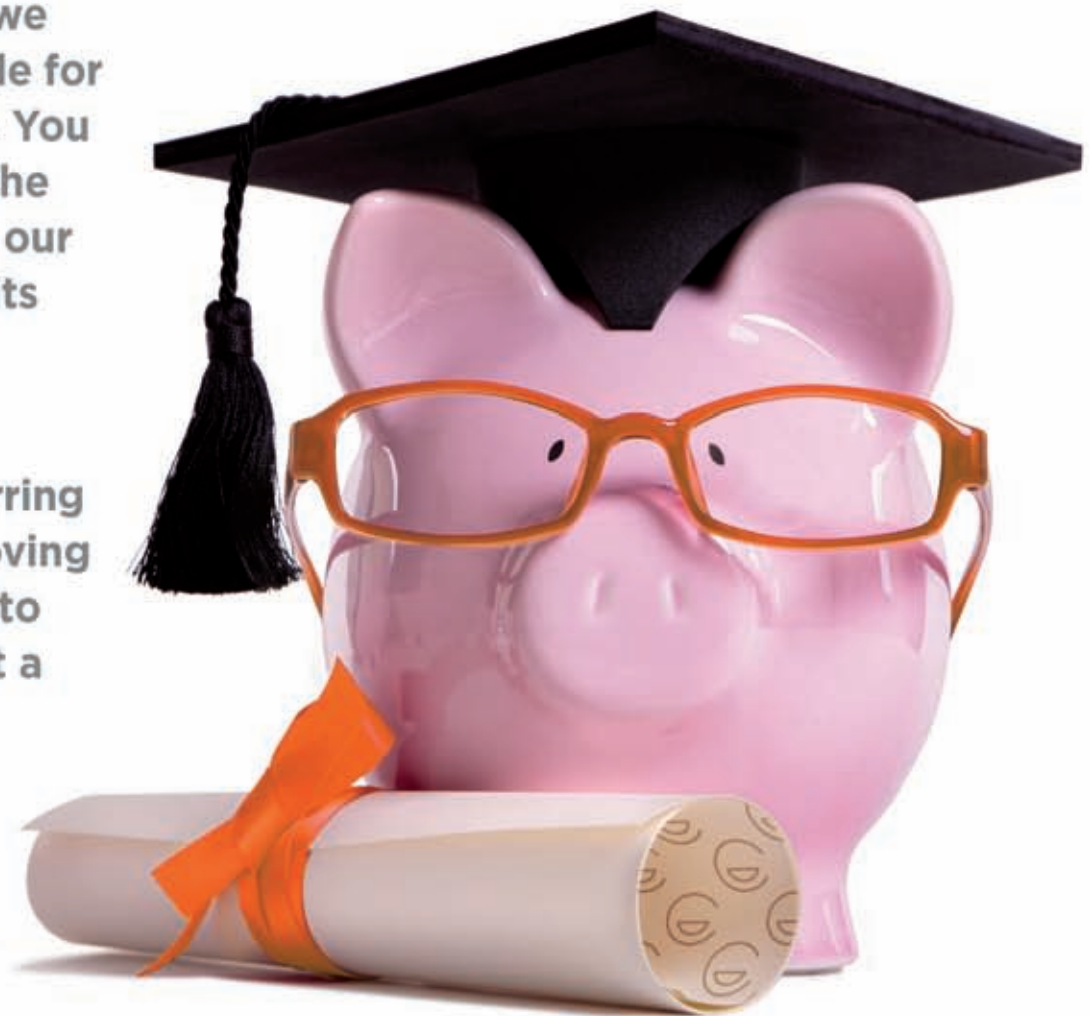
"If necessary we could adapt the convention centre to host the companies temporarily," said Franco in a telephone interview. "Other measures can be explored in the longer term."



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# Brits' €462,000 court battle

## BANKS DESCRIBED AS 'IRREGULAR AND DISHONEST'

THE Swiss branch of a Danish bank must pay a British expatriate couple €462,000 in compensation after a Malaga court found evidence of wrongdoing in a mortgage loan scheme.

A judge presiding over the case concluded that Sydbank - which opened an office in Fuengirola on the Costa del Sol - and Danish mortgage lender Nykredit were not authorised to operate in Spain, referring to them as "clandestine operators."

And a court ruling described the firms' behaviour after convincing the victims to remortgage their home to avoid Spanish inheritance tax as "irregular and dishonest."

It also accused two witnesses testifying on behalf of Nykredit of being "extremely unreliable, when not openly untruthful."

The document continued: "The Malaga Appeal Court has reversed an unjust Court of First Instance ruling and granted relief to two British pensioners, victims of the 'Spanish Equity Release Package' (SERP),



Photo credit Wikimedia/Twitter

**DANISH MORTGAGE TRIAL: Witnesses were described as 'extremely unreliable' in the Malaga trial and (inset) Maria and Barry Gill.**

peddled by Nykredit Realkredit A/S "and Sydbank (Schweiz) AG and sold by Offshore Money Managers."

The decision reportedly comes two days before the unnamed pair's home was due to be auctioned after

they received a notice of foreclosure.

Sydbank and Nykredit are the same two companies implicated in the case of British expatriates Barry and Maria Gill, who still live in their Costa del Sol home despite it being

repossessed, according to reports.

In 2006 they were advised to take out a 90 per cent interest-only mortgage on their property - which they owned in full - by a local financial adviser, slashing their inheritance tax liability from 20 to 2 per cent of its value.

And they were told to borrow the cash from Nykredit and deposit the €891,699 total with Sydbank.

But the sum began to plummet and in 2012 the Gills learned that Sydbank had shut its Swiss branch and paid the remaining €294,228 of their money to Nykredit without their consent.

"We later learned that Sydbank decided to close their Swiss branch because of the threats of legal action they were receiving against them and Nykredit from similar cases of fraud such as our own," Barry told Danish media.

It left the Gills with an outstanding mortgage of €600,000 on a property they had owned entirely six years earlier, and which Nykredit reportedly sold in 2017.

## Venezuela and Spain agree to strengthen ties

SPAIN and Venezuela have announced that they are to 'normalise relations' and restore their respective ambassadors.

It follows a diplomatic spat which erupted in the wake of European Union (EU) sanctions against the troubled South American country.

The row saw President Nicolas Maduro withdraw his envoy to Madrid over what he called "repeated meddling" in his nation's internal affairs.

His comments came after the EU and United States penalised Venezuelan officials for alleged abuses against opposition protests.

The country has been under fire for creating a Constituent National Assembly in 2017, a supreme power that critics say is akin to a dictatorship.

Maduro has repeatedly slammed Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy during live television broadcasts, accusing Spain and other European governments of working together to destabilise his regime.



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# 'Oh to be in England now that April's here'

**LEAPY LEE SAYS IT**  
OTHERS THINK IT



THOSE glorious words from the pen of Robert Browning have, to me, never been more evident than in the last few days of yet another quick sojourn to the old country.

Personally, for me the piece should actually be slightly amended, and the word England replaced by 'London.'

A few days ago, I had received word that the hospital wanted me back in the UK to run a couple of extra tests. Due to pressure of work, it had to be a really quick visit, so last week found me once again 'Ubering' around the streets of the great metropolis.

And what a difference. My last visit dumped me in the middle of the coldest spell for years, with people shuffling around like iced-up Eskimos from the far reaches of the Arctic. Not this time however. In true British fashion and in the blink of an eye, the 'Beast from the East' has been replaced by the shimmering sunshine of the south. And what a difference. London has been completely transformed.

The streets and avenues have literally burst into life, with a wonderful abundance of blossoming cherries and magnolias.



**SCORCHIO!** Sunseekers enjoying the pleasant weather on London's floating Garden Barge Square last weekend.

The embankment of the Thames was quite magnificent, with sunlight bouncing off the water and the terraces of the moored-up pubs packed with, somewhat relieved, lightly clad Londoners, celebrating the fact that spring truly does appear to have arrived at last.

So, once again I find myself hurtling through the air in a tin tube, at some 500 miles an hour, scribbling this missive and hoping that the first time it is

perused, is not when it gets washed up on some foreign shore or another. If you get my drift! Drift, geddit? Ah well.

All in all, it's been quite an eventful week. The anniversary of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech raised all the usual, predictable reactions.

What did interest me however was the high number of those, including some politicians, who felt that were he still alive today, he would have no

trouble being elected - to possibly the highest political position in the land! So things still appear to have a long way to go.

I did feel sorry for those Barbadians caught up in the Windrush fiasco however. I remember in my Bayswater days, this happy race of people arriving in their droves. Bringing with them their colourful attire and rhythms, into what was a somewhat drab UK of the late 50's.

They also managed at that time, in the light of some quite severe racist attitudes, to ultimately integrate and become true British members of society. Let's hope it's all sorted sooner rather than later.

Also delighted to see the North Korean threat all but settled. This of course has very little to do with the sanctions imposed. It is to me an obvious result of China, and probably Russia, ordering Kim Jong-un to cool it.

The way it was going between him and Trump, it truly was beginning to look as though it could indeed lead to some form of nuclear confrontation. Neither China nor Russia wanted that. But isn't it somewhat gratifying, after their arrogant posturing and contempt for past American presidents, that they appear to be extremely wary of Trump and what he could well be capable of?

*Keep the Faith.*  
*Love Leapy*

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*Leapy Lee's opinions are his own and are not necessarily representative of those of the publishers, advertisers or sponsors.*

## Not so secret pleasures of travel

**Nick Horne** *The Rich Pick*

Freelance correspondent, London, England



GENEVA is an interesting place. Of course it's a city, strong distinctive architecture, beautiful views of Lake Geneva and mountains, compact not sprawling, with a fast running river dissecting 'downtown'. A famous shopping street too, the Rue Du Rhone, which parallels the river Rhone's immediate source at the lake's overflow.

The iconic Jet d'Eau fountain blasts a tower of water into the air. Pleasure gardens and coffee shops to enjoy are dotted round the lake shore attracting citizen and visitor alike.

Geneva is usually associated with discreet bankers, jewellers and very high-end watches of exquisite mechanical complication, manufactured with precious metals and adorned with jewels, as well as a host of international organisations whose remits range from football to world health.

CERN the massive underground laboratory of the Large Hadron Collider buried deep underground peers into the secrets of the universe.

There are many reasons to travel to Geneva and many modes of travel to arrive there. Train,



**GUILTY PLEASURE:** The Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues, Geneva just steps from lake, the Old Town and Quartier des Banques.

airplane or car. Where though to stay when you arrive? There are many really good first class hotels in Geneva, how could there not be when it regularly hosts heads of state and is frequently the cockpit of diplomatic tussles.

On the shore of the river Rhone and overlooking the Jet is the Hotel des Bergues. First opened on May Day 1834 the hotel was the

largest in Switzerland at the time. More recently a Four Seasons group hotel, the Hotel des Bergues, was extensively and fabulously refurbished and reopened in 2005 to great acclaim.

The public rooms, shops and restaurants on the ground floor have attracted the wealthiest of travellers and people of business for more than 180 years. The hotel itself accommodated them

in luxury. Nowadays a hotel of this standard ought to have a first class spa and of course the Hotel Des Bergues does. While the hotel is at least 30 minutes from the international airport, it is just a 10-minute walk from Geneva railway station.

My choice of mode of travel to Geneva is the train and I would start my approach in Zurich. Trains frequently travel between Zurich and Geneva. Choose a time that suits you. I select one which will allow me to have lunch on the train, fine dining it is not, however the views from the excellent restaurant cars are just a little bit more expansive than elsewhere. Good food and a little wine to enhance the mood.

The view as the train repeatedly bursts from a tunnel, to traverse a valley, to plunge into another tunnel, to then burst again to a fresh view of mountain, snow and trees cannot be captured on film. In memory it's a stop-motion flicker of impressions. In its way quite exhausting.

The short walk down the hill from the railway station to the hotel, long enough to stretch your legs and arrive ready for the pleasure of the table, the spa, a curated ambiance, Louis-Philippe-style furnishings, with a marble bathroom in every room.

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## TECH FOR THE TIMID



A WHILE ago my bank account was hacked. Why anyone would bother given that my balance is often lower than my IQ beats me, but that's the way the galleta crumbles these days.

What's more surprising is that they only wanted, and took, the equivalent of two euros.

Turns out it was a fishing expedition. According to my friendly banker (yes, there are still a few around even if they're right up there on the most-hated list with us journalists), they were testing the waters to see whether (a) they could do it and (b) they could get away with it.

We nipped that incident together, only to find another odd transaction on my statement a few months later: a hundred euros changed into dollars. Then, presumably when the bank noticed 'their' mistaken transaction, it was changed back to euros. Job done, discrepancy solved, no need for any alarm bells.

Except that there was. What most users might easily forget is the difference between the buying and selling rates for foreign currency. My hundred smackers ended up back in my ac-

# Hack to the future

Terence Kennedy has an internet fraud to report: two euros stolen



**CYBER ATTACKS: Bank fraud is easing.**

count as just 97, and the hackers in Prague (apparently) had done this to thousands of accounts, a nice little earner.

Ditto the supremely clever scam right back at the beginning of comput-

erised banking, when an insider took just one cent from every account in his nationwide bank, correctly assuming no-one would bother. But the bank had several million customers, so you do the maths. Or math if

you're American.

Online banking has been one of the finer innovations of our digital age - used prudently. UK banks say they managed to catch more than 60 per cent of fraud attempts last year, but the equivalent of €800 million still found its way to the bad guys.

When my Inbox isn't telling me I've won a lottery I didn't enter, or that Nigeria's finance minister really needs my help to move several million, I regularly get emails purporting to be from my bank (and others) asking me to update my personal details, and providing a handy link to do so.

Don't. By all means check and update your information. But do it by going to your tried and trusted online banking site in the usual way, not by clicking an email link which may be a 'spoof', taking you straight to a site which may look like your bank's but isn't, and possible penury.

Oh and by the way: if you get an email from your bank saying some payments are outstanding - it's not a compliment.

## PIN money

THE good news for online bankophobes is that you're more likely to be defrauded through your plastic card than with internet banking (80 per cent vs 18 per cent last year).

Although fraud losses still run into millions, online banking crime is actually trending downwards, largely thanks to increased vigilance by both banks and customers.

One golden rule is never to give your PIN code to anyone. Not even bank staff.

Nor indeed to family members.

When a teenager blew some €11,000 on his dad's card last year, the bank refused compensation because the PIN was in dad's desk.

In the interests of family harmony the son is apparently paying it back - at €10 a month. For 90 years.

## Advertising Feature

Christina Sharp



GLOBELINK INTERNATIONAL

christina@globelink.co.uk

# Your quick guide to travel insurance and pre-existing medical conditions



**PEACE OF MIND: When travel insurance covers existing conditions.**

thing linked to that condition and this could cost you dearly in both stress and hard earned cash.

**Am I covered with an EHIC Card?**

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), may cover costs of

state-provided treatment if travelling within the European Economic Area (EEA), however, state healthcare provision varies and can be limited in some locations. You won't be covered for repatriation costs, or the additional med-

YOU will be forgiven if it's not the first thing on your mind when booking your next holiday, but ignoring a pre-existing medical condition when arranging travel insurance could be the single most eye-wateringly expensive mistake you'll ever make.

**Why bother with cover?**

Did you know that in-patient treatment abroad can easily run into hundreds if not thousands per day?

The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) revealed figures in 2017 that would have you quaking in your boots. Like £768,000 for medical treatment and repatriation for a traveller in the US who suffered a stroke; and £81,000 for treating pancreatitis in Greece.

Even a flight home with a doctor escort could set you back over £10,000, and an air ambulance, over £20,000.

It's easy to assume that your medical conditions won't cause you a problem, but doing so can have disastrous repercussions and may invalidate your travel policy if you haven't complied with the declaration requirements.

It may be more difficult, or more expensive to buy insurance which covers your pre-existing conditions, but it could be a drop in the ocean compared to the medical costs you'll face if you have a problem.

**What is a pre-existing medical condition?**

This is an illness or medical condition which you have previously had symptoms, advice or treatment for. The exact definition and declaration requirements vary a lot by travel insurance policy so always check carefully before you buy. NEVER withhold details of a pre-existing condition, or this could invalidate your policy

Many of us suffer from common pre-existing medical conditions, such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes or osteoarthritis, so it's essential that you check and comply with the rules set by your chosen travel insurance company.

Otherwise you are likely to find that you're not covered for any-

ical support this may involve - such as a doctor or nurse escort.

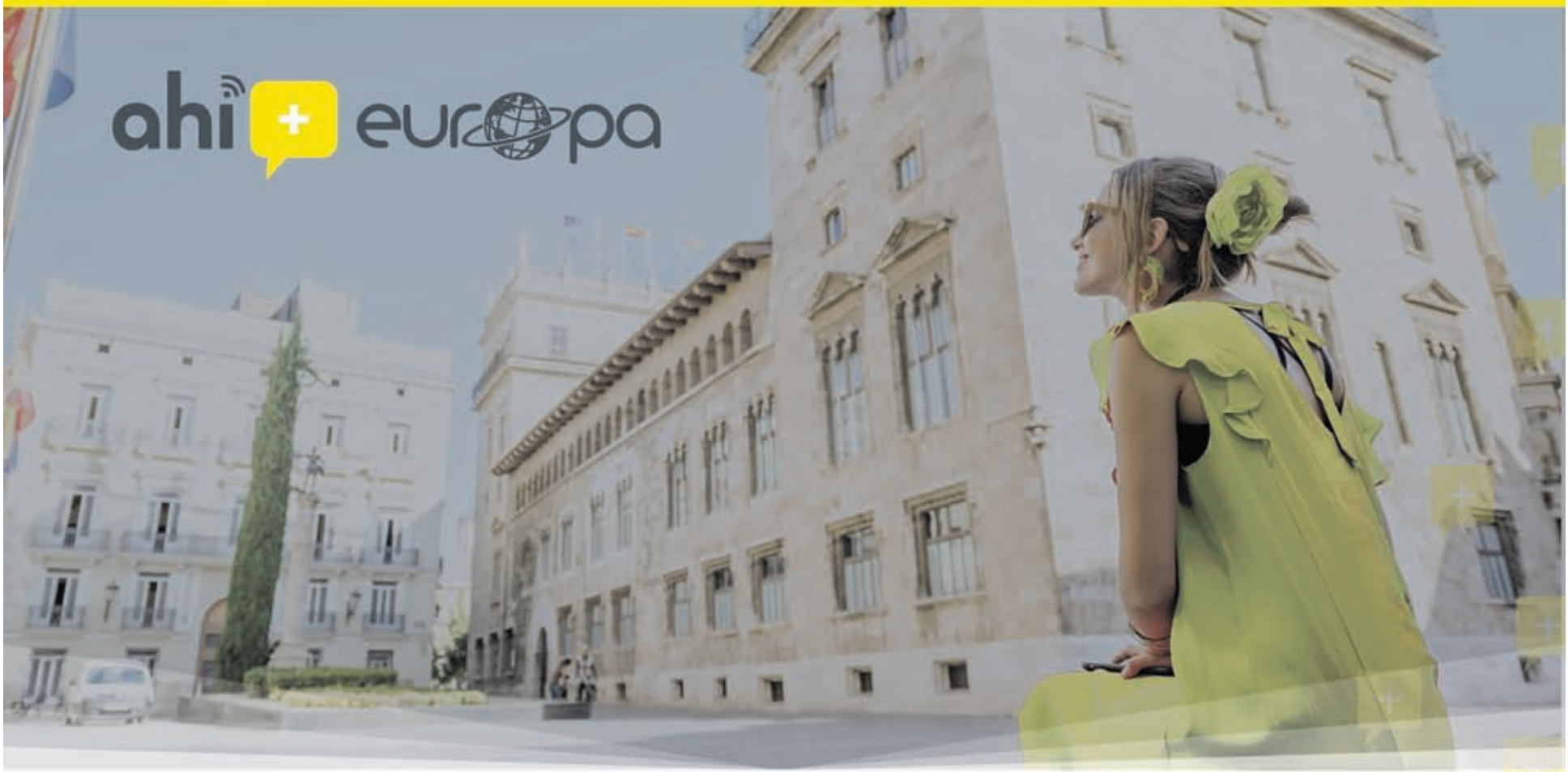
**How can I get covered?**

Some companies have 'accepted medical conditions' lists. Globelink now cover more pre-existing medical conditions than ever before, including high cholesterol, high blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, gastric reflux and more. Visit our website to check the full list. We also offer a medical screening service to check any conditions that are not on our standard list.

Do yourself a favour and think twice before travelling without checking your pre-existing medical conditions are covered. Your holiday heaven could turn into a traumatic trip before you know it.

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# House about that!

## Property market recovery goes on



By Matt Ford

**T**HE Spanish property market is officially booming.

It comes after Spanish real estate analysis and consultancy firm Tinsa revealed that the sector continued to grow throughout the first quarter of 2018, as prices shot up by an average of 3.8 per cent, according to year-on-year data.

But the cost of property increased by much more in a number of hotspots, with capital Madrid (17 per cent) and Palma de Mallorca (14.8 per cent) leading the charge.

Prices rose in virtually all provincial capitals across the country, but the Tinsa index shows that strong demand has dictated that larger markets are developing fastest.

Figures recently published by real estate website Idealista back up the report, after asking prices rose by 2.2 per cent over the first three months of the year, ending March at an average €1,621 per square metre.



**HOMEOWNER SURGE: Sales of both new builds and pre-owned properties are on the rise.**

Madrid again topped the ranking of autonomous communities, with each square metre costing an average €2,159, followed by the Balearic Islands (€2,068), with Extremadura (€768) cheapest.

Spanish estate agents have confirmed that sales of new homes are returning to pre-financial crisis rates.

A report by luxury homes specialist Lucas Fox shows that transactions in Madrid and Barcelona have reached their highest peak since before the property crash sparked by the collapse of international banks. New builds accounted for 50 per cent of sales in the two cities, while Lucas Fox itself says that they accounted for 39

per cent of its own deals.

The average price of homes sold by the firm in 2017 climbed to €830,000 from €730,000 in 2016, a 14 per cent year-on-year gain.

International buyers accounted for 66 per cent of the company's sales, with 10 per cent from the UK, 8 per cent from the United States - up 5 per cent from 2016 - while buyers from Scandinavia, the Middle East and Asia were also well-represented.

"Falling unemployment, low interest rates and a strong economy have all contributed to the growth in the Spanish property market," said Lucas Fox head of operations Rod Jamieson.

"Official figures now indicate that the market has recovered from the crash of 2008 with transactions reaching pre-crisis levels in some areas.

"Overall prices, however, remain below the levels of 2007, offering attractive opportunities for investors across the whole of Spain," he added.

# Veg out in a €5,000 mushroom treehouse

**T**HOSE with a desire to live amongst nature might be green with envy at guests of a luxurious mushroom house in upstate New York.

Suspended several feet above the forest floor, five 'pods' were designed and built in the 'Summer of Love' in 1969.

Each pod is made from moulded concrete and plastic weighing a stunning 80 tonnes, and yet they look like extraterrestrial shitakes.

The exclusive property is available to rent (via one of the pods) and is the creation of architects Peter Strong and William Ashton.

They also drafted in their artist friends to create unique and nature-influenced interior designs.

A monthly asking price of €5,521 is a lot to digest, and doesn't leave 'mush-room' for buying anything else.

However, the quirky designs and shapes of the rooms create a cosy environment and curved wooden



**MAGIC MUSHROOMS:** Forest dwellers will need to stump up to stay in a pod.

branches and beams stretch all around.

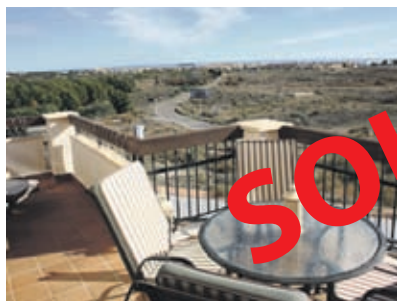
A stunning mosaic design forms the centrepiece of the house, while

the kitchen is divided by an island and bespoke carved furniture is a theme throughout.



CREDIT: MUSHROOM HOUSE/LORI FARR

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Fully furnished  
Air conditioning (hot/cold)  
Outdoor & indoor pool, Jacuzzi  
Lift with panoramic views



**API-V0358 110,000€**  
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2 bedrooms & 2 bathrooms penthouse with lift  
Terrace of 16 sqm with sea views  
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Parking space in garage  
Air conditioning (hot/cold)  
2 Outdoor pools & covered pool  
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Tennis & paddle courts

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# €12 million for a gangster's paradise

By Tom Woods

**A** MANSION owned by the legendary Chicago gangster Al Capone has hit the market for €12.2 million.

The sprawling Miami Beach property underwent extensive restoration in 2015, and is the place where Capone planned the infamous 1929 St Valentine's Day Massacre.

Located on the exclusive and gated Palm Island, the 30,000 square-foot waterfront home is also where the Mafia boss died after seeing out his days as a reclusive dementia sufferer.

Capone bought the Colonial-style white-washed compound in 1928 for €32,500, six



**MAFIA MANSION:** Al Capone held raucous parties on the estate.

years after it was built.

There are three buildings on the estate: a four-bedroom, 6,000 square-foot villa, plus a two-storey pool cabana and a

two-bedroom guest residence which the gangster built as a guardhouse.

The main villa boasts many of the original features from

its original 1920's style, including a black and gold Art Deco powder room, ceiling lights, and a roaring fireplace.

Several other interior



CREDIT: EWM REALTY INTERNATIONAL

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details were restored to their former glory in the renovation work, including French doors, hardwood floors, open archways and multi-pane windows.

The mansion enjoys a private beach, 100 feet of waterfront on Biscayne Bay, and has views of adjacent Hibiscus Island.

A picturesque 30-foot by 60-foot swimming pool sits just off the cabana which Capone bragged was the biggest in Miami.

America's most famous mobster was only 29 when he bought the property after a stint at Alca-

traz, and used it to relax and hold lavish parties.

On one occasion he was reportedly cavorting so loudly that retail magnate J C Penney asked him to 'keep it down' so that the visiting president Herbert Hoover could get some rest.

Capone also spent €40,000 fortifying the grounds, adding a guardhouse at the entrance, searchlights and a seven-foot high surrounding wall.

The gangster died in his bedroom in the house in 1947 at the age of just 48, after battling both syphilis and dementia.

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**LV751 105,000€**

**Turre**



Charming part renovated semi-detached property of 93m<sup>2</sup>, previously used as an art gallery. There is at least 1 bedroom & 1 bathroom, and a covered terrace.

**LV743 88,000€**

**Villaricos**



Superb 4 bed, 4 bath, townhouse on 3 levels of 138m<sup>2</sup> & 44m<sup>2</sup> of terraces & solarium. Beautiful gated community with pools & gardens. Fabulous views.

**LV746 229,350€**

**Mojácar Playa**



1st floor 3 bed, 1 bath, apartment of 70m<sup>2</sup> with lift access. Lovely views to the sea. 2 x terraces. Store-room & parking. Furnished. Community tennis & pools.

**A1327 138,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



South facing 3 bed, 2 bath, front-line apartment of 111m<sup>2</sup> plus 70m<sup>2</sup> of terraces. Uninterrupted sea views. Underground parking & community pool.

**A1328 295,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



East facing 3 bed, 1 bath, apartment of 65m<sup>2</sup> + 10m<sup>2</sup> terrace. Superb sea & pool views. Well kept community gardens. Good rental potential.

**A1335 135,000€**

**Puerto Rey**



3rd floor 2 bed, 2 bath, apartment of 83m<sup>2</sup> + solarium & terrace. 2 community pools & attractive gardens. Underground parking

**A1339 149,000€**


**Turre**



Attractive 3 bed, 2 bath, detached villa of 100m<sup>2</sup> on a plot of 400m<sup>2</sup>. A/C, large pool & gated parking. Short drive to town centre & the coast.

**DV1454 210,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



Pretty detached villa of 196m<sup>2</sup> on a walled corner plot of 600m<sup>2</sup>. Garden with lawn & variety of fruit trees. Solarium with glazed sun room. Great location.

**DV1455 279,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



Impressive 4 bed, 4 bath, detached villa of 212m<sup>2</sup> on 801m<sup>2</sup>. Full rental licence. Sea views. Private pool & garage. Huge under build & more.

**DV1456 475,000€**

**Cortijo Grande**



Stylish detached townhouse of 195m<sup>2</sup> on 3 floors on 508m<sup>2</sup>, 5 beds, 4 baths, A/C, alarm & 2 store-rooms. Plunge pool. Stunning views.

**DV1457 235,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



3 bed, 3 bath, detached villa of 105m<sup>2</sup> on a plot of 424m<sup>2</sup> + garage of 11m<sup>2</sup>. Private pool & terraces. Sea views. Excellent location for beaches & amenities.

**DV1428 255,000€**

**Bédar**



4 bed, 3 bath detached villa + 2 x 2 bed, 3 bath separate apartments of 385m<sup>2</sup>, on a plot of 20,000m<sup>2</sup>. Fabulous sea, village, & mountain views. Many extras included.

**DV1417 699,000€**

**Mojácar Playa**



3 bed, 2 bath detached villa of 125m<sup>2</sup> on an easily maintained plot of 386m<sup>2</sup>. All on one level with a garage & store-room. Walking distance to beach & amenities.

**DV1400 284,500€**

**Zurgena**



3 bed, 2 bath, contemporary villa on a corner plot of 527m<sup>2</sup> in a cul-de-sac of just 8 other properties. Solarium, private pool & carport. Mountain views.

**DV1373 149,950€**

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# Blending contemporary with countryside

**A**RCHITECTURE and design company SAOTA has completed its first built project in Mallorca and the results are stunning.

The Bora Headquarters is a serene resort-style home and work environment which represents a contemporary take on the island's architecture.

This innovative structure was inspired by the airy light-filled spaces of SAOTA's Cape Town projects, and also the surrounding bucolic landscape.

The linear arrangement of the building is interspersed with green breakout spaces on both levels.

Three bedrooms on the upper level are separated by lush courtyards all tied together by the steel holding edge beams.

It is a complex which fuses a modern ap-



**POOLING RESOURCES:** The open plan property is influenced by both nature and local architecture.

proach with regional influences, and the traditional curved tiled roofs in the area inspired the internal gallery, where they are reimaged as

a series of stone vaults. An open terrace is raised half a level across the pool, while the pergolas and tree canopies align perfectly with the space and encourage the entry of natural light.

On the upper level, bedrooms open into a light-filled gallery with signature barrel vaulted ceilings and stone walls.

The use of plaster, wooden pergolas and shutters, aluminium, stone and large expanses of glass reflect the absorption of local materials.

Although the property is perched on a sloping landscape, it enjoys comfortable access on foot and by car, and the linear terraces enable the perk of never-ending views.



CREDIT: FACEBOOK, SAOTA

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**TABERNO**

**VH1136 €139,950 CEE E29**



- 4 bed, 3 bath Country House
- 264m2 build incl garage
- 10,365m2 land
- 3 mins drive to Taberno

**LA ALFOQUIA**

**VH1290 €164,950 CEE TBC**



- Large 3 bed, 2 bath Villa
- 758m2 landscaped garden
- Sun roof, air con, sun roof
- Walk to amenities in La Alfoquia

**ZURGENA**

**VH1253 €179,950 CEE TBC**



- 3 bed, 2 bath Quality Villa
- Great views, swimming pool
- 953m2 garden, walk to restaurant
- 5 mins drive to Zurgena

**HUERCAL-OVERA**

**VH535 €199,950 CEE E159 40**



- Large 3 / 4 bed, 2 bath villa
- 3,339m2 land, pool, workshop
- Great views, walk to restaurant
- 12 mins drive to Huercal-Overa

**VH1279 €144,950 CEE F225 8**



- 3 bed, 2 bath Villa
- 3,000m2 of Land
- 8m x 4m pool
- 10 min walk to Taberno

**VH1304 €134,950 CEE TBC**



- 2 bed, 2 bath Villa
- 636m2 garden, swimming pool
- Sun roof & underbuild
- Walk to amenities in La Alfoquia

**VH1300 €169,950 CEE E141**



- 5 bed, 5 bath Village B&B
- Quality renovation
- Walk to amenities
- Zurgena Village

**VH1231 €214,950 CEE E154 31**



- Large 3 bed, 2 bath villa
- Plus 1 bed, 1 bath apartment
- 775m2 garden & pool
- Walk to restaurant, bar shop, doctors
- 10 mins drive to Huercal-Overa

**WE URGENTLY NEED PROPERTIES IN HUERCAL-OVERA, ZURGENA, LA ALFOQUIA & TABERNO.**

**VH1217 €89,950 CEE E190 32**



- 2 / 3 bed, 2 bath Semi
- Garden & driveway
- 2 communal pools
- Walk to amenities in La Alfoquia

**VH1288 €169,950 CEE TBC**



- 3 bed, 2 bath Villa
- 8m x 4m swimming pool
- Walk to bar / restaurant
- Zurgena area

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## Our Mojacar Offices



Ref: B1209 Valle del Este Townhouse only 159,950€  
Stunning 3 bed, 2 bath, roof solarium & communal pool.

## THE COMPANY WITH THE POWER OF TV BEHIND THEM



REF: A926

LOCATED IN ORIA

159,950€

This is an immaculate, high-quality, 3 bed, 2 bath single-storey, detached villa with private pool, garage, C/H, & all the additional features possible, situated in a fantastic location within walking distance of the charming, Spanish village of Oriá, where you will find a number of amenities ranging from bars, restaurants, shops, supermarkets, banks and importantly a 24 hour medical centre with ambulance, as well as being around a 20 minute drive from the larger town of Albox. The property also boasts great views of the surrounding area thanks to its end position. Bargain!



REF: A922 LOCATED IN ARBOLEAS 159,950€

Located in a small much sought after urbanisation that is within walking distance of the local village centre which has all of the amenities that you will need for day to day living. This lovely family sized villa has many extras included in the asking price. The property has 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, landscaped gardens, air con, private parking and is located in a cul de sac of just 12 other detached villas which comes with lovely views of the surrounding mountains & valley. The villa has been very well maintained both inside and out by the current owners. A must see villa!



REF: A905 LOCATED IN CANTORIA 169,995€

This is an immaculate, single-storey, detached villa with garage and private swimming pool, with fantastic views of the mountains, located within walking distance from the traditional Spanish village of Cantoria, which offers a number of amenities, including numerous bars, shops and more, as well as being within a 10 minute drive of other villages and towns like Albox. The property is also within a 45-minute drive of the coast. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, garage, easily maintained gardens with lots of paved areas and a mix of fruit trees and shrubs. Priced to sell!



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FEATURED  
PROPERTY



Ref:A861 Villa - Huerca Overa 214,950€  
4 bed, 3 bath, private pool. A must see!

OUR INLAND OFFICE IN ALBOX



## PROPERTIES WANTED IN ALL AREAS - INLAND & COASTAL

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Ref:A569 Los Higuerales 167,750€  
3 bed, 2 bath Villa. EPC F

EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:A859 Oria 239,950€  
6 bed, 6 bath Cortijo. EPC E

FEATURED  
LISTING



Ref:B1114 Vera 315,000€  
5 bed, 3 bath Villa EPC E

EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:B1005 S/Cabrera 149,950€  
3 bed, 2 bath Villa. EPC F-E

EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:B992 Mojacar 160,000€  
3 bed, 2 bath Duplex. EPC F

EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:B948 V/D/Este 119,995€  
3 bed, 2 bath Apartment. EPC E

FEATURED  
LISTING



Ref:B1213 Aguadulce 43,000€  
1 bed, 1 bath Apartment EPC E

EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:B1209 V7D/ESTE 159,950€  
3 bed, 2 bath Townhouse. EPC E

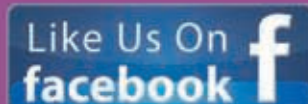
EXCLUSIVE  
TO SPC



Ref:A726 P/Lumbreras 309,950€  
4 bed, 2 bath Luxury Villa. EPC F



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Advertising Feature by Spanish Property Choice

Property of the week **368,000**

euros

THIS is an incredible, detached villa with separate annex and private swimming pool, and one of the most stunning views in Cortijo Cabrera.

On clear days you will see the snow-covered mountains of the Sierra Nevada, the Alpujarra, the observatories of the Calar Alto and the Sierra de Espuna. You will also enjoy breathtaking sunsets from the sun-sheltered terrace.

The property is located on one of the highest levels of this unique Moorish village, within walking distance to the local amenities in Sierra Cabrera, with restaurants, bars and multiple different clubs on offer, as well as a 10-minute drive down the mountain to the further amenities on offer in Turre, and a 20-minute drive to the beach.

The property sits on a relatively large plot, meaning you have an abundance of outside spaces including gardens, terraces, courtyards, off-road parking and the pool area. The access to the property is up a private driveway leading to the garage. From here,



through large, wooden double doors into a spacious courtyard space with an olive tree in the middle.

This leads into a further courtyard surrounded by the buildings that make up the property, which is partially covered offering fantastic outdoor living/dining spaces and has a feature fountain. You can then head up a staircase that leads to the private swimming pool and surrounding

patio area plus the annex.

The entrance to the main villa leads into the kitchen, which is a very high-quality, German build with abundant storage and all fitted appliances. From here you head directly into the typical, separate dining room with traditional dome element found in nearly all properties in Sierra Cabrera, benefiting from air-conditioning.

This then continues into the main living space, which is a very



A STUNNING HOUSE: With the most exquisite views.

large room with log burner, air-conditioning and a large glass area looking through the arches on both sides of the room and out onto the terrace and the views beyond. From here you can access the inner courtyard and the terrace looking out to the views.

The remainder of the main house consists of the master suite, with a good-sized bedroom with wardrobe. From here there is a doorway leading through a sec-


tion of walk-in wardrobes and into the en-suite bathroom, equipped with walk-in shower.

Heading back outside and leading off the courtyards are a number of other rooms, including a storage/utility room, a cloak-room, plus a further room which could easily become a further bedroom as it has wardrobes.

The separate annex is located by the private swimming pool, consisting in total of two rooms and a bathroom. One room is currently set up as a bedroom, whereas the other is set up as a living space with a small kitchenette in the wardrobe, although this could easily be converted back into a second bedroom. The bathroom is fitted with a bathtub.

A truly magnificent property that has to be seen to be truly appreciated!

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## Franco's summer retreat under siege

**M**ANSION that served as the summer residence of 20th century dictator Francisco Franco is now the subject of a legal battle.

The provincial authority of A Coruña in north-western Spain has decided to take action to argue that the late leader's heirs have no right to benefit from 'plunder.'

Franco's grandchildren put the impressive Pazo de Meiras palace up for sale last month, which has prompted a strong reaction from politicians and public alike.

Nestor Rego, one of around 25 Galicians who invaded the property in protest last year, said: "It's a scandal that this property continues to be controlled by the dictator's family." A similar view is held by Gorette Sanmartin, deputy president of the A



**PROBLEMATIC PALACE:** A legal judgement will decide the fate of the property.

Coruña authority, who would like to see a 'consensus between all political forces and all levels of government' to open the palace and grounds up to the public. She has presented a report which questions the way in which Franco acquired the property during the Spanish civil war of the 1930's. Some claim that leaders of both A Coruña Council and the business community obliged local people to hand over a

portion of their income for the purchase and expansion of the estate.

The palace's grounds were expanded from 5.7 acres to the pristine 16-acre site currently being advertised by real estate company Mikeli under a price tag of €8 million.

An overall figure on how much the state spent on the property, which became the Franco family's summer residence for 36 years, is difficult to establish.



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## A Selection of our Latest Properties



**Villa in San Juan De Los Terreros**  
 Ref 1939 price €259.000  
 3 Bed 2 bath - Private pool - Video intercom on the Gate - Electric gate - Electric Shutters - Private parking - Sea views



**Villa in San Juan De Los Terreros**  
 Ref 1963 price €228.500  
 3 bed 3 bath - Air conditioning and heating - Private pool - Off street parking - Gated and walled property - Sea views



**Villa in Desert Springs**  
 Ref 2030 price €240.000  
 4 bed 4 bath - Air conditioning and heating - Private pool - Off street parking - Gated and walled property - Sea views



**Villa in Antas**  
 Ref 2067 price €185.000  
 3 bed 2 bath - Air conditioning - Private pool - Close to shops Bars etc - Close to golf



**New apartments in Carboneras**  
 Ref 2063 price €113.000  
 1, 2 and 3 bedroom - High quality finish - 10 year builders guarantee - Sea views - Ask about great finance plans



**Apartment in Puerto Rey**  
 Ref 2079 price €85.000  
 2 beds and 2 baths - Communal pool - Full a/c - Close to the beach - 105m Solarium



**Villa in Urcal**  
 Ref 2077 price €149.950  
 3 bed and 2 bath - Central heating - Full a/c - Room for a pool - Large garden - Hot tub and out building



**Apartment in Valle del Este**  
 Ref 1665 price €99.950  
 2 bed 2 bath - Full a/c - Golf property - Stunning views - Fully furnished



**Townhouse Mojácar Playa**  
 Ref 2092 price €200.000  
 3 beds 3 baths - Communal pool - 100m to the beach - Large underbuild / games room



**Apartment in Macenas**  
 Ref 2093 Price €150.000  
 2 beds 2 baths - Communal pool - Underground parking - Sea views



**Triplex in Vera Playa**  
 Ref 2087 price €169.000  
 3 beds 3 baths 3 floors - 163m2 build with garden - 100m to the beach - Communal pool



**Off plan Villa in Puerto Rey**  
 Ref 2062 price €310.000  
 3 beds 3 baths - Private pool - Underfloor heating - 2nd line to beach

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 Saturday 11 am - 2pm

**ADVICE TO SELLERS**

Never pay to advertise | Agree inventory prior to contract  
 Never sign a sole agency agreement | Ask locally about your agent  
 Ensure reservation is paid to you, not an agent

**ADVICE TO BUYERS**

Appoint a solicitor to control all transactions | Ask locally about your agent  
 Never pay money to the agent, only to your solicitor | Research what you are looking for  
 Know your budget and don't be pushed into a purchase

## Could you be getting more from your pension? Make the most of your retirement with Currencies Direct

So you've finally realised your dream of retiring to Spain to live out your golden years relaxing and soaking up the sun, congratulations!

However, now you're living abroad you might have realised that using your bank to transfer your pension payments to Spain is eating in to how much you receive.

Keep reading if you'd like to find out how you could be maximising the return on your pension payments...

### Avoid fees

Most high street banks will charge a fee each and every time you make a transfer, and when you're making monthly pension transfers these sums can really add up - typically equating to hundreds of lost euros over the course of the year.

However, leading currency transfer providers like Currencies Direct work on a fee-free basis, meaning you could quickly see significant savings by using their services.

By avoiding these fees on your monthly pension payments it can quickly add up to considerable savings for you over the span of your retirement.

### Secure the most competitive exchange rate

Another way to make your pension stretch as far as possible is to ensure that you get the most competitive rate on your currency exchange.

You'll find that different providers will offer different rates when transferring your money, with currency brokers generally offering more competitive rates than high street banks.

While the difference may only be a few pennies either way, depending on the size of your transfer, you could be hundreds or thousands of euros better off if you choose the right provider.

However, it isn't enough to just use the right provider, to really get the most out of your pension you need to time your transfers for when the exchange rate is most favourable.

Exchange rates can be affected by factors like economics, politics and even natural disasters, and following Brexit there has been considerable volatility in the EUR/GBP exchange rate.

Therefore it's crucial to stay on top of the latest movements in the currency markets so you don't miss your window.

The easiest way to do this is to sign up for market updates from a leading currency broker, so you receive the latest news straight to your email inbox.

### Exploring your transfer options

As mentioned above, the volatility of currency markets means that the value of your pension could vary considerably from month-to-month, which can make it difficult to budget.

However, by setting up a forward contract with Currencies Direct you can freeze an exchange rate for up to a year, protecting you from unfavourable movements in the currency market.

You can even fix the exchange rate for regular transfers, ensuring that you know exactly how much your pension will be worth from one month to the next.

### Get in touch - Costa de Almería

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VIP Almeria will continue to promote the idea of overseas home ownership to a British audience and will be promoting Costa Almeria property at Stand E33 at A Place in the Sun Live, so if you are considering selling, contact us.

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<p><b>Villa in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7568</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 3 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Private Pool</li> <li>• Self Contained Apartment</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 360,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Apartment in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7476</p> <p><b>UNDER OFFER</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 1 Bathroom</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> <li>• Ground Floor</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 135,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Apartment in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7553</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 1 Bathroom</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> <li>• Established Communal Gardens</li> </ul> <p><b>From 125,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Villa in Mojacar</b> • VIP7529</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 3 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Sea Views</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 225,000€</b></p>
<p><b>Apartment in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7489</p> <p><b>SOLD</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Bedroom</li> <li>• 1 Bathroom</li> <li>• 2 Additional Rooms</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 79,950€</b></p>	<p><b>Cortijo in Mojacar</b> • VIP7526</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 1 Bathroom</li> <li>• 26,000 m2 Plot</li> <li>• Sea and Mountain Views</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 275,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Villa in Mojacar</b> • VIP7533</p> <p><b>UNDER OFFER</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 2 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Coastal Views</li> <li>• Room for Private Pool</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 299,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Apartment in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7565</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 1.5 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Frontline</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 149,950€</b></p>
<p><b>Townhouse in Mojacar</b> • VIP7419</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 2 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> <li>• Move in ready</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 195,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Apartment in Desert Springs</b> • VIP7410</p> <p><b>SOLD</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 2 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> <li>• Golf Resort</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 129,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Apartment in Mojacar Playa</b> • VIP7549</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 1 Bathroom</li> <li>• Communal Pool</li> <li>• El Cantal Area</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 128,000€</b></p>	<p><b>Villa in Agua Nueva</b> • VIP7522</p> <p><b>UNDER OFFER</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Bedrooms</li> <li>• 2 Bathrooms</li> <li>• Private Pool</li> </ul> <p><b>Price: 227,500€</b></p>

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Mojacar Playa 04638 - Almería.**

**W**HILE the country may have voted to leave the European Union, Brits show no sign of giving up on their dreams of owning a place in the sun, according to new research published by specialist firm Spanish Legal Reclaims.

The study reveals that over half (55 per cent) of Britons who are considering buying a home abroad say Brexit will have no impact on their decision to buy. In fact, 10 per cent of those surveyed said they were actually more likely to buy in Europe now that Britain has decided to leave the EU.

Spain remains the most popular choice for Brits looking to buy abroad, with 45 per cent saying it was their first choice, followed by France (37 per cent) and Italy (20 per cent).

"It's not surprising to hear that Spain remains the favourite destination for British people who want to buy property in Europe. Despite the horror stories you may have heard of disappearing developers, it continues to deliver on lifestyle, property prices and climate," said Spanish Legal Reclaims CEO, Luis Cuervo.

# Brexit? What Brexit

## Brits buying property abroad 'not bothered' by triggering of Article 50

- 55 per cent of Brits still want to buy a second home in Europe
- Spain remains most popular destination
- 130,000 Brits owed €5.3bn now eligible to get money back on previously unbuilt homes



**NO CRISIS: Brits looking for property abroad continue to flock to Spain.**

"What's more, a Spanish Supreme Court ruling introduced in December 2015 means that if you bought a property off-plan that isn't delivered on time by the developer, and they have since gone

bankrupt, you can reclaim your money back from the bank who was meant to safeguard your deposit.

"The new ruling gives fresh hope to thousands who are potentially hundreds of thousands

of pounds out of pocket," Mr Cuervo continued.

Around 130,000 Britons are eligible to claim a total of £5.3bn against this ruling, according to research commissioned by Spanish Legal Re-

claims and the Centre for Economics and Business research.

Spanish Legal Reclaims is also currently working with clients across the country to help them reclaim money they are owed from off-plan Spanish property. One of the successful claimants is Janet Jalil from north-west London.

"In 2002, my husband and I decided to buy a second home for holidays, as well as somewhere we could eventually use as a retirement home. After lots of research, we paid just over €200,000 for a property in Marbella.

"When we flew to Spain to see the property for ourselves, we quickly found out that it wasn't built. Our lawyer let me know about the change in the law and, after a year-long legal process we are now expecting to get all of our original deposit back plus interest!"

**For more information please visit [www.spanishlostdeposits.com](http://www.spanishlostdeposits.com).**

## Wandering cabin sees stars

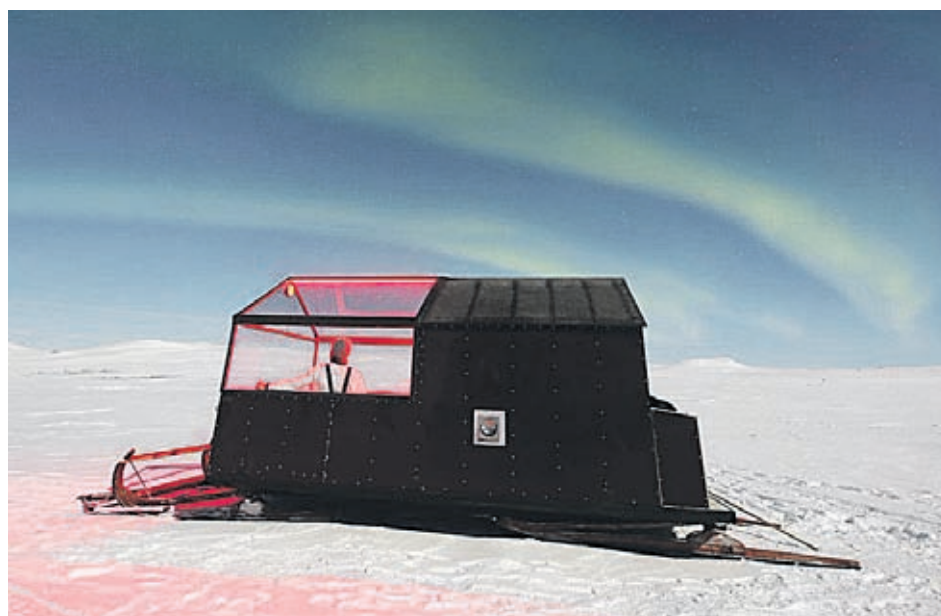
**A**PETITE mobile hotel has been launched in Arctic Finland, which can be fixed onto a sled behind a snowmobile in pursuit of the Northern Lights.

The two-person cabin measures just eight feet wide, almost 15 feet long and 6.5 feet tall, and is the brainchild of tour operator Off the Map Travel.

Inside, all the main facilities are present, including a comfy bed, small table, gas heater and external dry toilet.

A crucial feature of the novel abode is the transparent roof, so guests can view the stunning Northern Lights while lying down.

Guests will also have access to the complementary snowshoes and personal sleds, to allow them to explore the local area.



**SLED SHELTER: The cabin is perfect for gazing up to the skies.**

At the moment there are only three existing mobile cabins in operation, located in the remote village of Kilpisjärvi, northern Finland.

Jonny Cooper, founder of Off the Map Travel and an Arctic travel expert says: "Away from man-made light pollution, the

wilderness surrounding Kilpisjärvi gives guests the best possible opportunity to experience the Northern Lights and simply enjoy the silence of the Arctic Tundra."

The wilderness experience for customers includes a snowmobile journey to the hotel, and

a campfire meal of local sausages, made by a guide.

A warming breakfast, local snacks and hot drinks are included for guests, and the Kilpisjärvi area has statistically more clear night skies than any other place in Finland.

## Nine-year sales high

SPAIN'S National Institute of Statistics (INE) has published provisional residential property sales figures for 2017 that reveal a nine-year high in the number of transactions made last year.

This makes 2017 the most positive year for Spain's property market since 2008, which was the year in which the post-boom crash arrived, sending the real estate industry into a tailspin which has taken years to rectify.

Since 2013, the signs have been strong that the Spanish property market was steadily finding its feet, but this data is the first time that pre-crash conditions have been recorded.

Across all 17 autonomous regions of the country, property sales figures were higher than the year previously, and the nationwide 14.6 per cent increase on 2016 sales pushed the total figure to 464,423 homes sold last year.

This is in positively stark contrast to the 312,000 homes bought and sold in Spain in 2012, which marked the bottoming-out of sales activity during the deepest depth of the recession.

Figures for 2017 ended on a high too, with the official number of 32,211 transactions recorded in December last year, an encouraging 9.2 per cent increase on the same month in 2016, almost double the notary data published this week, which estimated a 4.5 per cent increase in sales for December.



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**SOLD**

€ 180,000 Cortijo Montesa

**Cerro Gordo, Partaloa**



**SOLD**

€ 169,000 Villa Caballeros

**Los Carasoles, Zurgena**



**Under Offer**

€ 157,950 Villa Magna

**La Perla, Arboleas**



**Under Offer**

€ 135,000 Cortijos Lorenzo

**Oria**



**Under Offer**

€ 149,950 Villa Rivela

**Partaloa**



**SOLD**

€ 155,000 Villa Santos



**Part of the team at Almeria Homes**

**Albox**



**SOLD**

€ 215,000 Villa Bello

**Seron**



**Under Offer**

€ 210,000 Cortijo Historia

**Partaloa**



**Under Offer**

€ 115,000 Cortijo Ginseng

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**TV COUCH CRITIC**

by Adam Whalley-Lewis

# Johnny Vegas spending a year with the tribe?

I'm so pleased that Johnny Vegas has found his way back from The Solana to the Lake District for the new BBC show *Home from Home*, BBC1 Fridays. I was getting worried that his mum and sister were holidaying without him in Benidorm (they are), but it seems he hasn't got sunstroke and is playing happy families in the north of England.

This is good news, I was on the verge of an after-sun gel dash up to the Costa Blanca, just to check that the absent Johnny was OK.

*Home from Home* started out as a pilot on BBC2, but as only the BBC can and I have no idea why they do, moved to BBC1 when it proved to be a success - maybe the BBC need us all to remind them that we can and do watch BBC2 sometimes and that some of us actually watch commercial TV too, with the shades drawn, lights off and wearing a large sun hat and dark glasses indoors, but we do watch. Back to the Lakes.

Johnny plays Neil Hackett and



**CABIN CREW:** Johnny Vegas (right) in new show *Home from Home*.

Niky Wardley his wife Fiona. No disrespect to anyone, but Neil and Fiona, that's more BBC1 than BBC2, right?

Fresh from *Silent Witness* and *Doctor Foster*, Emilia Fox and Adam James (Adam is a solid BBC1 name too isn't it) play the Dillons, Lakes' neighbours to the Hacketts. The basic story is that the Hacketts have eventually achieved a lifelong dream to buy a traditional lodge in the Lake District,

you know the sort of thing, lovely setting, nothing traditional about the actual lodges at all.

Their lodge is set on the Lake View Holiday Park and they love it, until they meet their neighbours, the Dillons. There is a lovely BBQ scene where Penny (Dillon) is explaining what she misses most about Ibiza - 'shut up and eat your steak' should become a new Johnny catch phrase.



Photo credit BBC

**JUNGLE MEN:** Will Millard and a Korowai tree-dweller in *My Year With the Tribe*.

*Home from Home* continues on BBC1, Friday evenings.

A solid BBC2 programme Johnny probably wouldn't want to front is *My Year with the Tribe*, BBC2 Sundays. The show follows Will Millard (he's a writer and looks really at home with the tribe, maybe too at home come to think of it) as he spends a year with the Korowai tribe in Papua, Indonesia.

The Korowai are tree house-

dwellers and Will sets out to understand the challenges they are tackling as they move into the modern world. There are some pretty spectacular shots of the tree houses and some curl up moments when Will gets to grips with the realities of living with the natives - put your coffee down, bugs cleaning out your ears for example, the programme pulls no punches; but then the Tribe explain that they have a sort of fake tree house for use on Dutch TV and for me it then all started to feel slightly uncomfortable.

If a massive HD TV and a convection oven come into shot during Sunday's offering, I'm crying foul!

Fans of the Channel 4 show *Humans* will be pleased that series 3 is due to be screened soon. If you didn't see this first time around and want to catch a couple of Mr Selfridge actors playing with a robot - he did literally play with a robot, series 1 and 2 are available via CH4 box sets.

*Happy Viewing.*

# Real men get real shaves

**Ric Polansky**



*Ric Polansky moved to Mojacar in 1969 as a pioneer developer. He reads extensively and has travelled in South America panning gold and looking for El Dorado.*

MONEY was hard to come by back in the early days. It seemed if we had any left over it was always needed on a house repair or something essential we were saving for.

Then, one day, I conjured up a different plan. I wanted a shave from a Spanish barber. It was a custom in the era that if you took your wife out for Saturday dinner you got yourself a shave. Garrucha was just such a place.

I knew the magic spot and motored on in. They were happy to see me. Sat me down quickly and threw a large sheet over me leaving exposed just

my head. The chair was cocked just right so I had my own personal view of the ceiling and handfuls of lather were painted on my face by a small brush. Over and over again swirling motions and more and more lather built up in a mountain of foam.

Finally a barber's finger probed the meringue to find where the skin was and a razor pressed up against a grizzled beard and smooth slashes ensued.

Within seconds the first two layers of my skin were scraped away and my face glowed for better or worse. I heaved a giant sigh of relief and started to get up, but he gently pushed me back into the chair.

"Wait" he said and the entire process started all over again. More mountains of foam and a rapid swirling motion filled my cheeks. Then the knife was back and a deeper

cut, cleaner shave began.

Few flourishes happened. It was all surgical and with a great purpose toward the night's coming activities. Smoother than a baby's bottom and with a glow that pulsated with each heart beat. Stubble wouldn't risk growing for weeks or longer.

In short it is a rite of passage for living here in Spain. A baptism of a type and must be done at last once whilst living here. A quest, a challenge, and a confirmation of the noble and good life. It will also score plenty of kudos around the drinking table at cocktail hour time. Crossed over the line and managed to return and tell the tale.

Living in Spain just isn't a balancing act of not falling over while clutching a G&T. There are quests that must be achieved to live here officially.



**CUTTING IT FINE:** An old-fashioned wet shave was a rite of passage for a man in Spain.

# Flagging appetite for dining out

**Nora Johnson**  
*Breaking Views*



Nora is the author of popular psychological suspense and crime thrillers and a freelance journalist. To comment on any of the issues raised in her column, go to [www.euroweeklynews.com/3.0.15/nora-johnson](http://www.euroweeklynews.com/3.0.15/nora-johnson)

RESTAURANT chains on the UK High Street have recently been facing a combination of a squeeze on incomes, rising costs and falling demand. Prezzo, Byron and Jamie's Italian have all shut restaurants. It's just market correction. Anyone can see there's massive oversupply, and most of those in trouble don't offer a good product so aren't sufficiently robust when the going gets tough.

This means that the market works the way Adam Smith taught us. Those restaurants which can't get bums on seats will fail, and their customers will move on to those of their competitors offering more appeal and better value.

In a restaurant there are two words never to get excited about. First, its 'Concept' (explained by hipster waiters who breathlessly tell you the salad leaves were foraged from the central reservation of the M1, or the salmon hand-smoked in a skip under Brixton



**FANNY CRADOCK: Back in fashion on BBC iPlayer.**

railway arches). Second, 'taster menus' (convenient and lucrative for the restaurant but only half the items of which many of us really like). Two words - like 'amateur' and 'brain surgeon'. Or 'Donald' and 'Trump'. All are terrible ideas.

Basically, there are still too many celebrity chef TV programmes helping perpetuate the dream that fancy food is what we all crave. You know: Masterchef smears, sprays, foams, powders, splats, skid marks and blobs.

Expensive ingredients, high wages, high overheads, fancy plates, fancy cutlery - equals low profit margins; equals bad business. What's preferable is a

good dinner without acres of starchy tablecloths or starched waiters.

Alternatively, cook at home and enjoy farm fresh foods. Oh wait, umm, we don't teach cooking at school any more! Pass the cornflakes...

Meanwhile, the original celebrity TV chef is back. Fanny Craddock, the OTT matriarch who introduced post-war Britain to prawn cocktails and cheese soufflé, is back on BBC iPlayer.

She peered from the telly like a culinary Medusa, rude, arrogant and completely insensitive to other guests. While Johnnie, her monocled husband, talked and moved like an original Thunderbirds puppet and is credited with uttering the immortal line: "Hope all your doughnuts turn out like F\*\*\*y's."

Priceless.

*Nora Johnson's thrillers 'The Girl in the Red Dress,' 'No Way Back,' 'Landscape of Lies,' 'Retribution,' 'Soul Stealer,' 'The De Clerambault Code' (www.nora-johnson.net) from Amazon in paperback/ eBook (€0.99; £0.99) and iBookstore. All profits to Costa del Sol Cudeca cancer charity.*

[columnists@euroweeklynews.com](mailto:columnists@euroweeklynews.com)

## LEGALLY SPEAKING

### Is she the president?

**Q.** I recently put myself forward as president of our community. At our AGM the administrator clearly miscounted the votes so I requested a recount. She then counted the votes and got it wrong again! At this point, the current president resigned and the meeting ended in disarray.

However, the administrator announced that she would do yet another recount and confirm the outcome. In this result, two days later, I had three more votes (out of 17 votes!) and a larger quota. I asked the administrator to send an email to all the owners with the result but she has not done this. Where do I stand?

SR (Costa Blanca)

**A.** I am supposing from the tone of your question that you have now been elected president of your community.

Properly, the outgoing president, who presided over the AGM, should, in combination with the person acting as secretary, prepare the official minutes of the meeting, sign them, and register them with the property registry. Then you are officially the president.

Properly, these minutes should state the number of votes cast and who voted for each candidate.

**David Searl**

*You and the Law in Spain*



Send your questions for David Searl through lawyers Ubeda-Retana and Associates in Fuengirola at [Ask@lawtaxspain.com](mailto:Ask@lawtaxspain.com), or call 952 667 090.

## Out of touchscreen

**Mike Senker**  
*In my opinion*



*Views of a Grumpy Old Man*

HERE'S a message for all people - mostly of the younger generation who walk along the street or in aisles of supermarkets or inside shopping centres - STOP STARING DOWN AT YOUR PHONE AND LOOK WHERE YOU ARE GOING! What are you doing?

Three times in a matter of minutes today I had to take evasive action because people were just not looking where they were going and were about to walk straight into me. As usual, if you say anything, you get a volley of abuse or just a dirty look - not a 'sorry' or any kind of acknowledgement that they might be at fault.

It worries me that these same people are messaging on their phones as they are driving too. I also still see loads of people talking on their phones when they are driving. I think it should be an instant ban don't you?

I bought something from Amazon the other day and was told it would be delivered within a couple of days. I had a tracking number and the web address of the delivery company. It was Amazon Spain by the way. Two days later I get an email saying it would be delivered that day. Great.

The day came and went and no delivery so I went online to see where it was. I put in the tracking number which was 22 digits long and it said they had tried to deliver and nobody was in. Now I live in a community where there is someone on the entrance gate 24/7 except for the odd time when they do a little patrol or go to the loo and there's always a note on the door saying back in 10 minutes.

So I called the company and after a while and after eventually finding an English-speaking operator and giving her the 22 digit tracking number - gawd knows why it has to be 22 digits - I was told that it was on the way. Anyway the next day the same thing happened. No delivery and the same note on tracking that nobody was at home.

I call again and explain there is always someone there and ask if they are they going to the right place. I also get an email from Amazon asking what I thought of the delivery, was I enjoying my new purchase and how would I score them. They got a one because there wasn't a zero, and a note saying I couldn't rate it yet as it had not been delivered.

I phoned again, the 22 digit number was given and I was told it would be delivered the next day. Five days after the original date I got the parcel and when I checked online it told me that I had signed for it, which I hadn't.

[mikesenker@gmail.com](mailto:mikesenker@gmail.com)

### Advertising Feature

## Funeral Insurance Plan with Albox Insurance

AT some stage in our lives we need to think about funeral insurance, especially the burden of high funeral cost combined with handling the different language culture and customs we have here in Spain.

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## Why didn't you publish my April Fool's joke?

CONGRATULATIONS on your success with *Euro Weekly*. As a reader from your very first edition, which then followed Mr Andy Ormiston, one of only two free papers, *The Entertainer* and Andy's paper which was the size of *The Financial Times* and published monthly. I have written to your paper many times on various subjects, animal cruelty and Second World War events and from as far back as 2002 I always sent you an April Fool which you published without any qualms but this year you refused - why?

Everything I have written has been harmless, nothing rude, insulting, racist, private names or public people. I have had phone calls, been stopped in the street to ask why no pranks this year.

Joe (*The Cat Man*), *Rojales*

### Editor's note:

Joe thank you for your words of praise.

However when your piece was sent in, there was no mention that it was an April Fool's joke but simply invited readers to visit the dock in Malaga to

### Many people irritated by Correos rule

**HOW many Costa Blanca residents are affected by Correos' refusal to deliver mail in many areas?**

**In Els Poblets we have a choice, pay Correos €80 yearly for the privilege of a postbox within the Correos building or queue and collect your mail. The office is open for two hours, five days per week and if not collected within a month the post is returned to sender.**

**I understand similar directives have been introduced elsewhere and some months later reversed af-**



Credit: Ratikova Shutterstock

**| CORREOS: Doesn't like to deliver.**

**ter many people have bought their postal boxes. Residents left to their own devices organised and paid for**

**local blocks of boxes thereby retaining their actual address.**

*Ray Brass, Els Poblets*

have the chance to tour two NATO warships and have pictures taken with the captains and crew. We attempted to verify the truth of the information and

discovered that the British warship mentioned had been scrapped a number of years ago and then called you to ask whether there was a mistake.

It was then that it was explained that this was an April Fool's piece and your partner was advised that we did not consider it appropriate to suggest that

our readers should waste their time visiting two warships that weren't there.

In hindsight we believe that when balancing your disappointment, against the potential misleading of our readers, we were absolutely correct in not publishing something that wasn't funny and was just misleading.

### Tee'd off two

IN response to Stephen Hamilton's Tee'd Off letter last week I would like to inform him that I belong to a small, friendly, English-speaking golf society. The society plays at Parador de Golf, near Malaga. One does not have to be a member at Parador de Golf to play with this society although if you wish to join as a member there is no waiting list.

The course is flat and very walkable and cooler than most inland courses in the summer, it being on the coast. The society plays two competitions on average per week on Mondays and Thursdays. There is also a very good social side to be enjoyed.

*Mo Reilly, Montemar*

### HAVE YOUR SAY

All letters by email or post should carry the writer's address, NIE and contact number though only the name and town will be published.

Readers who have missed correspondence can see all letters - which can be edited before publication - posted on: [www.euoweeklynews.com](http://www.euoweeklynews.com).

## Boozy Brits to be slapped with fines

Only old lifeless boring people think this is a good idea... remember you were young once.

*Matt Silver*

Having lived here for 14 years I have never seen Spanish young people behave like some of the Brits abroad. I go to a Spanish bar and watch a football match, they don't really drink much, it's called sport and unfortunately that ain't the case in the UK now. I got so tired of seeing hen stag holidays making fools of themselves I very seldom go into a British bar any more.

*Stephanie Bremner*

### Squatters refuse to leave expat's Spanish home

Sorry to say this happened to my sister and it took years to get him out and he trashed the house and stole everything when he went. Spanish Law in regard to this is nuts.

*Mandy Scott*

Terrible. Home owners selling property beware. When they see for sale boards and no activity they just move in. It's all wrong.

*Jay Ellis*

Big problem in Spain!!! It's not the first time I've heard of this. Unfortunately the law protect these people in the wrong... And if you don't pay your bills you may

### Comments from EWN online

lose your house for good...

*Maribel Orellana-Aragon*

### YouTuber faces jail for homeless man biscuit prank

Despicable. He should be locked up and fed a diet of everything he's made others eat.

*Mollie Matthews*

What a disgusting excuse for a human being!

*Judy Breadmore*

Shut down his channel and lock him up.

*Zara Maria*

### Child sex pest who fled Spain freed

Has not had access to computers? Pull the other one. He should at least be on the sex offenders list over here and worldwide. Just because they haven't found

any info doesn't mean to say there isn't any; and the original sentence was not enough.

*Moira Armitage*

Why is such a person even free at all? Isn't child porn illegal? Or is it one of those crimes that isn't really cared about? Possession of a pocketknife lands you in jail but kiddie porn doesn't?

*Erik Robinson*

### More than 1,000 pigs drown at farm

I'm all in favour of animal rights groups... but filming the pigs drowning!!! Why in god's name could they do that without helping them? Filming their deaths was obviously more important?? WHY?

*Mandy Taylor*

The owner will no doubt demand compensation for the loss of the pigs, and I doubt the authorities will have the stomach to prosecute him. Win win for the farmer.

*Ron Curtis*

Ghastly. But it is the farmers/owners who should be held to account. Ban them from keeping any animals. Plus hurt them where they care. In their pocket.

*Deborah Fitzgerald*

## Unfair exchange

MY partner and I have been on holiday in Calpe since early March, we come to the Costa Blanca frequently and love it. Last Sunday we walked the testing but beautiful Sierra Helada from Albir to Benidorm.

We needed to exchange some sterling into euros, however the exchange shop was closed in Calpe on Saturday afternoon when we went but we noticed a currency exchange shop open on Sunday and it was displaying a rate of €1.137 to the pound in big letters on a sign outside.

We decided to change £200. To our disbelief the lady behind the counter only gave us €170 for our £200! When we protested she pointed to a notice inside her dark shop saying we had to exchange more than £2,000 to get the €1.137 rate otherwise it was just €0.9 to the pound.

She wouldn't give us our money back and we felt deceived, duped and naive by this con. It is a scam and other Benidorm holidaymakers need to be made aware of.

*Helen Stretch, Calpe and UK*

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## MADDOCKS' VIEW ON LIFE



'ANTONIO, NEARLY ALL CHEMICALS ARE NASTY - BUT RIGHT NOW I FIND WEEDKILLER FRIENDLY.'

## YOUR STARS FOR NEXT 7 DAYS

**AQUARIUS**  
(January 21 - February 19)

You have a chance to give someone great delight, so why not go ahead? Your insecure side tells you that it is too good to be true and there must be a catch. Why should there be? This is a situation that you may relax into as only you know how.

**PISCES**  
(February 20 - March 20)

Don't look for spooks in the closet when there are none. Not only does it look silly but it also wastes good time. Basing your actions on past disappointments can only lead to more of the same. Show confidence in others and they will show it in you. Sometimes, your patience wears thin but it is in your best interests to remain calm.

**ARIES**  
(March 21 - April 20)

Is someone that you are closely involved with trying to drive a hard bargain? Are you surprised at the amount of time and energy that they are throwing at it? It could be that they are more passionate about it than you realised.

**TAURUS**  
(April 21 - May 21)

You have been learning about certain people very fast. Do you feel as though you are in the middle of a soap opera? In the spring sunshine, it is possible that passions will fire up. Everything seems to revolve round one person and it is upsetting everything else. Try to spend more time with people who have a warmth and generosity about them.

**GEMINI**  
(May 22 - June 21)

This is your week to sparkle and show how clever you are. Why be modest? Let others know what you are capable of; your talents will come out sooner or later. Don't be embarrassed when paid a compliment, for it is richly deserved. You have put on a jolly good show of late and it is now time to listen to the applause.

**CANCER**  
(June 22 - July 23)

Something that you had set your heart on, although still coming, is terribly slow. This is not a time to be a pessimist. Please don't, however, allow your tendency to put all your eggs in one basket trip you up. It is not necessary to go about things the way that you normally do. Remember that variety is the spice of life.

**LEO**  
(July 24 - August 23)

You are moving on in an important area but do not burn bridges before you have others to cross. You will know why I mention this later in the week. You are able to influence others far more than you realise, but with your wish to keep things on an even keel you may be giving away too much. You need to keep a balance.

**VIRGO**  
(August 24 - September 23)

Is there a chance that you are burying your head in the sand? It is likely that something happening right in front of you is being overlooked or ignored. You are able to deal with this more easily than you think. Just take one step at a time and stick to your plan.

**LIBRA**  
(September 24 - October 23)

This is not a time to take anyone for granted. At this time of the year people tend to look at their situation and ask if they are getting enough out of it. Neglecting someone now could store up a lot of problems for the future. Avoid doing anything that could lead to you being blamed later.

**SCORPIO**  
(October 24 - November 22)

Now is your chance to go straight for what you want. The shock of having this opportunity could cause you to hesitate. Do bear in mind, though, that he who hesitates is often lost. The temptation to keep something for yourself is not selfish but sensible. You may not have the chance again in the near future.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
(November 23 - December 21)

A big change means big chances, so don't let small things get you down. In the past six months you have come a long way. You are not back where you started. You are being given the chance to start again, but this time you have far more experience..

**CAPRICORN**  
(December 22 - January 20)

Challenges that do not please you are inevitable. That does not mean that your attitude towards them could not change. Indeed, unless you want to continue to be upset, it must. Luckily, you have mostly had your own way recently. Try to be a good loser when you have to accept second best.

## Trivia from around the world

\*\*\* The six-lane Vasco de Gama bridge which spans across the Tagus River in Portugal is the longest in Europe at more than 16 kilometres long.

\*\*\* Laos was once dubbed the Land of a Million Elephants. Between 400 and 600 of the animals are now estimated to live in the country.

\*\*\* Radio and television stations in Colombia are legally required to play the country's national anthem every day at 6am and 6pm.

\*\*\* Taxis in Senegal are often fitted with artificial tails made from goat or sheep hair as they are said to bring good luck.

\*\*\* In Lebanon, the President must by law be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament a Shiite Muslim.

\*\*\* Mountains cover around 60 per cent of Azerbaijan, with the remaining territory largely plains and lowlands.



**FOLD OVER:** The Geometric Series phenomenon makes paper incredibly thick when doubled.

### DID YOU KNOW?

When asked how thick a single piece of paper would be if it could be folded in half 50 times, many people say about the size of a telephone directory. In fact it would span the distance between the earth and the sun, according to mathematician and writer Malcolm Gladwell.

### Women's wit

It is strange that the years teach us patience; that the shorter our time, the greater our capacity for waiting."

Elizabeth Taylor, actor



### Famous quote

It is good to gain the day but I also say it is good to fall. Battles are lost in the same spirit in which they are won."

Walt Whitman, poet

### World of English

Prosopagnosia - an inability to recognise the faces of familiar people, which is typically a consequence of brain damage.

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	(9) (12)	(19) (20)	(33) (39)	(25) (39)	(33) (43)	(19) (29)	(24) (26)
	(20) (57)	(29) (36)	(50)	(44)	(45) (46)	(42) (43)	(41)
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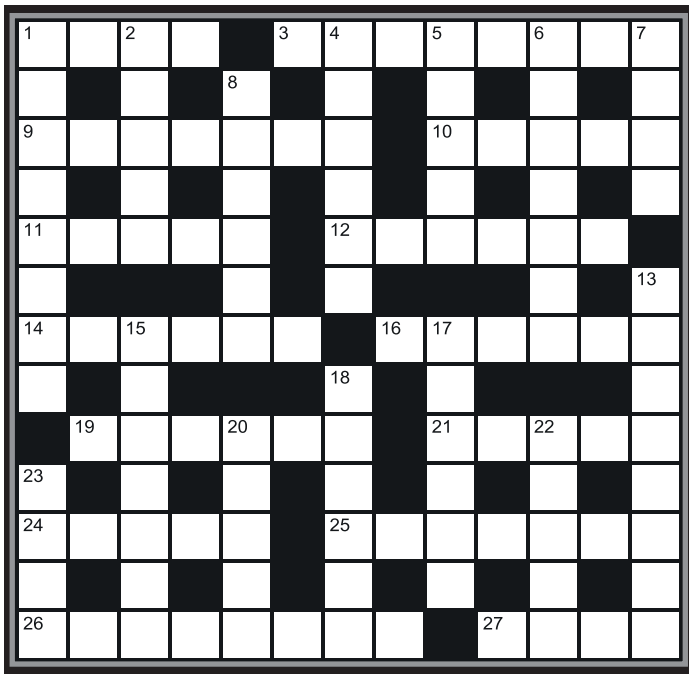
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Across

- 1 Daring bishop has aged (4)
- 3 Convict builder or sniper (8)
- 9 Record about American sailor providing ingredient for pie? (7)
- 10 Started back in the teenage boy's team (5)
- 11 A little bit of quiet colour (5)
- 12 Gossip about a rat net (6)
- 14 Dirty little devil by a river (6)
- 16 Previous or present shepherd (6)
- 19 Sunday school air (6)
- 21 Ordering sacks or barrels (5)
- 24 Repent by changing a note (5)
- 25 Hot garden recess provides shelter (7)
- 26 Exchange rate certain to provide wealth (8)
- 27 Dejected Cambridge sportsman (4)

Down

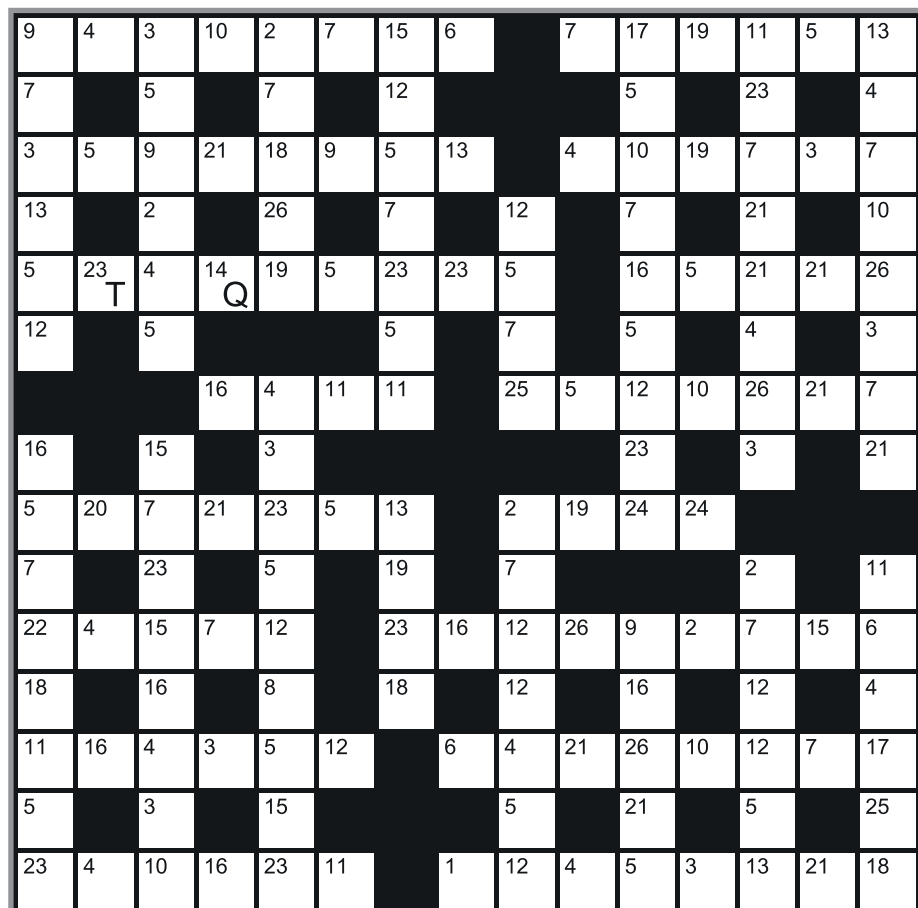
- 1 Hide dollars given to relatives (8)
- 2 Runner defeated in close race (5)
- 4 Squirrel, for example, not red? That's strange! (6)
- 5 Break up boats for wooden shoes (5)
- 6 Disregard the glen etc, it's silly (7)
- 7 Split payment to landlord (4)
- 8 Horseman capturing a



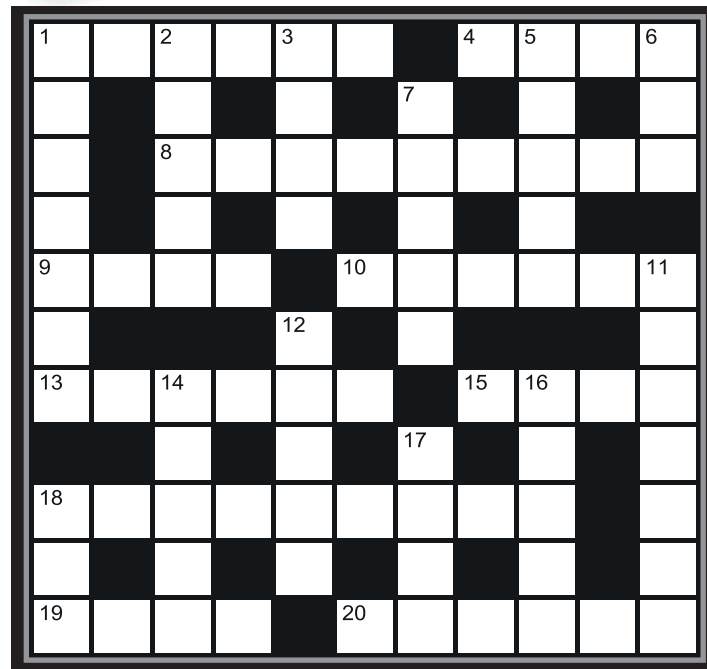
- freebooter (6)
- 13 Keep page attached to book (8)
- 15 Let Pooh put right the road problem (7)
- 17 Agreement that might be struck, it's said (6)
- 18 Secure part in Sullivan chorus (6)
- 20 Supports Lincoln and the system initially (5)
- 22 Small cattle with many a frown (5)
- 23 Stop film computer on time (4)

Code Breaker

Each number in the Code Breaker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In this week's puzzle, 14 represents Q and 23 represents T, so fill in Q every time the figure 14 appears and T every time the figure 23 appears. Now, using your knowledge of the English language, work out which letters should go in the missing squares. As you discover the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and the control grid.



Quick



Across

- 1 Holy sanctuary (6)
- 4 Musical composition for two performers (4)
- 8 Golden-yellow, cup-shaped flower (9)
- 9 Have care of or look after (4)
- 10 Emphasis (6)
- 13 Say, state or perform again (6)
- 15 Tusked wild pig (4)
- 18 Surgical procedure (9)
- 19 Disappear gradually (4)
- 20 Touch or stroke gently or lovingly (6)

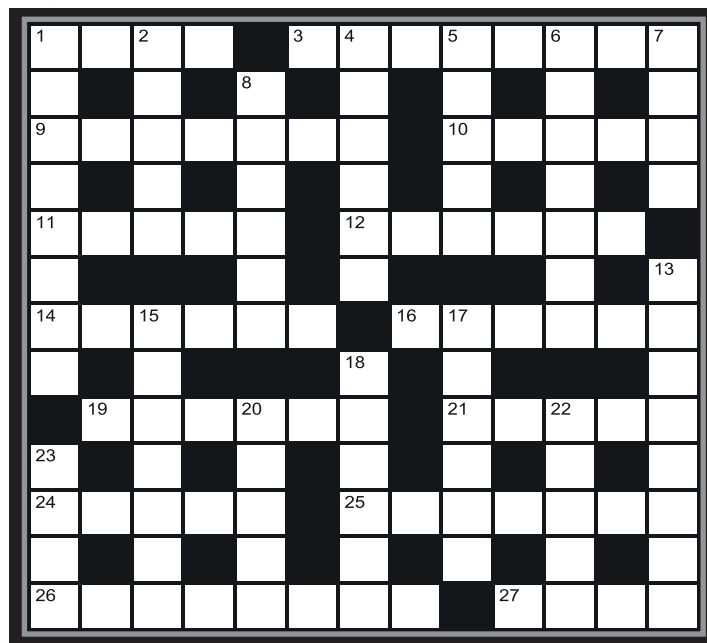
- 2 Small songbird with a reddish breast (5)
- 3 Brief written record (4)
- 5 Husband of your aunt (5)
- 6/18 Give insider information (3,3)
- 7 Small and of little importance (5)
- 11 Unsmiling (7)
- 12 Of or relating to the nose (5)
- 14 Appeal or request earnestly (5)
- 16 Snow leopard (5)
- 17 Former unit of currency in Italy and Malta (4)
- 18 See 6

Down

- 1 Structure that provides privacy and protection from danger (7)

English - Spanish

The clues are mixed, some clues are in Spanish and some are in English.



Across

- 1 Bombilla (4)
- 3 Hermanos (8)
- 9 Huerto (7)
- 10 Straight (without turning) (5)
- 11 Caracol (5)
- 12 Pantalla (cine) (6)
- 14 Dark (lacking light) (6)
- 16 Magpie (6)
- 19 Patata (6)
- 21 Goat (5)
- 24 Sand (5)
- 25 Más temprano (7)
- 26 To hold (8)
- 27 Alfombras (pequeñas) (4)

Down

- 1 Librería (8)
- 2 Struggle (effort) (5)
- 4 Rábano (6)
- 5 To throw (ball, stone, dice) (5)
- 6 School (7)
- 7 Pronto (4)
- 8 Sastre (6)
- 13 Words (8)
- 15 Cocinas (7)
- 17 Grabar (6)
- 18 Rocket (firework) (6)
- 20 Despierto (no dormido) (5)
- 22 Beret (5)
- 23 Sierras (herramientas) (4)

CROSSWORD PAGE







**Advertising Feature**

CBD NATURAL - Almeria's first CBD shop is open in Huerca-Overa

CBD Natural is one of only a few select shops in the whole of Spain devoted solely in the sale of CBD oil and dietary health supplements.

Specialising solely in CBD and natural hemp products, selling everything from dietary supplements, CBD Tinctures to CBD topicals, beauty and organic skin care, CBD vapes and pretty much every CBD product you could think of.

With their grass roots firmly imbedded in this industry for over 26 years, 12 years of which have been in Spain, the staff at CBD Natural have an extensive knowledge and full understanding of this amazing plant and will be able to share their knowledge and expertise on the natural benefits of CBD together with the improvement of lifestyle and well-being.

From tinctures to capsules CBD Natural offer a complete range of CBD dietary supplements, pain creams, anti-inflammatory gels and daily skin care.

# CBD Natural



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Psychoactive properties are not

present in any of the products we sell, they are completely safe, non-addictive with no health consequences and no side-effects. This is an exciting range of natural products like no other sourced from the

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CBD Natural are official stockists of all leading CBD brands and offer the widest selection of CBD products including:

Warming and cooling gels for rheumatic and arthritic conditions, CBD oil and capsules in a variety of strengths from the mildest to the strongest. Pain and anti-inflammatory creams and gels.

Healing creams to treat problematic skin conditions. CBD crystals. Vapes / E-Liquids in a variety of flavours and strengths from Natural Hemp to authentic cannabis flavourings. CBD chewing gum and tea plus much much more!

To find out more about CBD and how it can improve your lifestyle pop along to their shop in Calle Baza, Huerca-Overa (opposite the post office), and be part of the CBD revolution.

They are open six days a week, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 2pm and 3pm to 6.30pm as well as Saturday mornings from 10am to 2pm.



Contact us on: **950 882 237**  
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# Over the limit?



**BOOZE WARNING:** Drinking too much alcohol can cause many health problems.

NEW research shows that you might be drinking too much after all, even if you're keeping within the recommended limits

for safe alcohol consumption.

Regularly drinking more than 100g of alcohol a week - five or six medium glasses of

wine or pints of beer - has been linked to shorter life expectancy, according to research published recently.

On average, each unit of alcohol consumed over the 100g threshold, will slice about 15 minutes off your life, about the same as a cigarette. And drinking between 200g to 350g per week will lower your life expectancy by one to two years. If you drink more than 350g per week you can expect to say goodbye to this world by up to five years earlier.

The research concludes that recommended daily limits for alcohol consumption should be lowered to save lives. Limits in Spain are about 50 per cent higher than in Britain, where the threshold for safe drinking was recently lowered to 112g.

Good news for the ladies, though, is that the research found no evidence supporting a lower alcohol limit for women than for men.

# Battle of the bulge

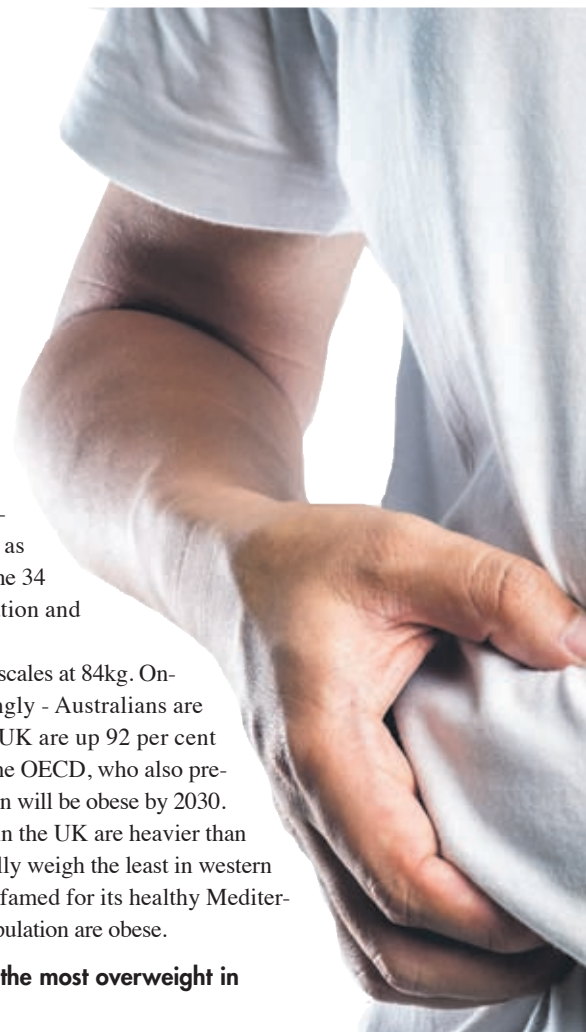
UK government figures show that men in the UK are officially the fattest men in western Europe.

Some 27 per cent of the British population is now obese, putting the UK as the sixth highest in a league table of the 34 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nations.

The average male Brit now tips the scales at 84kg. Only Americans and - perhaps surprisingly - Australians are heavier. In fact, obesity rates in the UK are up 92 per cent since the early 1990's, according to the OECD, who also predict that 40 per cent of people in Britain will be obese by 2030.

The figures also confirm that men in the UK are heavier than their Spanish counterparts, who actually weigh the least in western Europe at 74.8kg. In Spain, which is famed for its healthy Mediterranean diet, only 17 per cent of the population are obese.

**DIET DAMAGE:** British men are the most overweight in Western Europe.



A DECENT nail varnish can lift your outfit as much as an expensive bit of bling or a fabulous scarf. Whether you get your nails done at a beauty salon or do them yourself with a cheaper varnish, colour is key.

The colour has to speak to you, it has to be in fashion and it has to fit the event. Beyond that, it has to offer value for money and give your nails the appearance promised on the bottle.

Plus, given our busy routines, you'll want a varnish that dries

## Posh polish

superfast. Unless, of course, your beauty routine allows time for a small relaxed tittle as you prepare yourself.

Practicalities must also be considered. Such as, how long will your varnish remain in tip-top shape, will it easily chip and will it be difficult to remove

If money is no object, why not splash out on the world's most expensive nail varnish which has just been released at the staggering cost of €207,000.

Black Diamond polish by Azature contains 267 carats of black diamonds and creates a dark, glittery sheen on nails. For those with more modest means, Azature has also produced a budget €20 bottle which contains one single black diamond.

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# Grape expectations

GRAPSEED oil is a by-product of wine making. After the wine is made by pressing grapes, the grape seeds are left behind. Grapeseed oil is extracted from these leftover grape seeds. This oil is used as a natural beauty product.

Many of the beauty benefits of this oil are due to its content of vitamin E and omega-6 fatty acids. It can be used both as a skincare and haircare product in your daily beauty regime.

The cold-pressed version of the oil can even be used in your kitchen as a healthy alternative to vegetable oil.

Vitamin E is important because it works as a fat-soluble antioxidant, which helps decrease your chances of developing cancer, heart disease and other chronic diseases.



**STUNNING SEEDS:** Grapeseed oil is a by-product of wine making.

Omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids are crucial to the functioning and appearance of the skin. The main omega-6 PUFA in grape-seed oil is linolenic acid. This fatty acid can help reduce inflammation in the skin.

Grapeseed oil is popularly used to moisturise the skin, heal acne, tighten pores, reduce the appearance of scars and remove make-up.

The grapeseed oil penetrates into the skin quickly and does not leave it feeling greasy.

To use grapeseed oil on your face, massage several drops on clean skin before going to bed at night.

Because grapeseed oil does not clog pores, it is ideal for all skin types, including that which needs hydration.

## Growing on you

IF you are thinking of taking your beard to the next level this summer, now is a good time to think about what style you want to achieve so you can begin creating your masterpiece.

Beards generally tend to be trimmed neatly to create sharp cuts and an elegant appearance. However, increasingly many men have been letting their beard grow long, bushy and full.

These messy but masculine facial hairstyles work beautifully with many men's hairstyles. In addition, there are so many ways to combine stylish haircuts and beards, including the transition between head and face hair.

Depending on your ge-

netic, it netics and lifestyle it could take a few months to grow a thick beard. But once you have achieved the length you long for you can begin to play around with it.

There are many different ways to wear a long beard. The best long beards should be full and thick, with no irregular parts.

The great thing about full beards is that they are versatile and look great with short, medium and long hair. They can even be combined with handlebar whiskers for a modern touch.

If your plan is to stylise a full beard this year, you will surely want to invest in some quality beard oil or balm to keep your facial hair soft. But be careful not to brush too much or become impatient, as you will never be able to grow your beard to your full potential.



**LONG, BUSHY & FULL:** Achieve your length and then experiment.



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Update on food, drink, entertainments, what's on and weekly happenings

Rozalén performs

POPULAR singer and activist Rozalén will be appearing at the Maestro Padilla in Almería City on May 11 with tickets costing from €25 to €30.

She is currently promoting her third and most recent album When the River Sounds - which has already gone gold - as part of a tour of Spain with a new show.

Alert to the need to be as inclusive as possible, she is often accompanied by a specialist in sign language to interpret her songs for those who are deaf.

# Rockabilly Weekend hits Mojacar

THE first ever Mojacar Rockabilly Weekend will be held in the town this Friday, Saturday and Sunday where there will be music and much more for everyone, especially avid fans of 50's music and lifestyle.

Everything is free to see

except for the big Saturday night when Pike Calvero as master of ceremonies will introduce the cream of rockabilly - running from 9pm to 4am - in the form of AJ & the Rockin' Trio, Kick'em Jenny, Marcos Sendarubias and Mario Cobo who take over the council multi-purpose centre with tickets costing just €25 or €30 on the door.

There is a full programme of free activities, including performances by top rockabilly stars such as Al Dual (recently awarded Best Rockabilly Soloist at the prestigious 2018 Ameripolitan Music Awards) and Diego Cruz,



Credit: Facebook

50's MUSIC: AJ & the Rockin' Trio visit Mojacar.

both on the Friday from 10pm.

The Radions and Saint Peter Square will also perform on Saturday from 2pm onwards and, Sunday afternoon's beach party will include a guitar show by Mario Cobo and Daniel Álvarez.

The Mojacar Rockabilly Weekend, which follows the success of last year's Almería's Desert Wind Festival, is a musical event not to be missed and also includes a market where you can find 50's clothes and accessories on Friday and Saturday as well as a vintage car rally

on Sunday.

Bars, terraces and restaurants will be open with dance classes by Al Swing and Al Cabo. The best DJs will also be there, including the classic sounds and skills of Juke Box Johnny, Zapata, Bob Hop and Rhythm Boy Dam.

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### MEETINGS AND EVENTS

MAY		
THURS 3	11.15	BRANCH MEETING, ARTISAN CENTRE
FRI 4	19.30	FISH 'N CHIP NIGHT WITH QUIZ AT BADGERS, MOJACAR
<b>MARCH QUIZ AT BEACHCOMBER WAS CANCELLED. WE APOLOGISE, THIS WAS BEYOND OUR CONTROL.</b>		
<b>ALL FUTURE QUIZZES WILL BE AT BADGERS. TO BOOK, CALL RHODA 634 315 365 OR BADGERS.</b>		
THURS 17	11.15	BRANCH SOCIAL MEETING AT HOSTAL RURAL, TURRE. COME FOR JUST A COFFEE, A GAME OF PETANCA, TAPAS
SAT 19		GOLF CHARITY DAY, AGUILON GOLF. <b>FOR DETAILS CONTACT CHRISTINE 697 887 362</b>
WED 24	13.00	LUNCH & WINE TASTING, TIKKA HOTEL, GARRUCHA
JUNE		
FRI 1	19.30	FISH 'N CHIP QUIZ NIGHT AT OASIS BAR, PALMARES <b>CONTACT RHODA 634 315 365</b>
THURS 7	11.15	BRANCH MEETING, ARTISAN CENTRE
THURS 21	11.15	BRANCH SOCIAL MEETING, SCOTTY'S, MOJACAR
SAT 30	19.00	ARMED FORCES DAY, BISTRO AT THE COLLESEUM, LOS GALLARDOS. IN AID OF POPPY APPEAL. 40'S THEME, <b>3 COURSE MEAL, MUSIC BY SILHOUETTES FROM UK 30€, PRICE IN RBL SOCIAL EVENTS BOOKLET 35€ WAS INCORRECT. CONTACT BARBARA 622 207 774</b>

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# British comedy shoot in Almeria

COMEDIAN Jack Whitehall and American actress Rosie Perez hit the streets of Almeria City as they filmed their second series of the Sky hit comedy Bounty Hunters.

A number of scenes were acted out last Tuesday and

Wednesday as the couple attempted to find wanted criminals with a price on their heads in order to help Barnaby Walker (Jack Whitehall) recover money lost by his devious antique dealer father (played by Robert Lindsay).

The comedy adventure has received some excellent reviews as Whitehall plays his usual wide-eyed innocent middle class boy whilst Rosie Perez is a hard hitting and tough New Yorker who has crossed a Mexican gang of drug dealers.

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## A perfect sausage casserole

*Eat Well  
to Live Well  
by Andrew Harding*



HERE on the Costa del Sol the rain has stopped and the sky is blue again, I hope the same is true for my readers in other parts of Spain.

The evenings are still a bit chilly, so here is a recipe that can probably be cooked for the next two or three weeks before it is time to break out and clean the barbecue ready for late spring and the summer.

### Sausage Casserole (Serves 2)

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 whole sausage links
- 1 small red onion, peeled and diced
- 6 whole garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup red wine
- 1 can tomatoes, chopped
- 1 whole stock cube, ground
- 1 teaspoon English mustard
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 3 whole bay leaves, bruised
- 1/2 can cannellini beans, drained



### PERFECT MATCH: Sausage casserole and roast potatoes.

- 1 teaspoon black peppercorns, ground
  - 1 tablespoon parmesan cheese, grated
  - 3 whole mushroom caps, sliced
- Saute sausages with onion and olive oil until onion caramelised and sausages browned, add garlic saute until golden, add red wine and reduce by one third, add rest of ingredients except for parmesan and mushrooms and simmer for 45 minutes.

Add parmesan and mushrooms, cook for a further 10 minutes.

Serve with Yorkshire puddings (see last week's recipe), roast potatoes and your favourite, steamed green vegetable.

### Roast potatoes (serves 2)

- 1 large potato
  - 1 tablespoon olive oil
  - 1 pinch salt
- Preheat oven to 220 Celsius (conventional), or 200 Celsius (fan).

Peel and cube potatoes into rough sizes of two cubic inches.

Place potatoes in a microwaveable container and microwave on full power (850 watts) for six minutes, at the same time place a roasting tin containing the olive oil in the oven.

When the microwave has pinged, pour the potatoes and any water into a colander and shake to put a texture on to the outside of the potato.

Place in the oven and cook for about an hour or until the potatoes are a golden brown, shaking occasionally so the sides resting on the base of the tin change several times during cooking.

- Sprinkle with salt
- Serve

**Hint:** Choose whichever sausages are your favourite; this recipe works with them all.

**Tip:** Keep an eye on the roasting potatoes, in my experience all ovens are different and internal temperatures and fan speed can vary substantially.

*What's on!*

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This Amateur Production Of "The Actress (Quilter)" Is Presented  
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by Matt Ford

ZURGENA is gearing up to pay tribute to a local world silver-medallist.

Juan Antonio Ramos is current Spanish champion in the age 40+ category of 100-kilometre road running, and recently finished runner-up in the world event.

And the town hall has decided to pay tribute to the endurance specialist's feats with a special event dubbed 'The Zurgena Village People's Race' (Carrera Popular Villa de Zurgena).

Runners of all ages will line up for the light-hearted contest to compete for the Juan Antonio Ramos trophy, with the great man himself also taking part.

Mayor Luis Diaz told local media: "This is the best way to pay tribute to our neighbour who proudly carries the name of Zurgena around the world.

"And what better homage than the sport he is so passionate about."

Registration is now open via the council's website [www.zurgena.es](http://www.zurgena.es), with entrance free for anyone born after the turn of the century.

Adults will have to pay a €9 fee, which includes insurance plus a goody bag containing a quality running shirt and snood, a ticket for a

# Best foot forward

## Fun run to celebrate local champ



WAY TO GO: Councillors at the photo call for the race.

dish of paella and a beer at the after-event knees-up, and discount vouchers for partner stores.

The first hundred entrants will also receive a compression sleeve, with registration open until Friday May 11, while the event itself is pencilled in for Sunday May 13.

The seven-kilometre route is not

difficult and suitable for athletes of all abilities, with the start line in Plaza del Olmo.

Councillor Francisco Lopez explained: "We are finalising the remaining details so that hundreds of people can enjoy a spectacular day of sport and celebration.

"But above all, this is so that



Juan Antonio Ramos enjoys a deserved tribute to the heights that he has reached by his own people."

And a giant paella will be whipped up in Plaza del Olmo in the wake of the race to further promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

### Road works continue

THE road works to improve the safety of the A-332, from Cuevas del Almanzora to San Juan de Los Terreros, are continuing to advance at a good rate, according to territorial delegate of Development and Housing in Almería, Antonio Martínez.

The road sees an average of 5,000 vehicles a day and the new works are being put in place to hopefully improve traffic flow while improving the overall safety.

In the most recent works, 13 large beams have been installed which will support the new overpass that will go above the road.

Martínez was joined by mayor of Cuevas del Almanzora, Antonio Fernández Liria, in visiting the newest stage of the works, which saw the beams put into place above kilometre 11 of the road.

The works are expected to be completed by the summer at a cost of €1million.

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# Student boxing win

A TEAM of student fighters from an Albox kickboxing academy have returned to the town after bagging several medals at a competition in Madrid.

The 11-strong side, aged between six and 52, from the Nemesis Academy took home a total of five golds and two silvers from the World Kickboxing Association (WKA) Spanish Open.

A total of 587 athletes competed at the event.

Paul Ingram, the WKA's President, said the fighters were great ambassadors for the sport and for the Almería region.

Team Nemesis was made up of Clare Crosby, 49, and her son Joshua, nine, Tanya Martinez, 39, Louie Weir, 16, Oliver Weir, 13, Henry Briggs, 12, Marshall Butlin, 10, Oscar Briggs, nine and Luca Marriot, seven.

Steve Evans, 43, also attended as the team's coach. Amy Dougliis, another



CREDIT: Nemesis Kickboxing Academy, via Facebook

**VICTORIOUS:** The team returned to Albox after winning several medals in Madrid.

team member, scored her first win in a fight at the event and narrowly missed

out on a medal in her second bout. The squad, which spe-

cialises Light Contact and Points Fighting, are now hoping to repeat their recent success at competitions in Alicante and Madrid.

They are also set to head overseas to tournaments in Belgium, Britain, Hungary and Ireland.

Their next event will see the arrival of 3rd Dan coaches Lee Evans and Claire Walker, as well as four-star blackbelt Kaitlin Hendry, on May 3.

A series of Points Fighting and Student Seminars hosted by World Number One Point Fighter Chris Ashton is also set for May 4 and 5.

Nemesis Kickboxing Academy said new students from the age of four upwards were welcome to try the sport.

Anyone interested in doing so could come to the Nemesis Studio on Calle Embajador Inocencio Arias, Albox, they added.

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# Mayor 'punched'



CREDIT: Francisco Torrecillas, via Twitter

**WOUNDED:** Francisco Torrecillas was taken to hospital with nose wounds after the alleged assault.

ALBOX'S mayor was taken to hospital in Huerca-Overa with nose wounds after a local allegedly punched him in the face.

Francisco Torrecillas Sanchez was with another council official visiting road works on the corner of Avenida America and Teniente in the town when he was approached by a woman.

The mayor was inspecting the works when the woman reportedly warned him that a hut nearby belonged to her family and authorities could not take her property.

Torrecillas told the Guardia Civil a car then

pulled up by them and a man, believed to be the woman's brother, got out and assaulted him.

The mayor was taken to Albox's Health Centre before then going to the Hospital La Inmaculada in Huerca-Overa for treatment to his nose.

Torrecillas said in a post on his Facebook page justice would be done after the alleged attack.

"I will always defend the locals of Albox, little by little and without stopping," he wrote.



Credit: Twitter

**PRESENTATION:** Caparros Miron (centre) at a previous promotional event.

## The tree of memory

FORMER Purchena politician Luis Caparros Miron has presented his new novel 'The Tree of Memory' at the Circulo de Albox.

Alongside the President of the Albox Circle, Maria Dolores Maldonado and Albox Deputy Mayor Sonia Cerdan, Caparros presented the book and explained some of the characters of the novel

that is set between the 17th and 18th centuries.

The former deputy mayor of Purchena told local media: "My protagonists are a Moorish family at the service of tolerance and cooperation."

The Tree of Memory, Caparros' second novel of a planned trilogy, describes what society may have been

like during the time periods but also delves into the clergy, nobility and diseases of the time.

The story ultimately reflects many of the injustices of the time and follows the story of how the protagonists overcome so many adversities, never giving up hope of freedom and dignity.

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# ‘I thought they were going to kill me’ Brothers’ cousin testifies in court

THE cousin of the two men accused of killing their uncle in Albox has told a court ‘I thought that they were going to kill me.’

Juan Andres and Pedro TG, aged 33 and 23 respectively, face charges of murder, attempted murder and illegal possession of weapons after they allegedly killed their uncle on February 24, 2016.

The pair are alleged to have become involved in a ‘struggle’ with their uncle, believed to be over an inheritance disagreement, which saw Juan TG shoot his uncle point blank in the chest.

Their cousin, son of the two defendants’ late uncle, was reportedly able to break up an initial confrontation between his father and the brother but has now said that he ‘did not have time to stop the shooting.’



According to Spanish media, the man told the court: ‘He shot my father after pointing (the gun) at him while Pedro GT (the other defendant) said ‘come, come, throw him’ and pointed at me with his fingers on the trigger.’

‘I heard a click, I saw that the bullet did not come out and I jumped on

**ON TRIAL:** The brothers have appeared at Almería’s provincial court.

in court that he ‘accidentally shot his uncle’ while the other brother, Pedro, claimed that he ‘did not know’ his brother had a gun on him and that the pair had only gone round to talk to their uncle.

him. Everything happened in tenths of a second.

‘I thought he was going to kill me when I heard a click.’

Spanish media report that Juan GT has previously said

The Provincial Prosecutor’s office has requested 32 and a half years for each of the brothers if they are found guilty of the murder, while also asking for more than €480,000 in compensation.



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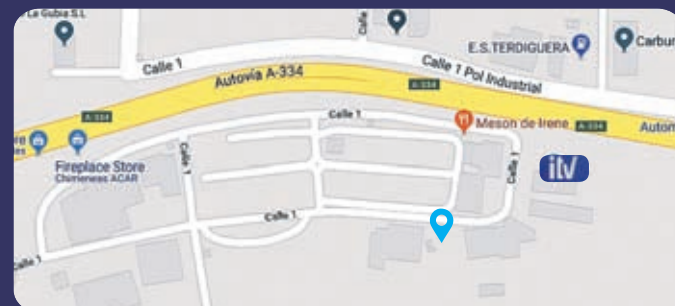
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**Advertising Feature**

# Four solutions to heat your pool

LET'S compare them on reliability, operating costs and eco-friendly character.

**Solar**

Only for southern climates. The existing pool pump will circulate the water through a tube-based heating panel on the rooftop or a frame in the garden. Sufficient sunshine is essential!

Downside; often the solar surface is too small and flow rate too low to actually make a real difference. Pool water temperature lost overnight needs to be made up again during the day. Resulting in slow heating up of your pool. Also be aware, that these installations are fragile and prone to leaks and malfunction.

**Gas**

These are ideal for cold northern climates. Running on gas and operating independently of outdoor temperature conditions. Gas pool heaters burn the fuel within a combustion chamber, heating the copper coils transporting your pool water. The water absorbs the heat and runs back to the pool, warming it up.

The downside; ecologically unsustainable and of course quite expensive.



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**Electrical**

Electric current passing through a resistor will convert electrical energy into heat. Similar to a small water kettle, a lot of electricity is



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needed in order to heat the flowing pool water. Very inefficient, making it extremely expensive. Spending money on solar panels, to use as an electrical source during the day is an option. Again adding to the total cost of investing in an inefficient heating solution.

**Heat pumps**

These systems are a form of solar energy, ecological and efficient. They use a small amount of electricity to extract heat from the air and transfer it to the water. It works like a reverse air con. Even on cloudy or cooler days it

can run very efficiently. In the ideal 'green' world, a few roof-installed EV solar panels can even compensate for that consumption. Best of all - with online transparency in sales prices, the heat pump is a relatively cheap investment as a guaranteed effective and efficient working solution.

**Running cost**

With solar you still need to continuously run the circulation pump, boosting your electric bill by €300 to €950 a year. Costs to operate gas and electrical heaters can range from €300 to €500 per month or more. Pool heat pumps are costing their owners on average €25-€90 per month for an 8x4 pool, and with the inverter technology applied in pool heat pumps this may even be cheaper for you.

Check out their detailed information on [www.poolworx.eu](http://www.poolworx.eu), and contact them for your 'pool specific' price quote, by calling Spain 643 363 179 or Belgium (+32) 497 408 800 or email [albert@poolworx.es](mailto:albert@poolworx.es). Visit their websites in English at [www.poolworx.eu](http://www.poolworx.eu), Spanish at [www.poolworx.es](http://www.poolworx.es) or Dutch at [www.poolworx.be](http://www.poolworx.be).

# The American dream

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terior design.

The other popular option is to merge the salon and

the terrace. People living in urban flats can sometimes be hesitant about us-

ing their terrace. There can be too much noise or smoke from the neighbours or simply a general lack of privacy. This salon-terrace fusion involves enclosing the balcony, normally with double glazing, as well as removing the old door which separates the two areas. What remains is a larger room which receives much more light.

Undertaking these projects in your house can not only add value to your bricks and mortar but can improve your quality of life around the home, something which is priceless.



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If space is an issue, pallets can be stood vertically to create a multi-storey garden with rows of plants held by the pallet's wooden slats. Horizontally the pallets make a good row divider and keep the plants cleaner as they rest on the wood rather than soil.

Either way they make growing your plants much easier as they hold the soil, insulate the soil temperature, and give easy access to care for and harvest the produce.

If you are lucky you may find some pallets at factories or other places which frequently get deliveries on them. Some are starting to re-

# Salad and herb pallet gardens

## Upcycle timber, save space, time and cost



**HOMEGROWN:** Different salad plants in a pallet garden.

side so that it will not flow out when watering. You can paint and decorate them if you are really keen or just leave them with the natural wood.

Horizontally laid pallets are easiest but take up more space. If you are placing them on a balcony or terrace with a hard surface it is best to make sure that run-off from watering will not cause any issues. A simple waterproof material under the pallet, with the edges pinned up onto the pallet frame, can act as an effective water tray.

I have seen many gardens with plenty of space using pallets just for their convenience to suppress weeds, protect the plants and add character to the garden. It works wonderfully when filled with compost and enriched soil. The pallets help to reduce evaporation and so less watering is needed.

There are so many types of lettuce and Asian green vegetables available these days that you can make interesting arrangements of the plants or the more traditional rows of different varieties can be guided by the pallet lines.

Parsley, thyme and various other herbs will also do well in pallets. Grouping them together makes it easy to gather the herbs when needed in the kitchen.

alise their value and may wish to charge something for them but many still give them away.

It is still far easier to have the ready-made frame at a fraction of the cost and work it takes to make them from new timber.

The best pallets are heat treated ones. Chemically treated pallets may last longer but may have residues that can be

harmful. Fortunately most are not treated as they are often for one use only, which makes a great benefit to the environment if you can find creative ways to reutilise them.

For vertical gardens you will need to put a liner of shade cloth, a sack that fits inside the pallet or even some extra wood from another pallet to keep the soil stable in-

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## MOTORING FACT

“ JUST 35 per cent of the world’s population drives on the left hand side of the road.

THE world’s very first off-road electric supercar, the MISS-R, has been sighted while out testing in an off-road setting.

Taiwanese giants XING Mobility are responsible for making the MISS-R supercar, which was revealed at the AutoTronics show in Taipei earlier this month, and the car has been mooted as potentially becoming the fastest production car in the world.

It has also been claimed that the impressive supercar, which boasts a staggering 1.341bhp, can accelerate from 0-100km/h in just 1.8 seconds, thanks to the car’s unique system.

The supercar has four 350V motors, which the company are marketing as the first of its kind and are able to tackle a range of harsh terrains.

Another of the supercar’s features is a one megawatt battery pack, which alongside the motors has led the company to claim the car will be able to reach 0-190km/h in just 5.1 seconds.

# The MISS-ing link

## First off-road electric supercar spotted testing



CREDIT: XING Mobility/Twitter

WORLD FIRST: XING Mobility’s MISS-R has been seen testing.

The top-of-the-range supercar also has an ‘immersive-cooled battery pack’ which is in place in the hope of preventing the car from overheating when reaching top speeds.

Alongside the MISS-R, XING Mobility are also reportedly currently working with both commercial and industrial vehicle makers in the hope of applying the technology created for the off-road supercar in other vehicles including buses, special-purpose boats, ride-sharing scooters and even construction equipment.

XING Mobility co-founder and CTO, Azizi Tucker, told the company’s website: “The commercial vehicle market is primed for a conversion to electric drivetrains due to functional needs, increasing emissions requirements and public noise reduction.

“However, this market is currently extremely under-served with many electric vehicle technology manufacturers focusing only on passenger vehicles.”

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# Opel celebrate 13 million



**ALL SMILES:**  
Factory workers celebrate the 13 millionth vehicle.

SPANISH car giants Opel have announced that their factory in Zaragoza has produced its 13-millionth vehicle.

The jubilee car, which was bound for Morocco, is an Opel Crossland X two-tone blue bay and white.

A number of employees participated in a celebration ceremony, alongside the President of Aragon, Francisco Javier Lambán, Manag-

ing Director Manufacturing of Opel Automobile GmbH, Rémi Girardon, and the plant's Director, Antonio Cobo.

Since production began in August 1982, the Aragonese plant has produced five generations of Opel Corsa and Opel Kadett, Astra, Tigra, Combo, two generations of Meriva, Opel Mokka, Mokka X, the Opel Crossland X as the first Opel vehicle based on Groupe PSA plat-

form and since last August the Citroën C3 Aircross.

The production of the 13-millionth vehicle at the Aragonese plant comes shortly after it was announced that the next generation of the Opel Corsa will be produced exclusively in the Zaragoza plant from 2019.

In addition, an electric version of the successful sub-compact will also be manufactured

in the Spanish plant as of 2020, when Zaragoza will become the first factory to produce an electric Opel model in Europe.

Aragon's President, Javier Lambán, said: "Today is a historic day for Opel and Aragon because it consolidates the production centre of the Aragonese plant of the Groupe PSA in Zaragoza and lays the foundations for Aragon to lead the mobility of the future."



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## ROAD TEST

by Nick Fletcher

SEAT'S Ibiza supermini has attracted a loyal following in recent years and the latest version, lower, wider and with a longer wheelbase and sharper styling, is certain to boost sales of this increasingly cool and sporty marque.

# SEAT Ibiza Xcellence

Running on a new light-weight platform also shared with some of its VW-Audi stablemates, Ibiza now has more of a grown-up feel, is more spacious, better equipped and with charismatic styling which makes rivals look rather dull.

Ibiza prices start at €15,838 (£13,665) and there are several trim levels including a tasty and more sporty FR version. Available only in five-door form, Ibiza comes with petrol and diesel options, with the 1.0 litre three-cylinder 94 hp petrol unit a popular choice.

This engine - the one fitted in my Xcellence flagship test model - has a 0-100kph time of 10.6 seconds, with a top speed of 182kph (113mph) and impressive fuel

economy - 21.2kpl (60.1mpg). Emissions are low at 106g/km.

The Xcellence model, priced at €20,063 (£17,310), has plenty of kit including keyless entry and start, four different driving modes, cruise control, parking sensors and rear-view camera, touchscreen infotainment, satnav with voice recognition and connectivity including Mirror Link, Apple Car Play and Android Auto, plus a wireless phone charger.

On the move, the lower, wider Ibiza handles exceptionally well, with minimal body roll and lots of grip. Ride quality is slightly firm but still comfort-

able. The turbo-petrol engine is responsive and at speed, pleasingly quiet for a three-cylinder unit.

Occupant space in the Ibiza is very good, accommodating four adults with ease and five at a squeeze. The box-shaped boot holds a substantial 355 litres and the rear seats fold down, though not fully flat.

This is the fifth generation of the Ibiza, with 5.4 million sold in over 30 years and sales currently at record levels in the UK and across Europe.

That upward trend is set to continue as the latest Ibiza has outstanding credentials in a hotly-contested supermini sector.



TOP MARKS: SEAT Ibiza Xcellence.

### STATS PANEL

- Model: SEAT Ibiza Xcellence
- Engine: 1.0 litre petrol
- Transmission: 5-speed manual
- Performance: 0-100kph 10.6 seconds, top speed 182kph (113mph)
- Economy: 21.2kpl (60.1mpg)
- Emissions: 106g/km

Model tested was UK-specification and equipment levels and prices may vary in other markets.

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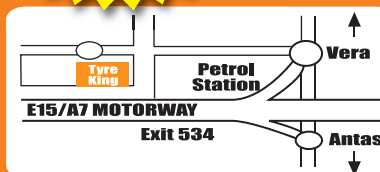
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TO READ MORE

# Spanish players banned after referee row

FIVE Spanish rugby players have been banned for a total of 121 weeks for their actions in the aftermath of last month's World Cup Qualifier against Belgium.

Spanish tempers flared over at the end of the match after players felt many decisions in their 18-10 loss had gone against them, with several players confronting Romanian referee Vlad Iordachescu at the final whistle.



Credit: Twitter

**BANNED:** Five players have been banned for confronting Romanian referee Vlad Iordachescu.

Spain subsequently lodged a formal complaint to Rugby Europe, after the result ensured Romania a spot at next year's World Cup, with governing body World Rugby later expressing it was 'deeply concerned' by the matter.

But Rugby Europe has now announced varying lengths of bans given to five

players involved in the aftermath match row, who include Guillaume and Sebastien Rouet, Pierre Barthere, Lucas Guillaume and Mathieu Belie.

The Rouet brothers, Guillaume and Sebastian, who both play at scrum-half, received the longest bans for physical and verbal abuse of a match official, 36 and 43 weeks respectively, while

flankers Barthere, Guillaume and number 10 Belie all received 14 week bans for threatening actions/words at a match official.

A statement released on the governing body's website read: 'After considering the charges against each player and the Spanish Rugby Federation (FER), the Committee heard the arguments and evidences of all parties.'

'These sanctions are applicable immediately for all players' rugby activities (clubs and national teams).

'Players have the right of appeal within seven days of receipt of the written decision. The misconduct complaint against the Spanish Rugby Union was suspended and a further hearing date will be set.'

## Record breaker

### Nadal claims third consecutive Monte Carlo Masters

RAFAEL NADAL claimed his 11th Monte Carlo Masters title as he beat Japan's Kei Nishikori in straight sets.

It took the 31-year-old just 94 minutes to dispatch the World Number 36 Kei Nishikori in straight sets, 6-3, 6-2 as Nadal raced to his third consecutive title in Monte Carlo and a record 31st Masters 1000 title.

The victory, which saw him pick up his 36th straight set victory on clay, will also mean that Nadal will remain as World Number One ahead of Roger Federer.

Following his victory, the Spaniard told the media: "It's always special for me to be back here, having this trophy. It's one of the most important events of the year for me."

Nadal, who returned from an injured hip in the Davis Cup ear-

lier this month, found himself under some early pressure from the former world number four as Nishikori broke the Spaniard's serve to go 2-1 ahead in the first.

But the pressure soon subsided as Nadal immediately broke back and then raced clear to take the first set, before quickly breaking in the second to take a 2-1 lead.

And the Spaniard ultimately proved too much for the Japanese star, who only returned from a long injury lay-off in January, as he soon broke again to claim victory and the perfect preparation for next month's French Open.

"I want to thank all my team and my family. We had some tough moments during the past five months after a couple of injuries in a row," Nadal continued.

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