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ISSUE No. 1694 | 21 - 27 December 2017 **COSTA DE ALMERÍA » YOUR PAPER, YOUR VOICE, YOUR OPINION** WWW.EUROWEEKLYNEWS.COM

A rally to demand the Spanish government step in to save Almeria from drought took place in Murcia.

The Table for the Defence of Water in Almeria is travelling around the Costa de Almeria and Costa Blanca to raise awareness about the threat in the Spanish south-east.

The Platform is a loose coalition of farmers, engineers, business leaders and politicians. It argues that the province is in dire need for water for irrigation and that some 60 million fruit trees from Almeria to Alicante are at risk of dying of thirst.

Of major concern is the fate of the 12 municipalities in Almeria that depend on the endangered Segura basin.

These include Mojácar, Garrucha, Los Gallardos and Carboneras. The loss of the Tajo-Segura and Negratin-Almanzora transfers due to a scarcity of rainfall and funding could ruin more than 24,000 hectares



WATER FIGHT: Defenders demand solution in Murcia.

Drought crisis Water fight heats up

of crops, the Platform says. Adding to the threat is the closure since 2012 of the Villaricos desalination

plant, which the Platform wants to reopen with its own funds.

During the protest a series of requests were issued to the Spanish government. These included construction of a new dam in Jaen which could provide water to the Almanzora Valley and the expansion of the Carboneras desalination

plant. The latter would allow the Nijar aquifer to recover and begin supplying the Levante and Tabernas regions.

Urgent repair of the Villaricos plant was also requested. It has been closed since flooding in 2012 and is at the centre of a corruption investigation linked to state company Acuamed.

Andalucia to back new LGBTQ+ laws

ANDALUCIA'S parliament is set to unanimously back new laws for the LGBTQ+ community, according to Spanish media.

In its final session of the year, the body is expected to support proposals for harsher punishments against those who discriminate against LGBTQ+ people.

The new legislation - jointly proposed by a coalition of leftist parties - is also the first from a Spanish regional parliament to guarantee the rights and outlaw discrimination against the children of LGBTQ+ parents.

Conservative parties have also agreed to support the initiative.

The region reportedly has one of the worst records in Spain for discrimination and homophobic hate crime.

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No white Christmas

A MILD Christmas is forecast for the majority of Spain.

An official from national weather office, AEMET said that while temperatures will be cool at night, there is almost no chance of heavy rainfall before the festive period.

Scattered showers are expected in central and northern Spain plus the Canary Islands, but Mediterranean parts of the country - including Alicante, Malaga and Almeria - will bask in daytime highs of 17-21°C.

The dry conditions are being driven by the return of an anticyclonic weather system off Portugal, which is blocking the entry of Atlantic fronts.

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Currencies Direct

The solution to great currency savings is on page 31

CATALONIANS vote in hotly anticipated regional elections today (Thursday). Some hope it will resolve the crisis which has engulfed Spain for the last two months but others fear it will further complicate the situation.

Here, we provide a handy timeline to the confusing saga.

September 2015

Pro-independence parties win a majority in regional elections.

November 2015

Catalonian MPs vote to support independence.

January 2016

Carles Puigdemont takes over as Catalan president.

June 2017

The Catalan government calls an independence referendum for October 2017.

September 7

The Spanish constitutional declares the referendum illegal.

September 15

Spanish police seize ballot boxes hidden by the regional government.

September 20

Spanish police storm and occupy Catalan government buildings. There are protests in response.

October 1

Catalans vote overwhelmingly for independence in the referendum, which is overshadowed by



CONTROVERSIAL: Thousands have participated in protests over the poll which sees deposed leader Carles Puigdemont (inset left) take on Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy (inset right).

Timeline: Catalan independence crisis

police violence, 92 per cent vote in favour, turnout is only 43 per cent.

October 3

King Felipe VI condemns the Catalan government in a strongly-worded television address. There is a general strike and huge protests.

October 11

Prime Minister Mario Rajoy sets the Catalan government a five-day deadline to clarify whether they have declared independence or not. This is extended to October 19.

October 21

Spanish government suspends Cataluña's autonomy and says it will impose direct rule on October 28.

October 26

Catalan president Carles Puigdemont delays declaring in-

dependence, saying he will leave the decision to MPs.

October 27

Catalan parliament meets and unilaterally declares independence. The opposition boycott the

vote. The Spanish senate responds by approving new powers for Madrid to impose direct rule on Cataluña.

October 28

Spain dissolves Catalan Parliament - deposing president Puigdemont - and call fresh elections.

October 29

Thousands march through Barcelona calling for unity.

October 30

Puigdemont flees to Belgium with five ministers, shortly before a prosecutor files charges of rebellion, sedition and misuse of public funds.

November 3

Spain issues a European arrest warrant for Puigdemont.

November 5

Puigdemont turns himself in to

Belgian authorities.

December 4

Spain's Supreme Court denies two former ministers - including the vice-president - bail, leaving them to contest the election from prison.

December 5

A Spanish judge withdraws Puigdemont's arrest warrant. Theresa May meets her Spanish counterpart Mariano Rajoy and gives him her support.

December 11

Scuffles break out as artwork is removed from a Catalanian museum.

December 13

The homes of Catalan officials are seized to pay for the costs of October's referendum.

December 21

Catalans go to the polls.

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Polls predict deadlock

THE final poll ahead of the Catalan regional elections suggests that pro and anti-independence parties are neck and neck, with a hung parliament likely.

Such an outcome could trigger weeks of uncertainty, as parties negotiate in an attempt to form a coalition.

Turnout is widely expected to be a record high.

Ciudadanos, Ines Arrimadas' pro-Spanish party, are expected to win most seats but be outnumbered by rival pro-independence parties working together.

Ousted president Carles Puigdemont's Junts per Catalunya party is expected to finish third, with imprisoned vice-president Oriol Junqueras' ERC party likely to place second.

Last Friday's poll is the final official forecast.

But unofficial polls suggest that the pro-independence parties could yet take an unexpected majority.

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Christmas

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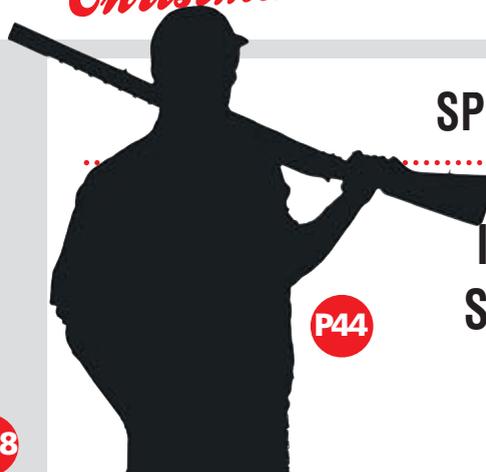
P43

LETTERS

Readers' views on eclectic topics in print and online. P48

SPECIAL FEATURE

IS IT TIME FOR SPAIN TO LEAVE HUNTING TRAIL? P44



SOCIAL SCENE

What's happening near you this Christmas? P55

Nuclear nightmare

RETIRED US Air Force officers filed a class action lawsuit against the American government over the 1966 nuclear disaster in Palomares. The veterans claim they were exposed to dangerous radiation during a clean up operation after the bomber jet collision spread plutonium over the area.

Tokyo twist

A BOUTIQUE fashion business, Airun Tocado Artesanales, with origins in Seron and a presence in Tokyo and Dubai, opened its first commercial shop in Almería City's Calle Garcia Alix. The local designers specialise in accessories, including belts, hats, bracelets, and earrings.

Super surgeon

TEAM doctor for UD Almería football club has been named one of the top 50 doctors in Spain by *Forbes*. The American magazine described Pedro Luis Ripoli as a pioneering knee surgeon who performed the first meniscal transplant in Spain and is behind dozens of books and articles on arthroscopic surgery.

Bird killer

A MAN accused of strangling four chickens is facing a 20-month prison sentence. The Canjayar local, aged 62, broke into his neighbour's farm to kill the birds as bickering between the two reached boiling point. He allegedly stole two other birds and broke the fence.

Wonder veg

SCIENTISTS from Almería's Ifapa Centre La Mojonera have shown that compounds from the skin and pulp of yellow courgettes can fight tumours. Yellow courgette extracts were able to slow down the growth of human leukaemia cells more effectively than green or white courgette compounds.

SPANISH FACTS OF LIFE... 42

With the festive season upon us, Spain's traditional celebrations - from grapes, to kings and jokers - are not what you might expect, writes Harrison Jones.

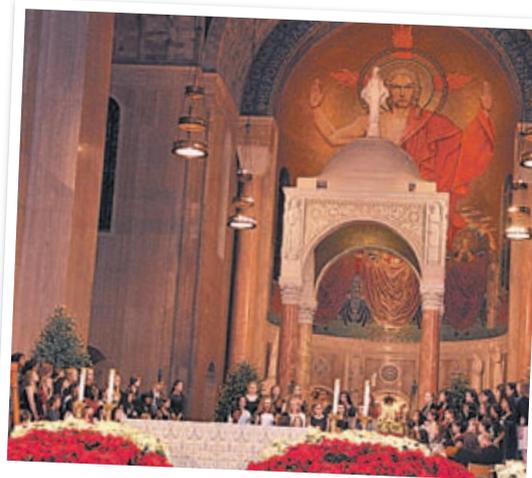
'Tis the season!

ON Christmas Eve, while British children are getting overly excited, Spanish children have Christmas carols and midnight mass to look forward to.

Families eat their main Christmas meal on the 24th - often a varied spread including all sorts of fish, meat and cheese, depending on the region and family preference.

Tempting Christmas snacks also include turrón, mantecados, churros and marzipan.

After the eating and religious services, some Spaniards walk through the streets with music and lights. Christmas Day is not roundly celebrated and, traditionally,



THE MASSES: Spaniards go to mass on Christmas Eve.

there are not even presents - those come later in the festive season.

On the 28th, the country celebrates El Día de los Santos (Innocents' Day).

Friends, family, and occasionally the media are in on this Spanish answer to April Fool's Day, with the unsuspecting being labelled 'Innocent, Innocent!' when caught out.

In Malaga, they also celebrate the Fiesta de Verdiales on the same day. This cultural celebration involves groups of musicians playing songs and dancing.

3 kings, 12 grapes

WITH Christmas antics complete, the real fun begins. In Spain, perhaps the biggest festive celebrations take place on January 6, on the Día de Los Reyes (Three Kings' Day).

First, though, Spaniards celebrate New Year in style.

With the wine flowing, attention turns - oddly enough - back to grapes. Twelve 'lucky' grapes, in fact, with one for each striking of the midnight clock.

As the New Year comes in, Spaniards eat grapes one by one in time with the chimes, broadcast live on television.

If you can manage to eat the grapes in time, it is considered a sign for a year of prosperity and good luck.

The rest of the fiesta, which is often a family affair, is spent eating and drinking until the very early hours.

Five days later, on Three Kings' Day, 'Christmas' presents are given out.

Similarly to a Christmas stocking, children in Spain leave shoes by their door in the hope that the Three Kings will leave their gifts there.

The day is also celebrated by eating Roscon de los



NEW YEAR'S EVE: Madrid's Puerta del Sol, above, is a popular place for Spaniards to eat 12 grapes, right.

Reyes (ring-cake of kings), which is made to look like a king's crown. It is decorated with icing and sprinkles, often including glazed fruit.

A toy is also buried inside, with Spaniards being superstitious that the finder will have a year of good luck.

Cold showers

HUNDREDS of residents have been plunged back into the dark ages by marijuana growers in

Berja, Endesa say. Drug dealers are overloading the network to grow plants inside causing power outages which have affected 600 families, who must use candles and forego hot showers.

179

The total number of news and features which appeared in Issue 1693 of the Euro Weekly News Costa de Almería edition, including 69 local stories.

PLUS THE REGULARS

News
1 - 26

Finance
29

Leapy
35

Tech
38

Time out
46 - 47

Health & Beauty
53 - 54

Pets
65

Albox
58 - 61

Classifieds
66 - 67

Motoring
69 - 70

Sports
71 - 72

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Work of art

Festive sand sculpture is world's biggest



CHRISTMAS CRACKER: The giant scene from above and (inset) visitors admire the sculptures.

SPANIARDS are famous for inventing new twists on the traditional nativity scene.

And arguably the most spectacular of all is found on Las Canteras beach in Palma de Gran Canaria, the Canary Islands.

Every December, some of the world's premier international sand sculptors descend on the sandy strip to painstakingly carve a giant homage to the birth of Christ.

The tradition was started by Canarian artist

Etual Ojeda in the early 1980's, but has grown in scale since.

Said to be the world's largest open-air sand sculpture, more than 2,000 tonnes are now used to construct the incredible scene.

Entry is free, but visitors can leave a donation at the entrance with the proceeds given to local food banks.

In 2016 more than 200,000 people visited the nativity, raising €17,000.

POLL OF THE WEEK

Are there too many repeats on TV during Christmas?

LAST WEEK'S POLL:

Do you send online Christmas cards?

Yes 35% **No** 65%

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Top 5 stories

Weather alerts for whole of Spain as Storm Ana set to hit TODAY

- 6,648** views Weather alerts issued for the whole of Spain as storm Ana set to hit
- 4,503** views Lorry driver dies after crashing onto Costa del Sol beach
- 4,367** views December strike call by Ryanair ground staff in Spain
- 3,861** views Flights diverted and red alerts issued as storm Ana lashes Spain
- 2,362** views Raiders pillage wrecked lorry in southern Spain

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FOR COMMENTS FROM EWN ONLINE TURN TO LETTERS PAGE

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OUR VIEW

Christmas cheer needed

CHRISTMAS is suddenly upon us.

Amid the festive rush and preparations for family events, it is easy to forget that many people are in need at this time of year.

From the homeless, to the lonely, to migrants being held in an unopened prison, many people will not enjoy the happiest Christmas.

With the seasonal pay squeeze, helping those outside of your immediate circle also becomes more challenging.

But across the region various charities and volunteer groups are doing worthy work to make sure the less fortunate can enjoy - or at least be comfortable - at this time of year.

There are countless important causes - too many to name - that are worth your spare change and more, if you can afford it. And as we gear up for Christmas, New Year and even Three Kings, we could do worse than to just offer our time to local charities.

Spain has plenty to offer over the festive period. Christmas lights, traditional winter snacks and Innocents' Day on December 28 are particular highlights.

Christmas is a time for family and friends - so enjoy the festivities but spare a thought for those who are less lucky.

We know it often isn't easy to part with your time or money - but it can be very rewarding if you do.

From everyone at *Euro Weekly News*: have a very Merry Christmas.

Now we want to hear your views.
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A GANG leader posed as a Guardia Civil captain to steal drugs from rivals, police say. In Operation Kodiak, the Guardia arrested 11 members of a Roquetas-based gang which used fake police badges and uniforms to ambush rivals.

The gangsters would either brazenly crash through the doors of an enemy's home pretending to be a police raid, or accost them on the highway under the pretence of a routine traffic stop.

Once they had secured drugs, weapons, and cash they quickly left the scene. Police have charged gang members with drug trafficking, kidnapping, weapons possession, masquerading as public officials and falsifying public documents.

In their possession were found five revolvers, a pistol, ammunition, three fake Guardia Civil badges and uniforms, and other casual clothes with police insignia on them.

Before last week's arrests, real Guardia Civil officers had been surveilling the gang, watching as they themselves spied on their rivals and identified drug safe houses and regular drug trafficking routes.

They used sophisticated sur-

Brazen baddies posed as police



FANCY DRESS: Fake uniforms and weapons seized.

veillance equipment to track the safe houses, identify vulnerabilities and carefully plan their move. In one case the gang leader allegedly kidnapped a woman connected to a rival gang and threatened to torture her for information.

All 11 gang members are now in custody and awaiting trial.



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Merry Christmas

Mum-to-be is all heart

A SPANISH model has revealed her heart-shaped baby bump to send her social media followers in to a flap.

Gala Caldirola, 24, is married to Chilean international football star Mauricio Isla, 29, who currently plys his trade at Turkish club Fenerbahçe.

She is well-known for her regular appearances on reality TV in Spain, and shared a saucy snap of her bump on Instagram, where she has 1.5 million followers.

She added the caption: "This is beautiful and strange. It's probably not the only one in the world, but it is the first time that I've seen one. I would love to know if someone else has seen it."

"In the ultrasound the doctor had already told me that my uterus had a heart shape, and today I could see it with clarity for the first time."

"My little light is without doubt the fruit of love."

LOVEBIRDS: Cesc and Daniella and (inset) the engagement ring shot.

Photo by Gala Caldirola/Instagram



BABY ON BOARD: Gala's bump.



Holly Rickwood/Twitter

BEST OF FRIENDS: Kayleigh, right, and Holly.

Racy pair back on the beach

SHE'S the Welsh firecracker famed for being kicked off Big Brother after issuing violent threats to a housemate. But former Ex On The Beach (EOTB) star Kayleigh Morris, 29, appeared carefree after slipping into a skimpy orange bikini for a beach day during a winter break in Tenerife.

And she was joined by former rival Holly Rickwood, 25, who donned a matching - and equally revealing - swimsuit as the pair put on

Fab-ulous result!

HE'S the Chelsea midfielder who has won everything with his native Spain.

And now Cesc Fabregas, 30, has won the best prize of all after his long-term girlfriend Daniella Semaan, 42, agreed to marry him.

The pair have been together for six years and already have three children together, and they took to Instagram to share a picture of Daniella's jewel-encrusted engagement ring.



Rose exposed

SHE is best-known for flaunting her famous curves on the internet.

But British model Demi Rose, 22, made headlines with her clothes on after candid snaps of her locking lips with a mystery man at Madrid airport emerged.

The steamy moment came after the buxom beauty shared photos from her latest swimsuit campaign - shot in Mallorca - with her 5.9 million Instagram followers.

Fit of Pique

COLOMBIAN pop superstar Shakira and footballer boyfriend Gerard Pique have once again set tongues wagging.

After scotching recent rumours of their break-up, the pair filmed a group of paparazzi photographers outside their Barcelona home on their phones before calling the police. But the snappers were doing nothing illegal under Spanish law so were not moved on.



CURVY: Demi Rose.

Demi Rose/Instagram



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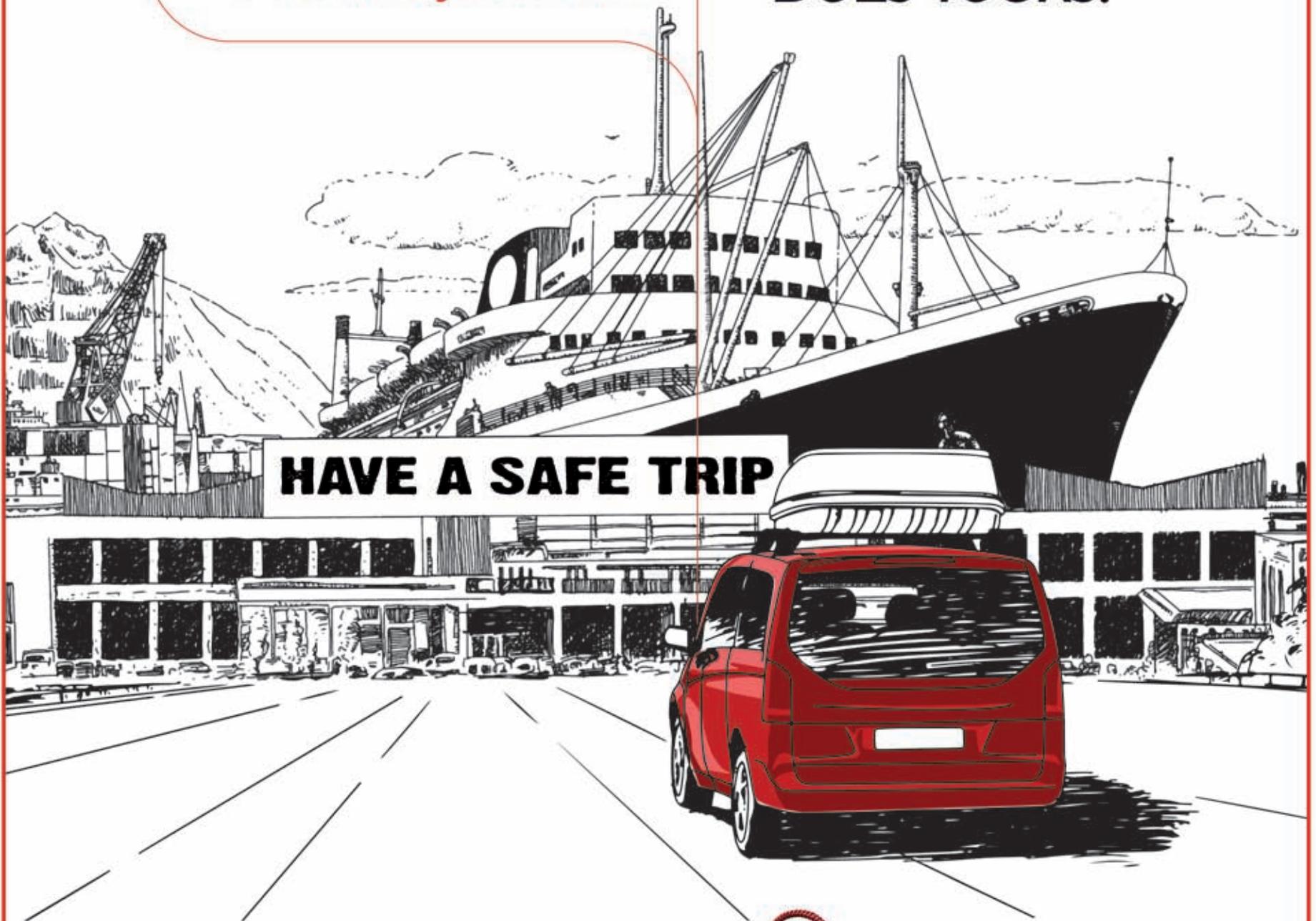
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Chaos at sea

Fatality among migrant wave

ONE man died and more than 170 people were rescued in Almería's coastal waters in a busy week for emergency services. At least three boats, each carrying dozens of people, were intercepted by Maritime Rescue.

All the boats had departed from Morocco and came to within around 20 miles of the Costa de Almería. Each carried a majority of men, although 30 women and two babies were among the rescued.

The man who died was on a boat carrying around 25 people. He was already suffering acute health problems and had collapsed when the coastguard arrived. Despite resuscitation attempts he could not be revived.

Maritime Rescue were informed of the location of the boats by a European patrol vessel participating in the Frontex operation. Frontex ships patrol the Mediterranean identifying migrant boats and initiating rescue operations.



Photo by Salvamento Marítimo

MIGRANTS KEEP ON COMING: More than 170 rescued.

ating rescue operations.

National Police have now revealed that a total of 248 migrant boats have been intercepted in Almerian waters this year. More than 5,300 Africans were rescued, among them 259 chil-

dren who are now in the care of the Junta de Andalucía.

International Migrants Day, a UN idea from 1990, was celebrated on Monday by councils across Almería Province.

NEWS EXTRA

Big soccer spenders

A BUDGET of €10.5 million for the 2017-18 season has been approved by UD Almería football club which is mid-placed in Spain's Segunda División and keen to attract new talent.

Aladdin sane

A PSYCHIATRIST was punched in the face by a man claiming to be insane at Torrecardenas hospital when he rejected the patient's demand to be sectioned. Instead he was taken to jail.

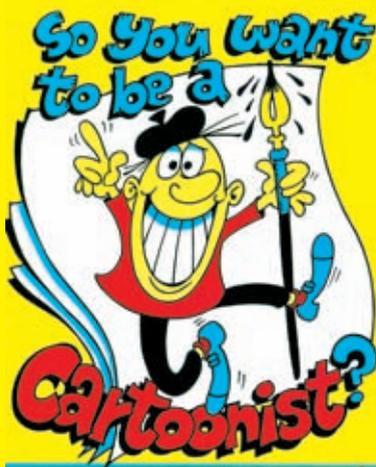
Black out

POWER cuts affected Níjar, Turre, Carboneras, Los Gallardos and other municipalities on Friday and Monday as Endesa were working on expanding its electricity network.

Missing cash

A CORRUPTION scandal erupted around €750,000 missing from the provincial tourism board which prosecutors believe went to pay off a debt owed by Almería's Volleyball Club to the Leitour travel agency.

PETER MADDOCKS



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The usual suspects

ALMOST 3,000 foreign criminals were arrested in Almería Province last year, new police statistics reveal. Only Málaga had more foreign crooks than Almería within the Andalucía region.

The numbers put Almería among a select group of Spanish provinces with more than 2,000 arrests of foreigners per year. Last year 2,436 for-

eign men and 534 women were arrested.

Given Almería's large foreign population, the number of criminals is relatively low. The vast majority of foreign crooks come from North Africa.

Foreigners are also disproportionately the victims of crime in the province, a fate they share with

disabled citizens.

Despite the large number of foreigners arrested, the typical profile of an Almería criminal is a Spanish male aged between 18 and 30. Data from the Ministry of the Interior shows that of the 8,770 people arrested last year, 2,918 fit this profile.

Eight out of 10 people arrested were men. Seven in 10 were Spanish and 198 were aged 65 or above.

The number of children aged under 18 arrested rose by 20.7 per cent last year, compared to a Spanish average of just 5 per cent.

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38.2% Of young people in Spain are unemployed according to government figures.

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NEWS EXTRA**Armed robber**

POLICE arrested a local man accused of four armed robberies in Roquetas de Mar and a string of other crimes across the Costa de Almería and Costa Blanca using knives.

Young bully

SPAIN'S Ministry of Defence has formally dissociated itself from an exhibition organised in Almería that showcased a portrait of a young Francisco Franco before he became dictator.

Secret stash

A NIJAR man was nabbed with 100 grams of hashish and €2,450 cash after Guardia Civil officers acting on intelligence raided his home with a search warrant.

Nature tour

CHILDREN from Mojácar, Níjar, Vera, Carboneras, Garrucha and Pulpi have been taken on boat trips to learn about local posidonia seagrass meadows around the Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park.

Clean river

MAYOR of Cuevas del Almanzora, Antonio Fernández, checked in on the progress of major cleaning works at the mouth of the Almanzora river to help improve the smell and prevent flooding.

Sneak thief

A THIEF was caught by two Guardia Civil officers in Níjar after he snuck in through the open front door of a family home to steal a mobile phone and assaulted two people who were in the property at the time.



EPIC: Hunger striking Asoproal had quite a year. Photo by CNAE/Twitter

Holiday honk for strikers

A DRIVING test examiner strike which cost driving schools across Almería more than €1 million in lost revenue could be resolved by Christmas.

A political compromise between the PSOE and Popular Party would see €3 million of public funds injected into the industry to quieten demands for pay rises and shorter hours.

The deal comes after members of the driving schools union of Almería, Asoproal, went on hunger

strike to protest against the costly bickering between examiners and the Spanish government.

Asoproal estimate that 600 families dependent on income from driving schools suffered during the months long examiners' strike. Around 2,500 learner drivers didn't get to sit scheduled exams this year.

Many needed a licence to secure jobs. The state has estimated the total finance damage wreaked by the strike at €15 million.

1.46% Rise in the average electricity bill in Spain in November compared to October, as prices went up for the third consecutive month.



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Sex ring horror

POLICE smashed a sex ring that lured young eastern European women to Almería Province with false promises. Dozens of Ukrainian and Russian women were forced to work as prostitutes in El Ejido.

They came to Spain expecting work in restaurants or bars. After a year long investigation, National Police officers have arrested five individuals suspected of contacting the women, getting them visas, and threatening them with violence once in Spain.

Three men and two women are now in custody. All arrests were made in El Ejido. During the police raid, officers found and released two young women who said they were forced to sell their bodies to pay off a €3,000 debt.

It is unknown how many women the gang lured to Spain then forced into prostitution.



EXPLOITED: The gang used social media to lure women to Spain. Photo by Policía Nacional

Police became aware of their existence in 2014 but it took three years to gather the necessary evidence.

All the victims were contacted on Russian-language job sites abroad. Fake job offers were posted by the gang, who helped secure three month tourist visas and paid for flights.

When they arrived in Spain they were taken to

apartments in El Ejido where six or seven other women stayed. The gangsters told them they had to work off the €3,000 debt in various brothels but imposed fines for 'bad behaviour' so that the debt always increased.

The women were never out the sight of a gang member and were escorted to clubs and brothels and then back to the flat.

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Late night eviction sends expat home

EXCLUSIVE

By Harrison Jones

A SCOTTISH woman in her 50's says she was left 'shaking with fear' after being 'il-

legally' evicted from her El Galan home by a landlord she did not know, at 1.30am.

The aggressive late night encounter - which allegedly occurred despite Margo Jenkins paying a month's

rent in advance - left her feeling 'afraid and vulnerable' and that her 'Spanish dream' was over.

According to Mrs Jenkins, 56, her landlord arrived at the rented property unannounced and began rattling the grate, demanding that she open the door and leave.

Despite living at the Almeria address for a year, she left the apartment and stayed with her sister, who arrived at the property after a phone call.

The landlord then gave Mrs Jenkins, a carer, two hours the next day to pack her things and leave, despite the rental contract requiring a month's notice.

She has now returned to Glasgow following the incident, which occurred on Sunday October 15.

"This was very frightening and intimidating, also bullying," Mrs Jenkins said.

"(The owner has) shown no remorse, no apology and is blaming the agent as



'DREAM OVER': Margo Jenkins has returned home after the incident.

(they) said (they) made it clear (they) wanted me out on October 14.

"I feel upset at the injustice and lack of interest from both agent and landlord."

The agency involved says it will offer to reimburse the advanced rent payment and

€700 deposit 'as a gesture of goodwill,' but blames the landlord for the incident.

They say they had 'no control over what the owner did' and will be taking legal action against them. The landlord has not replied to requests for comment.

The agency added: "The owner never once told me that (they) were coming in the early hours of the morning and that (they) would be needing to stay in the apartment, nor did (they) say (they) would be asking her to leave at this time."

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Walk for cancer

POPULAR watering-hole, The Rose and Crown in Mojacar, owned and managed by Jamie Webber, aged 30, have organised and sponsored a Christmas fun walk to raise money for the Mojacar Area Cancer Support charity, MACS.

Manager Jamie, who moved to the area in May last year, said: "We used to do this walk as a family on Christmas Day, but as the bar is open over Christmas now, we have brought the walk forward this year and invited everyone to join in, this way we can raise money for MACS while we walk."

A whole crowd of supporters flooded into the public house prior to the walk, each donating €5 or more to take part.

Everyone who had arrived to join in was dressed in either Christmas jumpers or decorated with Christmas ornaments and the atmosphere was warm and friendly as fundraisers gathered by the doorway to begin the sponsored stride.

MACS charity president, Elaine Brown aged 58, was also on hand with a huge smile, to give additional support where it was needed. Born in Nottingham, England, Elaine set up the

MACS charity with her husband in 2007, five years after they had left the UK and moved to Almería.

Enthusiastic locals, who joined The Rose and Crown Christmas walk to raise money for MACS, could be seen all the way along the Paseo Mediterraneo, as they made their way towards the Best Indalo Hotel and then back to the pub for a well-deserved glass of Christmas cheer.

The total amount raised by the Christmas walk for the Mojacar Area Cancer Support charity was well over €200.

Well done and thank you to all those who gave up their time to get involved with the organisation of the event and those who walked for such a great cause.



Photo credit: L. Hutchison

THE ORGANISERS: MAC and The Rose and Crown Team.

NEWS EXTRA

Get your skates on

SKATERS will flock to Almería's Christmas ice rink tomorrow (Friday). City councillors managed to secure a last minute deal after a payment debacle looked set to see the traditional rink cancelled.

Car fires

THREE cars were involved in a huge accident on the A-7 at the Vicar exit. There were no major injuries but all three vehicles caught fire.

Young team

AFTER being re-elected as president of his party, Huerca-Overa mayor, Domingo Fernandez announced the creation of a new town hall team of local youngsters to focus on youth policy.

Good deed

LOCAL companies took part in a jobs workshop organised by the Vera branch of the Red Cross offering career advice to disadvantaged groups, including immigrants and those with learning difficulties.

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Planet hunters strike gold

ASTRONOMERS working on the Carmenes project discovered their first ever exoplanet at Almería's Calar Alto Observatory. They have named their discovery HD 147379 b and say it resembles the more simply named Neptune.

Exoplanets are found outside of the solar system and are keenly sought after by astronomical projects worldwide.

The Carmenes project has been hunting exoplanets and other interstellar phenomena for two years using the 3.5 metre monster telescope located at the observatory in the Sierra de los Filabres.

They have published their latest findings in the international Astronomy and Astrophysics Letters journal. HD 147379 b orbits a dwarf star about 30 light years away and is slightly

bigger than Neptune, researchers say.

It orbits its sun every 86 days at a distance which is just a third of that between the Earth and the Sun. It is also within the so-called 'habitability zone' but lead researcher, Ignasi Ribas says it is unlikely that life could develop as there is no solid surface.

"The exoplanet, similar to Neptune, which orbits in the habitable zone of a very nearby star, is not one of the most spectacular, but it is the first, and we have a future of observations that will undoubtedly bear fruit," he added.

The Carmenes project is a joint Spanish-German endeavour funded by the Max Planck Society and Spain's Higher Council for Scientific Research. It will persist in its hunt for exoplanets until at least 2020.

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Prime Minister Theresa May's message to UK nationals living in Europe

THE following statement on Brexit and UK nationals living outside of the UK has been released by Prime Minister May.

Road to Brexit

From the very beginning of the UK's negotiations to leave the European Union I have been consistently clear that protecting the rights of both EU citizens living in the UK and UK nationals living in the EU was my first priority. I know that the referendum result has caused considerable anxiety for many of you and your families.

That is why, at the beginning of the negotiating process, I made it clear that any deal guaranteeing the rights of EU citizens living in the UK would be dependent on such an offer being reciprocated for our UK na-

tionals in the remaining Member States.

So I am delighted to announce that in concluding the first phase of the negotiations that is exactly what we have achieved.

From speaking to my counterparts across Europe, I know that they hugely value the UK nationals living in their communities. We have worked hard to address the very complex and technical issues that needed working through before a formal agreement could be reached. The details are set out in the Joint Report agreed by the UK government and the European Commission, as published Friday December 8.

This agreement guarantees that your rights as residents in the EU will be protected in the Withdrawal

Agreement, so you can have certainty that you will be able to receive healthcare rights, pension and other benefit provisions as you do today. You can also benefit from existing rules for past and future social security contributions.

Furthermore, we have agreed that close family members will be able to join you in the Member State where you live, after the UK has left. This includes existing spouses and civil partners, unmarried partners, children, dependent parents and grandparents, as well as children born or adopted outside of the UK after March 29, 2019.

While I hope this agreement will bring you some reassurance, I know there are a few important issues that have yet to be concluded.



PRIME MINISTER: A message of reassurance.

ed. We raised these concerns, including the ability of UK nationals living in the EU to retain certain rights if they move within the EU, but the EU was not ready to discuss them in this phase of the negotiations. We will continue to raise these issues with the EU in

the New Year.

I will continue to push for the best possible deal for our nationals across the EU, but in the meantime, please do sign up for the latest updates on gov.uk.

The constructive way in which these talks have been conducted gives me confi-

dence that we will achieve a final deal that reflects the strong partnership between the UK and our European partners, and is in the mutual interest of citizens living across the continent.

I wish you and your families a great Christmas and a very happy New Year.

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MOJACAR OFFICE: The real estate team celebrated in style.

Celebrating Santa Lucia

FASTIGHETSBYRAN, Sweden's Mojacar-based real estate agency celebrated Santa Lucia's Day (Saint Lucia's Day) in style on Tuesday at their office in Parque Comercial.

Saint Lucia Day, also known as the Feast of Saint Lucia, is thought to have been a Christian feast day, however the tradition actually dates all the way back to Pagan times.

In the past it was thought that lighting candles on this special day, during the night, prevented demons or evil spirits from en-

tering people's houses. Celebrated on December 13, Saint Lucia is remembered as a martyr who, according to legend, brought food to the Christians who were hiding in the catacombs during the 3rd century. The candles always lit on this special day are thought to represent the candle lit wreath which Saint Lucia used to light her way.

Traditional Swedish saffron

bread and a delicious gingerbread cheesecake were prepared especially for Saint Lucia Day by the family who manage the Mojacar branch and the wonderful smell of mulled wine and Swedish delicacies drifted through the office during the celebration, adding to the joyful atmosphere and laughter of the occasion.

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Life saving screening

FREE colon cancer screening is taking place at the Hospital Mediterraneo de Almería until February. The screening is available regardless of social security status or whether patients have health insurance.

The campaign narrows its focus to individuals considered at medium risk of developing the disease. These in-

clude men and women aged between 50 and 74. Below that age range incidences are rare. Above 74 early diagnosis is also a rare event.

The test consists of performing analysis on stool samples to check for pre-cancerous lesions. Dr Jose Rodriguez Laiz, who leads the team, says screening is the

best preventative measure.

Colon cancer now affects men and women almost equally, Laiz noted. "The incidence in the female population has increased in recent years and we still do not know why," he said.

More than 20,000 people die each year in Spain from colon cancer.

Man on trial for groping child

A MAN held for 'touching the bottom' of an 11-year-old girl before attacking police officers in

Almería faces a four-and-a-half year jail sentence.

The incident occurred in the car park of a fast food restaurant in the provincial capital.

According to the victim's family, she was sitting in her family's car with the door open when the accused approached the vehicle and 'fondled her backside.'

Her father and elder sister saw what happened and marched to-

wards the man, who hit both in the face as he tried to get away.

Police arrived at the scene and took him to the local station, where he jumped on an officer as he was led to the cells.

He later attacked two others as they returned his belongings to him.

If found guilty the defendant, who has not been named, is also likely to face a financial penalty.

NEWS EXTRA

Mum-to-be fire danger

A PREGNANT woman was hospitalised with smoke inhalation after a fire broke out in the basement of her Roquetas home when a lamp tipped over.

Top marks

ALMOST half a million euros will be spent on fixing pavements, improving street lighting and tidying up the San Isidro bridge by the Huercal-Overa Council next year.

True love

A BOYFRIEND chased a mugger who snatched his girlfriend's backpack in Adra only to be confronted with a knife. Police have since caught the assailant, a male aged 39.

17.9
m

Travellers have used Malaga Airport up until November this year according to official statistics, 11.9% more than the same period last year.

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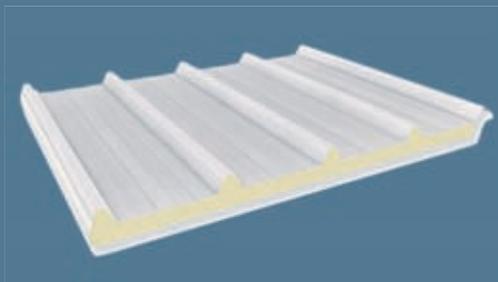
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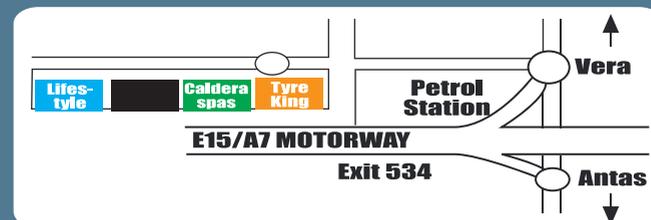
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A life well lived



REST IN PEACE: Ana pictured earlier this year.

EUROPE'S oldest person has died in Spain weeks after celebrating her 116th birthday.

Ana Vela, who moved to Barcelona from Puente Genil in Cordoba during the 1940's, passed away in her

sleep at a retirement home in the Catalan city.

The great grandmother outlasted two of her four children and was living with her 90-year-old daughter at the La Verneda residence.

She became the oldest woman in Europe, when 117-year-old Italian, Emma Morano died in April this year, and turned 116 on October 29. Despite being wheelchair-bound and suffering from dementia, staff at the home described her as being 'strong as ever' prior to her death.

Her daughter last year told Spanish media: "She

likes a glass of semi-sweet wine with her meal but doesn't drink a lot.

"When it comes to food, she eats everything, meat, fish, vegetables. She has a very normal diet."

It comes as the world's oldest man, Francisco Nuñez Oliveira from Extremadura, last week celebrated his 113th birthday.

Ana is succeeded as Europe's oldest woman by 114-year-old Italian, Maria Guiseppa Robucci, while Japanese ladies, Nabi Tajima, 117, and Chiyo Miyako, 116, remain the two oldest people on the planet.

Strike off Ryanair pilots suspend pre-Christmas strike

IRELAND-BASED pilots for low-cost airline, Ryanair have suspended their one-day pre-Christmas strike action on Wednesday.

It comes after Impact, the union representing the 117 directly employed pilots, has agreed to meet the airline's management.

Ryanair said it would recognise unions for the first time as it also faces challenges from staff in Spain, Germany, Portugal, Britain and Italy.

The firm's chief operations officer, Peter Bellew, said: "Let's keep talking and get people home quietly for Christmas."

Impact said it hoped the suspension of industrial action would remove any uncertainty for passengers intending to travel on Wednesday.

Unions in other countries had already halted action, but Impact said Irish pilots wanted more clarification.

The union said: "Impact has suspended a planned one-day strike of Ryanair pilots on Wednesday after company management agreed to recognise the union as the representative of Ireland-based pilots."

"The union has agreed to meet management on Tuesday evening, but says it is available to meet sooner. We look forward to establishing a positive relationship with Ryanair company management."

Impact says the dispute is about winning independent representation for pilots in the company.

The union said it would make no further comment until after Tuesday's meeting.

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Renovated south facing apartment with new kitchen and bathroom, private garage, 400 metres to beach.

Holiday home in the sun

Looking for a great family holiday home? This week's properties offer excellent value for money, perfect locations and have good rental potential. **Most have swimming pools, all have terraces and offer spacious accommodation. Arrange a viewing today.**

Mojacar 169,950€



Ref: NW1083 Beds: 2 | Baths: 2
Well presented refurbished duplex, new kitchen and doors, private driveway, roof terrace, sea views and close to the beach.

Mojacar 139,950€



Ref: NW1101 Beds: 2 | Baths: 1
2 x 2 bedroom bungalows with easy access, close parking, roof terrace, no community fees with attractive views.

Turre 230,000€



Ref: NW1087 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2
Attractive 3 bed villa on Agua Nueva, excellent condition, with garden, roof terrace, AC and sold furnished.

Cuevas del Almanzora 369,950€



Ref: NW1117 Beds: 4 | Baths: 3
Luxury 4 bed villa on secure 6.000 sqm plot with private pool with gas central heating installed during recent full refurbishment, garage beautiful views, just 5 mins from nearest beach.

Cariatiz **PROPERTY OF THE WEEK** Price: 164,000€

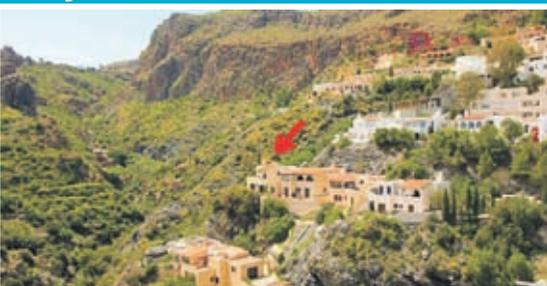


REDUCED Attractive 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom apartment with lift to front door, stunning sea and mountain views, south facing so all day winter sun, desirable community with allocated parking and communal pool only 450 metres walk to the beach and restaurants.

Ref: NW1110 Beds: 2 | Baths: 2



Mojacar **REDUCED** 279,950€



Ref: NW1058 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2.5
Well presented 3 bed villa with private pool, terrific sea and mountain views, 5 mins from beach, located in the popular 'La Parata' community a private peaceful location.

Mojacar **EXCLUSIVE** 82,500€



Ref: NW1096 Beds: 2 | Baths: 1
2 bedroom apartment with large terraces, close to communal pool sold fully furnished move in ready.

MOJACAR 379,950€



Ref: NW1051 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2
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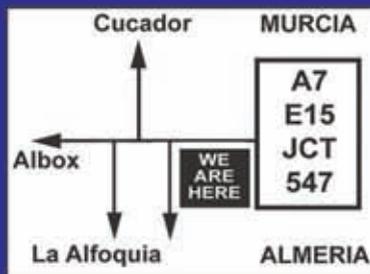
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Stage Door

Indalo Players enjoy Christmas party

WITH good reason, the cast and crew accompanied by supporting members of the Indalo Players celebrated a combined after show and Christmas party in Kuki's Bar, Mojacar.

Having performed to sell out audiences in several different venues in the area from Mojacar Playa to Bedar, then Los Gallardos and Vera Playa, the cast and supporting company enjoyed a well earned break before starting again after Christmas and the New Year.

Next year, they have been invited to perform for the Masons and then they are back to the Playa on Friday January 19 in the Rose and Crown, for which tickets are now on sale from the venue. If you want to be there don't leave it too long as tickets tend to go very quickly.

They would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported them, especially the bars involved. Without exception they have thrown open their doors to them and taken an active part. It has been a great experience for them and they look forward to returning next year with another murder mystery.



INDALO PLAYERS: Enjoying a break.

They have big plans for next year, so if you want to become a member of one of the most well equipped and go-ahead groups in the area, then please get in touch as soon as possible as they will have plenty for you to do.

They are always looking for people on stage, back stage, front of house and publicity. Please give them a call on 671 810 819 or email: williamwhite9552@aol.com.

Sun shines on Bedar Christmas market



WINTER WONDERLAND: Mama and Papa Noel make their way through the town.

THE square was packed again with store-holders selling gifts, cakes and mulled wine for the third annual Christmas market in Bedar.

Apart from the usual activi-

ties, more were available this year for the children who came to this village family driven event. Pencil John rebuilt the grotto for Mama and Papa Noel, once again performed by John Gibb and Maruca who arrived in an open top BMW to the town hall square where the market was held.

John also built the chimney, which was a popular game for the youngsters who were awarded prizes to knock the toy Santa off the top. Adults were catered for with a tombola, plenty of mulled wine, a hog roast and music by the local choir and junior band.

A Christmas Piñata filled with sweets, was hung for the children to break open and was closely guarded by the Protection Civil volunteers in case of accidents.

The success of this Christmas market, which gets bigger every year, is due to the support and help from so many people who live in and around Bedar and who are proud of where they live.

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€7 spirit drink + game

A paws-atively good time

THE Paws-Patas annual Christmas Fayre was an absolutely cracking success.

They would like to thank all the folk who booked space for their stalls and to Peter and Raimonda at Scotty's bar/restaurant who worked with great speed in delivering all the food and drink requests. A record crowd of people attended and were greeted by Father Christmas and given a raffle ticket with their €1 entrance fee.

The sun shone and music entertainment was kindly provided by Lady Ellen and Stuart Drury. Sales of crafts, merchandise, soft toys, jewellery, books and much more raised a whopping €1,860.

The grand annual Paws-Patas raffle was drawn at Scotty's and raised the most money to date - €683 - so they would also like to thank all the kind generous people who purchased a ticket and the people who donated prizes and vouchers, including: Oasis Fashion, Nails by Jing, Bar Montana, Cafe 353, Lemon Lounge, El Rincon De Mary, Pro-health beauty-lab, Wacky Barbers, Bonita Hair and Beauty and Abodes Home and Gifts.

The magnum of Champagne, tin of Quality Street and a voucher were won by people who were given a free ticket at the gate, so please check numbers and names at their locale in Mojacar or visit their website: www.paws-patas.org.

Paws-Patas are most grateful for the grand total raised of €2,543, their funds are extremely low so this amount will help with vital repairs required at the shelter plus the day-to-day care of the animals.

Hotel La Resistance

Due to public demand and in memory



FUN-RAISERS: From left, Daniela Traverso, Janet Franklin, Anika Poort, Chrissie Cremore and Raimonda and Peter Scott.

of Annabelle Grey, Shoestring Productions are proud to announce that 'Hotel La Resistance' will return in January 2018.

Tickets are €8 and can be purchased at the Paws-Patas locale in Mojacar and Bugarillas, plus Connexions in Turre. There will be a €3 donation to Paws-Patas with each ticket sale. There will also be a raffle at each performance. Money raised will go towards their neutering programme.

Show dates are Friday January 26 and Saturday January 27 both at

8pm, and Sunday January 28 at 3.30pm.

The venue is the MontMarte restaurant in Mojacar. A special menu will be available for those who would like to eat either before or after the show. Please book, as there is limited space to eat, timings are 6.30pm or 9pm, by calling: 634 388 867.



CAROL TIME: Father Alan leads the singers.

A busy time for Mojacar Anglican churches

A CHRISTINGLE service was held at Mojacar church.

The congregation are so pleased to have three children, Xavier, Inira and Caleb joining them who played a large part in the service.

Last Saturday members of all of the congregations joined together to entertain the public at Mojacar's Parque Comercial with Christmas carols led by Father Alan. A collection was made for the churches' mission projects and they thank all members of the public who donated.

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CURIOS: CIA want info on Russia's Black Sea Fleet.

High treason

■ A RUSSIAN citizen was charged with high treason. A Moscow court described the case as 'top secret' but revealed he is accused of passing on information about the Russian Navy to the CIA. Recently two other men were charged with supplying intel on the Black Sea Fleet to the Ukrainians.

Grave fight

■ FIVE men who took part in a huge brawl at a Moscow cemetery were jailed for three years each. They were among 500 people who used shovels and stones during a turf battle between Tajik gravediggers. At least three people were killed and another 17 are being investigated.

Terror thwarted

■ A TERRORIST attack planned for New Year's Eve in Moscow was thwarted by Russia's FSB security agency. FSB chief Alexander Bortnikov said terrorists from Central Asia connected to Daesh were planning suicide attacks on the capital and kept grenades and handmade bombs in their Moscow apartment.

Art attack

■ A NEW branch of the Museum of Moscow has opened on plush shopping street Stoleshnikov Pereulok. The Gilyarovsky Centre will hold temporary exhibits, theatrical performances and film festivals right in the city. It is named after journalist Vladimir Gilyarovsky who wrote about working class Muscovites in the 1920s.

Hit list

■ A NEW report reveals the most searched for terms on the Yandex web giant, Russia's answer to Google. In 2017 Russians were most interested in TV show Game of Thrones, cryptocurrency, the iPhone X, the terrorist attack on the St Petersburg metro and controversial new film Matilda.

Victory speech

■ VLADIMIR PUTIN made a surprise visit to a Russian air base in Syria and met with President Assad. The two leaders declared victory in the fight against Daesh. Putin told forces at the air base "the Motherland is waiting for you" and they would return home heroes from a great victory.

Moon mining

■ RUSSIA has tabled a motion at the United Nations for a ban on the commercial mining of asteroids and the Moon. The Kremlin wants to amend the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and will present its case in Vienna in April. Currently the US permits companies to explore mining of extraterrestrial objects.

BRAKE: Russia wants to stop asteroid mining.



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DV1449 360,000€

Mojácar Playa



Attractive south facing 3 bed, 2 bath, townhouse of 86m² with sea views. A/C. Private garden terrace with sea views. Upper rear terrace. Community pool.

LV741 155,000€

Mojácar Playa



Superb 3 bed, 2 bath, apartment of 77m² in a very sought after urbanisation. A/C & furnished. Easy parking. Short walk to beaches & amenities.

A980 159,500€

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2 bed, 1 bath, penthouse golf apartment of 57m² + terrace & solarium with fantastic sea views. A/C. Community pool & underground parking. Beaches in walking distance.

A1212 99,950€

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Christmas
and A Very
Happy New Year!*

**To All our Friends & Clients,
Join us for a glass of sherry &
shortbread or mince pie**

Mojácar Playa



Part furnished 2 bed, 1 bath, top floor apartment of 62m² in a sought after community. Underground parking. Community pool & gardens. Sea views.

A1183 130,000€

Villaricos



3 bed, 2 bath, south facing top floor apartment of 97m² in a beautiful urbanisation. Furnished. Community pool & solarium. Walking distance to beach & amenities.

A1249 125,000€

Vera



Superb south-facing 3 bed, 3 bath, detached villa of 220m² on a fenced plot of 1,900m². Good quality. Great views. 9x4 pool, A/C, carport & much more.

DV1447 380,000€

Mojácar Playa



Independent 3 bed, 2 bath villa of 135m² in need of some modernisation but in a great location. Sea & mountain views. Adjacent plot of 1,000m² also available. POA.

DV1448 380,000€

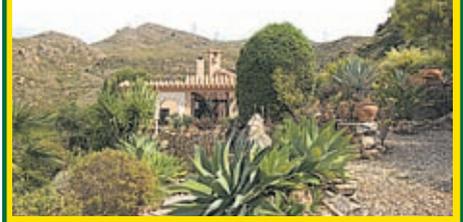
Cortijo Grande



Superb property consisting of a main house, guest bungalow, & annex of a total of 188m². 4 bed, 4 bath, in all. Beautiful gardens & pool. Outstanding views.

DV1438 395,000€

Cabrera



2 bed, 2 bath house + 1 bed, 1 bath apartment of 210m² on a plot of 1,070m². Private pool, Jacuzzi & summer kitchen. A/C. Sea views.

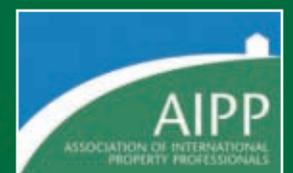
DV1402 350,000€

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Rolls Royce approved takeover

THE Spanish government has sanctioned the purchase of ITP (Industry Turbo Propulsions) by Rolls Royce for a reported €720 million.

ITP which has headquarters in Bilbao and employs 3,000 workers across the world is the ninth largest manufacturer of aero engine components used in both civil and defence aircraft.

Rolls Royce already held a 46.9 per cent stake in the company and will purchase the balance of shares from SEN-ER Grupo de Ingeniería SA

Shopping centre take over

THE owner of Westfield shopping centres is to earn €21 billion in a deal that will see the brand extend throughout Europe.

The Westfield Corporation, an Australian group is to sell its portfolio to French property group Unibail-Rodamco which operates shopping centres in 13 locations around Spain.

There are currently 35 Westfield shopping centres in the UK and the US, while the French group owns 71 sites in Europe but wants to create more operations under the recognis-

By John Smith

able Westfield brand name in major cities within the EU including Barcelona, Paris and Vienna.

As well as giving the new owners access to lucrative markets in America and Britain it estimates that it will be able to make savings of at least €100 million in the first year following completion thanks to a consolidation of advertising and marketing expenses.

In order to help fund the acquisition, Unibail-Rodamco expects to

sell some of its smaller developments and hopes to raise some €3 billion to boost liquidity.

The takeover is the second major deal involving shopping centre owners to emerge in just over two weeks.

A proposed €3.88 billion merger between shopping centre operators Hammerson and Intu is set to create one of the UK's biggest property companies which will create a €24 billion giant provided that Intu shareholders vote in favour of the merger next year.

Chinese company finds success

HUAWEI SPAIN, the Spanish arm of the Chinese tech manufacturer which employs 180,000 people worldwide sold two million smartphones in 2017.

According to CEO Tony Jin Yong it has seen growth in its three Spanish branches, infrastructures and networks, enterprise and private consumers.

So successful has it been that it claims to now own 20.6 per cent of the entire high street market for phones, tablets and wearables (such as smart watches).

With 1,200 employees in Spain it is now developing fibre-optic networks especially in rural areas as well as developing 5G networks and has opened service centres in Barcelona and Madrid.

Quote of the Week

Seat is the only Spanish brand in the automotive sector, which is rooted in Barcelona and I see no reason to change this." **Francisco García Sanz**, Chairman of the Board of Management of Seat on the company's future.



Photo by Eric Salard flickr

Iberia A320 aircraft at El Prat airport.

Barcelona airport Christmas strike

THE UGT union has announced that following a poll of its 2,000 Iberia Airline workers that there will be a strike at El Prat Barcelona airport from December 21 to 24.

According to the union, the decision to call the strike was forced upon the staff at the airport as employers IAG (who also own Aer Lingus, BA and Vueling) had not complied with the

terms of agreements entered into.

The decision to introduce partial stoppages in the week leading up to Christmas Day is to protest at the lack of staff needed to undertake necessary work at the airport and to highlight that staff there are owed 7,000 hours of leave.

The expansion of the Vueling presence has increased the workload for the staff.

» BUSINESS EXTRA

Google aid

PROJECTS from 26 European countries will receive in excess of €20 million as part of Google's Digital News Initiative. The Spanish share of this fund which is to be used to develop news platforms will be €1.5 million.

Mango sale

AFTER suffering losses in 2016, privately owned Catalan fashion company Mango has reached an agreement to sell the facilities it has in Palau-Solità i Plegamans (Barcelona) for €100 million. It will then lease the property back and continue to trade there.

Helping Rafa

THE company that has developed radiotherapy machines used by Rafael Nadal and the Spanish Basketball team has been sold for €65 million. Indiba which has been improving its range of specialist equipment for 40 years is now owned by Spanish investors Magnum Capital.



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Careful when using wifi

BEWARE the use of public wifi as it has been revealed that a Starbucks in Buenos Aires had its service hijacked by scammers.

In this case, the hackers obtained access to customer's computers in order to use

their power to link with other computers to 'mine' for digital cash.

In this case no harm other than a slow-down of service occurred, but the dangers are clear.



LONDON - FTSE 100

CLOSING PRICES DECEMBER 18

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Anglo American	1,405.00	-5.00	-0.35	19,503.05
Associated British Foods	3,135.00	292.00	10.27	22,641.88
Admiral Group	1,872.50	-34.50	-1.81	5,500.15
Ashtead Group	1,899.00	5.00	0.26	9,595.12
Antofagasta	914.50	-16.00	-1.72	9,020.59
Aviva	506.50	4.00	0.80	20,076.43
AstraZeneca	4,865.00	-16.00	-0.33	61,836.87
BAE Systems	570.00	7.00	1.24	17,920.89
Babcock International Group	684.00	-8.93	-1.30	3,412.78
Barclays	201.50	-0.75	-0.37	34,572.72
British American Tobacco	4,910.00	-57.00	-1.15	112,949.40
Barratt Developments	626.00	0.06	0.01	6,378.29
Berkeley Group Holdings	3,705.00	-455.00	-10.94	5,553.38
British Land Co	644.00	-27.00	-4.02	6,707.28
BHP Billiton	1,382.50	-37.00	-2.61	29,315.56
Bunzl	2,014.50	0.20	0.01	6,782.43
BP	504.13	-1.07	-0.21	99,648.50
Burberry Group	1,750.00	27.00	1.57	7,364.37
BT Group	272.50	-5.05	-1.82	27,159.85
Coca-Cola HBC	2,387.00	62.00	2.67	8,507.38
Carnival	5,000.00	170.00	3.52	10,052.51
Centrica	145.50	7.50	5.43	7,733.52
Compass Group	1,541.00	7.00	0.46	24,126.39
Croda International	4,340.00	9.00	0.21	5,638.07
CRH	2,680.50	148.50	5.86	21,223.45
ConvaTec Group	205.85	0.00	0.00	3,966.16
DCC	7,250.00	20.00	0.28	6,310.96
Diageo	2,620.00	-35.00	-1.32	65,584.12
Direct Line Insurance Group	402.80	37.00	10.11	5,009.13
Experian	1,546.50	-54.50	-3.40	14,587.79
easyJet	1,430.00	13.00	0.92	5,664.19
Ferguson	4,800.00	-470.00	-8.92	12,982.93
Fresnillo	1,399.00	63.00	4.72	9,616.46
G4S	290.00	38.00	15.08	3,906.92
GKN	310.00	12.00	4.03	5,102.63
Glencore	357.50	-5.25	-1.45	51,439.61
GlaxoSmithKline	1,300.00	5.00	0.39	63,475.74
Hargreaves Lansdown	1,704.50	-7.17	-0.42	8,106.11
Hammerson	528.00	-6.00	-1.12	4,216.00
HSBC Holdings	740.00	-11.50	-1.53	151,259.72
International Consoltd Airls Grp	646.50	13.00	2.05	12,964.02
InterContinental Hotels Grp	3,860.00	-721.00	-15.74	8,559.06
3i Group	900.50	9.00	1.01	8,668.28
Imperial Brands	3,110.00	25.00	0.81	29,088.98
Informa	693.25	-46.75	-6.32	6,081.16
Intertek Group	5,222.50	177.50	3.52	8,101.81
ITV	164.00	-1.70	-1.03	6,694.26
Johnson Matthey	3,130.00	91.00	2.99	5,840.84
Kingfisher	332.50	0.80	0.24	7,219.24
Land Securities Group	960.00	-24.00	-2.44	7,255.01

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Legal & General Group	271.00	2.80	1.04	15,849.29
Lloyds Banking Group ORD	66.33	-0.08	-0.12	47,721.56
London Stock Exchange Grp	3,839.50	59.50	1.57	13,172.53
Micro Focus International	2,409.00	-109.00	-4.33	10,834.67
Mediclinic International	716.50	107.50	17.65	4,581.97
Merlin Entertainments	360.85	0.04	0.01	3,695.95
Marks & Spencer Group	323.55	19.75	6.50	5,025.33
Mondi	1,869.00	51.00	2.81	8,618.58
Morrison (Wm) Supermarkets	215.45	-1.35	-0.63	5,026.32
National Grid	880.00	11.40	1.31	29,132.67
NMC Health	2,900.00	100.00	3.57	5,862.88
Next	4,168.50	-77.50	-1.83	6,344.22
Old Mutual Group	204.00	0.60	0.29	9,943.94
Paddy Power Betfair	7,767.50	-817.50	-9.52	7,211.60
Prudential	1,835.00	-12.50	-0.68	47,682.97
Persimmon	2,480.00	-146.00	-5.56	8,184.86
Pearson	709.25	-15.75	-2.17	5,938.05
Reckitt Benckiser Group	6,695.00	-36.00	-0.53	47,145.19
Royal Bank of Scotland Group	270.80	-5.50	-1.99	33,243.22
Royal Dutch Shell	2,375.00	-53.50	-2.20	110,101.41
Royal Dutch Shell	2,442.50	-10.00	-0.41	90,996.60
RELX	1,640.00	-89.00	-5.15	18,367.91
Rio Tinto	3,548.25	-76.25	-2.10	48,183.24
Rolls-Royce Group	851.00	20.00	2.41	15,148.10
Randgold Resources	6,495.00	-460.00	-6.61	6,509.87
RSA Insurance Group	638.75	31.25	5.14	6,157.37
Rentokil Initial	285.50	-23.90	-7.72	5,671.85
Sainsbury (J)	237.00	0.90	0.38	5,182.03
Schroders	3,542.50	70.50	2.03	7,845.24
Sage Group (The)	777.50	-4.00	-0.51	8,472.00
Segro	575.25	0.00	0.00	5,696.62
Shire	3,765.00	2.50	0.07	33,518.11
Smurfit Kappa Group	2,392.50	-13.50	-0.56	5,636.93
Sky	1,065.00	47.00	4.62	17,018.27
Standard Life Aberdeen	410.25	-7.75	-1.85	12,326.56
Smiths Group	1,490.00	46.00	3.19	5,718.30
Scottish Mortgage Invstmnt Trst	433.50	-3.50	-0.80	6,130.54
Smith & Nephew	1,297.50	15.50	1.21	11,266.13
SSE	1,322.50	7.50	0.57	13,278.01
Standard Chartered	731.00	-26.10	-3.45	25,032.27
St James's Place	1,166.00	-18.00	-1.52	6,200.75
Severn Trent	2,090.50	-10.38	-0.50	4,876.53
Tesco	205.75	-1.55	-0.75	16,951.57
TUI AG	1,531.50	69.50	4.75	8,417.25
Taylor Wimpey	203.35	1.45	0.72	6,592.75
Unilever	4,105.00	-91.00	-2.17	51,004.59
United Utilities Group	804.00	-12.00	-1.47	5,455.11
Vodafone Group	231.25	1.25	0.54	61,270.40
Worldpay Group	463.70	28.30	6.50	8,584.00
WPP Group	1,285.50	-103.50	-7.45	17,194.89
Whitbread	4,206.00	342.00	8.85	7,025.25

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THE ABOVE TABLE USES THE CURRENT INTERBANK EXCHANGE RATES, WHICH AREN'T REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RATE WE OFFER

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CLOSING PRICES DECEMBER 18

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE%	CHANGE	VOLUME(M)
3M	238,000	-0.03%	-0,080	142,201,44
AMERICAN EXPRESS	98,5200	+1.41%	1,3700	85,593,11
APPLE	173,970	+1.02%	1,750	891,544,01
BOEING CO	293,940	+0.02%	0,060	175,340,64
CATERPILLAR	146,690	+0.28%	0,410	87,252,96
CHEVRON	119,73	+0.17%	0,20	227,734,93
CISCO SYSTEMS	38,190	+0.77%	0,290	190,852,06
COCA-COLA	46,19	+0.35%	0,16	196,544,58
DOWDUPONT	70,00	-1.03%	-0,73	164,185,42
EXXON MOBIL	83,03	+0.16%	0,13	352,400,11
GENERAL ELECTRIC	17,8200	+1.02%	0,1800	154,102,95
GOLDMAN SACHS	257,17	+0.66%	1,69	97,329,30
HOME DEPOT	182,5800	+0.25%	0,4500	213,581,11
IBM	152,50	-0.97%	-1,50	141,312,80
INTEL CORP	44,5600	+3.01%	1,3000	209,457,93
J.P.MORGAN CHASE	106,1400	+1.41%	1,4800	368,693,04
JOHNSON & JOHNSON	142,4600	+0.57%	0,8100	381,647,04
MC DONALD'S CORP	174,0600	+0.53%	0,9200	138,989,31
MERCK AND CO. NEW	56,24	+1.21%	0,67	152,718,31
MICROSOFT	86,850	+2.55%	2,160	666,321,13
NIKE	64,79	+0.40%	0,26	84,530,52
PFIZER	37,2000	+2.03%	0,7400	221,380,67
PROCTER AND GAMBLE	91,890	+0.98%	0,890	232,537,58
TRAVELERS CIES	134,89	+1.74%	2,31	36,979,05
UNITED TECHNOLOGIE	126,17	+1.95%	2,41	100,755,57
UNITEDHEALTH GROUP	221,82	+0.26%	0,57	214,784,11
VERIZON COMMS	52,67	+0.63%	0,33	214,945,74
VISA	113,82	+0.80%	0,90	206,333,91
WAL-MART STORES	97,1100	-0.02%	-0,0200	291,782,39
WALT DISNEY CO	111,2700	+0.63%	0,7000	168,203,47

M - MILLION DOLLARS

NASDAQ

CLOSING PRICES DECEMBER 18

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE NET / %
Most Advanced		
Educational Development Corporation	\$ 16.75	2.70 ▲ 19.22%
TiGenix	\$ 24.92	3.25 ▲ 15.00%
Crocs, Inc.	\$ 12.55	1.61 ▲ 14.72%
Surgery Partners, Inc.	\$ 11.15	1.40 ▲ 14.36%
Forterra, Inc.	\$ 10.83	1.35 ▲ 14.24%
Roku, Inc.	\$ 52.31	6.16 ▲ 13.35%
Compugen Ltd.	\$ 2.80	0.30 ▲ 12%
Presbia PLC	\$ 2.16	0.23 ▲ 11.92%
Diana Containerships Inc.	\$ 5.44	0.57 ▲ 11.70%
FormFactor, Inc.	\$ 16.60	1.70 ▲ 11.41%
Overstock.com, Inc.	\$ 68.35	6.85 ▲ 11.14%
Most Declined		
Marinus Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 7.89	1.44 ▼ 15.43%
Allena Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 10.50	1.88 ▼ 15.19%
Verastem, Inc.	\$ 3.14	0.51 ▼ 13.97%
Syndax Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 8.03	0.97 ▼ 10.78%
Frontier Communications Corporation	\$ 11.86	1.39 ▼ 10.49%
China Internet Nationwide Financial Services Inc.	\$ 42.95	4.87 ▼ 10.18%
Mountain Province Diamonds Inc.	\$ 2.45	0.275 ▼ 10.09%
Restoration Robotics, Inc.	\$ 4.86	0.54 ▼ 10%
ACM Research, Inc.	\$ 5	0.54 ▼ 9.75%
Xunlei Limited	\$ 15.77	1.68 ▼ 9.63%
Corvus Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 9.30	0.94 ▼ 9.18%

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DEALING PRICE

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Price Movement

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Accumulating Funds

Multi Asset Conservative B GBP

DEALING PRICE

£1.1601.....

£0.0036

Multi Asset Conservative B EUR

€1.0786.....

€0.0031

Multi Asset Balanced B GBP

£1.3265.....

£0.0098

Multi Asset Balanced B EUR

€1.2213.....

€0.0086

Multi Asset Growth B GBP

£1.4813.....

£0.0156

Multi Asset Growth B EUR

€1.3709.....

€0.0140

Remaining Elite Fund prices available on request

Prices correct as at 13/12/2017



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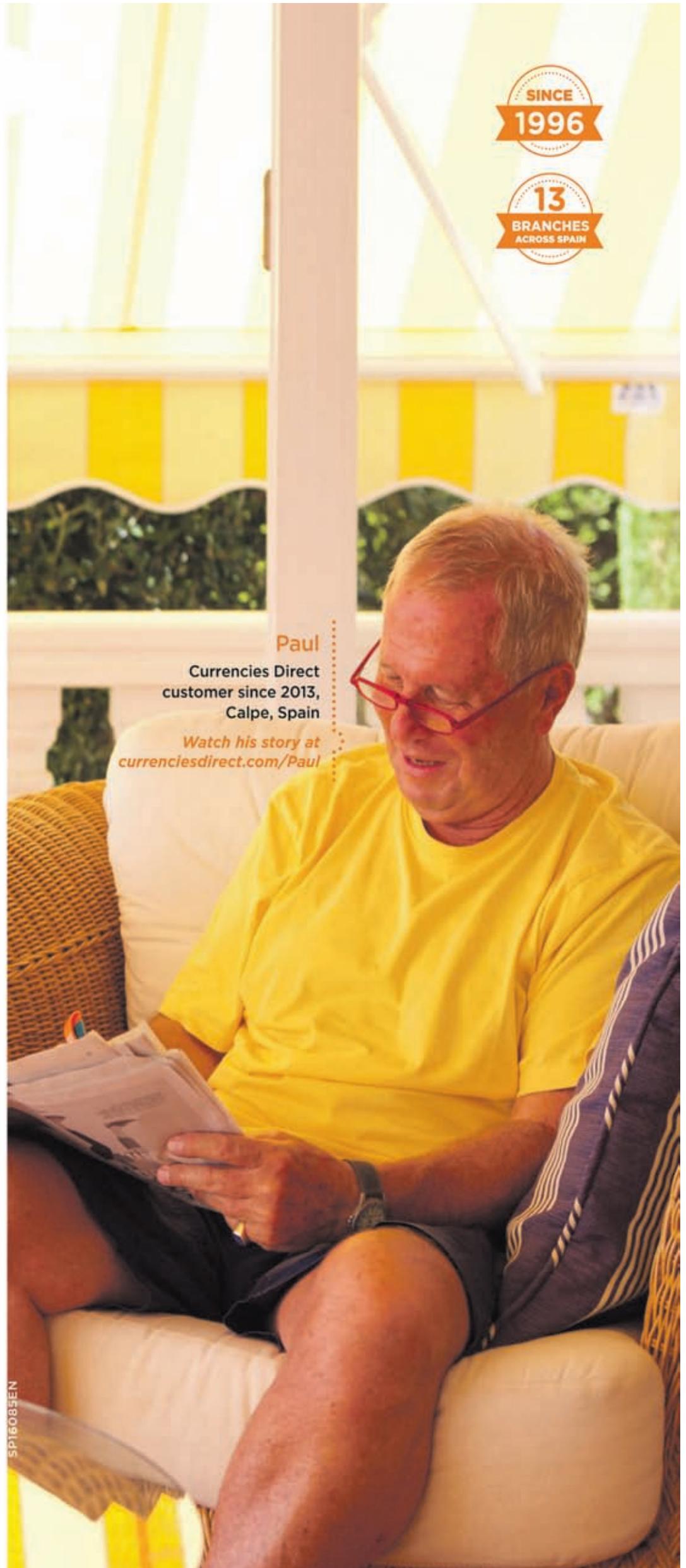
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Qatar works with Spain

Needs assistance to produce more food

THE Qatari government has been isolated as other Middle Eastern countries accuse it of supporting terrorism which has meant that it has expanded its economic relationships with Europe.

Having been awarded the FIFA World Cup Final for 2022 it has to ensure that it has a markedly improved infrastructure in order to guarantee that air conditioned stadiums are built, as well as accommodation and training camps which will be sufficiently cool for the huge number of visitors expected.

It has been steadily investing in Europe over a period of years and through a subsidiary in Luxembourg, Qatar Airways is the largest shareholder (with 20 per cent) in IAG which operates airlines Aer Lingus, BA, Iberia and Vueling.

Now, an alliance of Spanish agribusiness companies AgroQatar has signed a memorandum of understanding with Gulf Petroleum for the development of a system of high-tech greenhouse production of fresh fruit and vegetables.

According to a statement from the Spanish embassy in Qatar, this project intends to improve the self-sufficiency of Qatar in fresh food supply.

Gulf Petroleum president Abdul Aziz Hamad al-Dulaimi and AgroQatar general manager and chief operating officer Juan Carlos Santiago signed the memorandum in the presence of Spanish ambassador Ignacio Escobar.

According to the embassy, Gulf Petroleum was recently awarded the right to develop 100 hectares of greenhouse facilities by the Qatari government and AgroQatar is supported the Spanish Export Promotion Authority (ICEX) which includes the financing of its projects in Qatar.



Photo Credit: The Peninsula Qatar Twitter

Signing the memorandum of understanding.

“The objective is trifold: to contribute to the growth of the agricultural economy in the state of Qatar and guaranteeing its self-sufficiency, to increase the participation of the non-hydrocarbon sector in the national economy and, finally, to develop the private sector” its spokesman said.

The organisation was created specifically to facilitate the development of agribusiness adapted to the climatic conditions of Qatar.

INDITEX GROUP CONTINUES TO SEE PROFIT GROWTH

Third quarter figures up

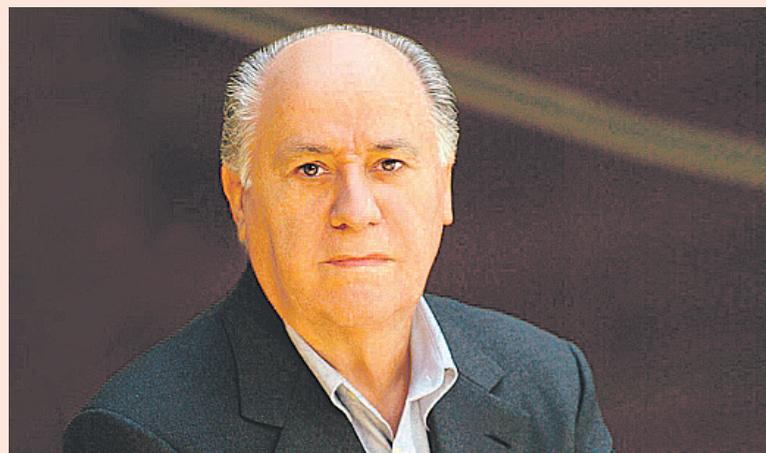
THE world's largest fashion retail group Inditex has reported continued growth and profits of €11.15 billion by the end of the third quarter of 2017.

Its turnover for the same period of €18 billion would rank it number 100 in the world alongside Latvia and Paraguay if it was a country.

The company which owns Zara, Bershka and a number of other brands just keeps expanding and during 2017 has opened 212 new stores across the world giving it a total of 7,504 in 94 countries with 162,000 employees.

Interestingly however it has been reported in foreign financial media that it is looking to sell 16 of its stores (14 in Spain and two in Portugal) in a sale and leaseback venture with an asking price of €400 million.

The reason for this decision is that the bulk of its stores around the world are operated on a leased basis and it has also seen a growth



AMANCIO ORTEGA: Founder of Inditex.

in internet sales within Spain which has been notoriously slow in embracing online shopping.

The group has invested a great deal of time and money in upgrading its internet presence and believes that the Spanish market is ready to see a definite move away from store purchases to online shopping which means that its stores may start to become redundant to some extent.

One of the properties that it is believed to be looking to dispose of is the Zara store in the upmarket Calle Preciados in Madrid, said to be the most expensive Spanish street in terms of retail rents.

One independent analyst has been quoted as saying that whilst pan-European internet purchase is expected to rise by 12 per cent per annum, Spain is likely to see a growth of 18 per cent up by 2021.

Profit margins for the company are in excess of 50 per cent over cost and this has been achieved by a policy of entering into arrangements with suppliers who will produce additional stock at very short notice, ensuring that the group does get left with an excess of previous season's clothing.

Still privately owned by Amancio Ortega who is currently listed as the world's fourth richest man, the Inditex Group has weathered all financial storms to become a true Spanish success story.

Jaime Botín accepts that he is tax evader

THE former Bankinter president Jaime Botín has accepted a sentence of nine months in prison and a fine of €506,134 for allegedly defrauding €1 million.

He has now accepted a ‘plea bargain’ with the prosecution agreeing that he pretended that a private plane which was actually based at Madrid Torrejon airport was actually located in Portugal where no taxes would have been paid.

As part of the agreement, he has accepted full responsibility for this matter meaning that charges against three of his former colleagues will be dropped.

There is however another charge pending against the millionaire member of the family which controls Santander Bank regarding the attempted sale of a painting by Picasso outside of Spain.

ECB confident for the future

AS the European Central Bank (ECB) has increased its growth forecast for members of the eurozone, the Bank of Spain has blamed Cataluña for an expected reduction.

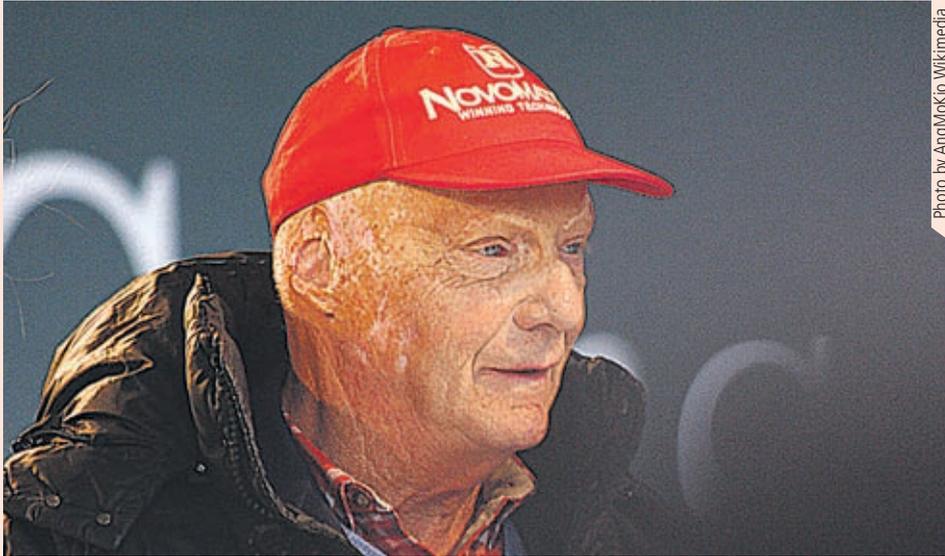
Spain has been something of an economic powerhouse over the past few years so by dropping its forecast for 2018 to 2.4 per cent, it aligns itself with the increased expectation of the ECB for 2.4 per cent by the end of 2017.

Whilst the ECB president Mario Draghi has indicated that the bank is much more confident than it was a few months ago, the Spanish Bank is also dropping the 2019 forecast to 2.1 per cent.

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AFTER Lufthansa pulled out of a rescue attempt due to EU Commission opposition, Niki Airlines filed for bankruptcy.

All flights were suspended leaving an estimated 5,000 passengers stranded without flights, although the airline website told passengers who had booked with tour operators to contact them for assistance whilst listing five 'friendly' aircraft who may assist in returning passengers to Austria, Germany and Switzerland until the end of 2017.

The airline which was part of the Air Berlin group (also in liquidation) has 20 airlines and flew across much of Europe with seven destinations in Spain including Malaga and Palma de Mallorca.

The original founder of the low cost Austrian airline - which he sold in 2011 - former F1 racing driver Niki Lauda has reportedly shown an interest in making a bid for it.

This is the third European airline to fall into the hands of liquidators this year.

Bid to take over toll operator still dragging on

IT was in May of this year that Italian company Atlantia bid €16.3 billion to take over Spanish toll road operator Abertis.

A few months later, that offer was topped by Hochtief the German subsidiary of Spanish construction group ACS who have indicated that they would pay €18.6 billion.

The matter is now being considered, but two Spanish ministers have joined in the discussions suggesting that the bid from the Italian group was not ideal as Abertis also owns Hispasat, which controls Spain's national satellite communications system.

The suggestion is that they would rather see ACS, whose chief executive Florentino Pérez is also President of Real Madrid

football club, take control of the company which relies upon the goodwill of the government which grants the rights to manage toll roads across Spain.

There is however a problem with the Hochtief bid as ACS is half the size of the Italian group which is controlled by the Benetton family and has less access to cheap funds which could cause shareholders in the Spanish operator to prefer a sale to Italy.

It has been suggested that the ACS/Hochtief bid will have to be supported in part by the issue of new shares and main shareholder in Abertis, CriteriaCaixa may not want to take stock in a construction company when it can take cash from the other party.

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What are they thinking?

LEAPY LEE SAYS IT
OTHERS THINK IT



DELIGHTED to have been invited to attend the Westminster Parliamentary Carol Service last week. Not quite so impressed with the almost unbelievable lack of security which surrounded the event.

Don't they ever learn anything? Just two minutes from the terrorist attack on Westminster Bridge, and with half the cabinet, including Jeremy Corbyn expected to be in attendance, we walked from our traffic-jammed Uber to the church, without observing even one member of the security forces - let alone an armed officer.

Our tickets could have been run up on anyone's PC and, although asked to bring our passports, they were not requested and we were allowed to pass unchallenged into the building, with no search, no metal detection and the briefest of ticket scrutiny. We took our seats among the MPs and peers of the realm, clutching an unchecked bag and umbrella, with yours truly wearing a long raincoat, which could have concealed a bomb or an AK47.

Frankly, I don't care if we were closely examined by a whole truck load of CCTV cameras, had I been a terrorist, I could have taken out half of those in attendance before any security force could



PEW FOR PEERS: Leapy takes a seat.

even have raised a small Glock. It was actually quite disturbing, and I truly did feel vulnerable in a situation which should have been sewed up tighter than the duck's proverbial. What are these people thinking?

I was actually surprised to see Corbyn in attendance at all (May sent a representative, obviously Brexit negotiations more important than her catching a glimpse of Leapy!) I didn't think the Labour leader 'did' religion; I was therefore not surprised to see him leave before the prayer segment of the service. Speaker John Bercow smiled as he passed



STEEPED IN HISTORY: Winston Churchill married here.

my pew, he obviously doesn't read the column! In all, apart from the feelings of vulnerability, a wholly interesting and enjoyable event in a church which is steeped in historical occurrences, including the marriage of Winston Churchill and Lord Louis Mountbatten.

The same building in 1555 AD, witnessed a priest attacked at the altar, after which the perpetrator, a William Flower was burnt at the stake outside the church. (Perhaps it is a good thing they haven't actually read Leapy's blurb!) The Westminster choir were of course superb and fair caused many a



TICKETS: The only thing that was checked.

droplet and lump. A truly unforgettable and wholly unique experience. This was the lesson read by the Speaker of the House, which made quite a pleasant change from 'Order Order.'

BC-AD

This was the moment when before turned into after, and the future's un-invented time keepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing happened. Only dull peace sprawled boringly over the earth.

This was the moment when even energetic Romans could find nothing better to do than counting heads in remote provinces.

And this was the moment when a few farm workers and three members of an obscure Persian sect walked haphazard by starlight, straight into the Kingdom of heaven.

Keep the faith

columnists@euroweeklynnews.com

Love Leapy. leapylee2002@gmail.com

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

Advertising feature

New branch of Spanish Property Choice opens in Albox

Office launched Tuesday December 12

FAMILY-RUN estate agency Spanish Property Choice, based in Mojacar, has opened up a brand new branch in Albox.

The successful company, run by the Garner family and established in 2007 has steadily expanded to accommodate property sales from not only Almeria and Murcia, but all over the Costa Blanca in Alicante as well.

Staff looked happy and relaxed at the launch of the new office, following a huge joint effort to paint and decorate the space before the opening.

The spacious new offices have crisp white walls, ceramic floors and clean lines, giving a refreshing, airy feeling as one enters. The light flooding through the sparkling glass storefront, highlights the neatly framed property advertisements which stand



CELEBRATING: The real estate team in Albox.

in the window.

Sharon and Steven Garner have worked incredibly hard to create a company which values family at its heart. This warmth and team spirit was easily reflected by the pride on the faces of all the family and staff who were present for the opening, with family members flying in especially from the UK to muck in

with the hard work prior to the launch.

Beaming with delight, Sharon Garner said that she was both grateful and touched by "the warm and friendly welcome from the locals and businesses around Albox."

Producers from Spanish Property Choice's own television series Sun, Sea and Selling Houses were also present to film the special occasion and the whole team could be seen lined up happily outside the new frontage for a photograph to mark the special day.

Albox's new branch looked fantastic and the launch was a wonderful way to celebrate the huge success that Spanish Property Choice has had as a company over the last 10 years. The official opening will take place on January 2, 2018.

www.spanishpropertychoice.com



OFFICIAL OPENING: Will take place on January 2.

INLAND PROPERTIES

Ref: A857 • Arboleas • 182,000€

VILLA CLOSE TO ALL AMENITIES

This attractive detached 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom villa comes with the additional bonus of having lovely landscaped gardens and a bespoke swimming pool, outside shower and hot tub. Private covered parking and extra storage. A must see property! EPC rating E 229 - 45



Ref: A866 Located - P/Lumbreras
349,950€ EPC E-D



Stunning villa with 3 beds, 3 baths, swimming pool with american enclosure.

Ref: A706 Located in Arboleas
159,500€ EPC D



Beautiful 3 bed, 2 bath villa located on an elevated plot with stunning mountain views.

Ref: A810 Located P/Lumbreras
359,000€ EPC E



Lovely 3 bed, 2 bath villa with a private swimming pool and roof solarium. 35 mins to beach.

Ref: A361 Located in Alfoquia
324,950€ EPC G



Wonderful 5 bed, 6 bath luxury villa with bespoke swimming pool, walking distance to village.

Ref: A660 Located in Cucador
179,999€ EPC E



3 bed, 3 bath cortijo, located in a small hamlet. Private pool and easy access to the motorway.

Ref: A861 • Huercal Overa • 224,950€

DETACHED VILLA WITH APARTMENT

This is an impeccable, single-storey, detached villa with a separate apartment and private swimming pool, located within walking distance of the village of Urcal. 4 beds, 3 baths. Located 35 minutes to the beach. Priced to sell. EPC rating E154 - 31



Ref: B874 Located in Lorca
From 300,000€



Build your dream home with Spanish Property Choice. Pick your plot & leave it to the experts.

Ref: A569 Located in Arboleas
167,750€ EPC G



If you are looking for a villa that stands out from the rest take a look at this colourful 3 bed.

Ref: A875 Located in L/Gallardos
249,950€ EPC F-E



This is a great 3 bed, 3 bath villa with stunning views, private pool & mature gardens.

Ref: A876 Located in Alfoquia
199,000€ EPC E

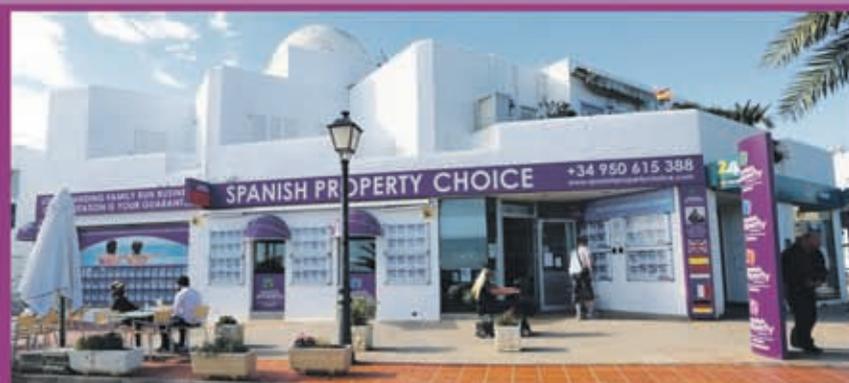


Characterful large property with 4 beds, 2 baths, 12.5 metre pool and stables, animal housing.

Ref: A869 Located in Cantoria
199,950€ EPC E



A beautiful 3 bed, 2 bath villa with pool & breathtaking views of the mountains.



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spanishpropertychoice.com
spanishpropertychoice.com

COASTAL PROPERTIES

Ref: B1009 • Sierra Cabrera • 475,000€

REDUCED TO AID A QUICK SALE

This beautiful 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom luxury villa occupies one of the best positions on the mountainside and has spectacular views. Central heating, air conditioning, private swimming pool, garage, lots of terraces with awe inspiring sea & mountain views. EPC E



Ref: B948 Located on V/D/ Este 129,995€ EPC E



3 bed, 2 bath apartment located on Valle Del Este golf resort. Lift access.

Ref: B934 Located on Valle del Este 95,000€ EPC E



This is a lovely 2 bed, 2 bath penthouse with roof solarium. Communal swimming pool.

Ref: B1174 Located in Cabuzana 158,000€ EPC G-F



A compact villa with a very large garden and private pool. 3 beds, 2 baths. 5 min drive to the beach.

Ref: B1034 Located in Plomares 129,999€ EPC E



Beautiful townhouse within walking distance of the village and beach. 3 beds, 2 baths.

Ref: B1114 Located in Vera 315,000€ EPC E



Superb 5 bed, 3 bath villa with pool, garage, central heating and air conditioning.

Ref: B992 • Mojacar • 160,000€

GREAT RENTAL POTENTIAL

This is a 3 bed, 2 bath end position townhouse with communal swimming pool, air conditioning, central heating, private parking, located 10 minutes to the beach and only 5 minutes to the local shops and all amenities. EPC F 119 - F 29



Ref: B1099 Located in Garrucha 119,999€ EPC F-E



A 3 bed, 2 bath Penthouse with sea views, communal roof solarium and underground parking.

Ref: B1005 Located in S/Cabrera 149,950€ EPC F-E



Villa in a stunning location with spectacular views. Communal pool and parking.

Ref: B1063 Located in Vera 695,000€ EPC D



This is a beautiful luxury villa with 5 beds, 5 baths, superb pool, garage, C/H and air con.

Ref: B1178 Located in Mojacar 355,000€ EPC E



A larger than average villa with 3 beds, 3 baths and only a 2 minute walk to the beach. A Gem!

Ref: B1105 Located in San Juan 249,950€ EPC F-E



Large 3 bed, 3 bath townhouse located on 3 floors and with Private swimming pool.

SPC

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BAR LEPANTO

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Albox Mercadona

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TECH FOR THE TIMID

UNTIL last month, where I live it was quicker to send out a messenger with a cleft stick than to use e-mail.

Then despite the hesitance of the town's largely-elderly inhabitants who still think the Interweb is the devil's spawn, we received a wonderful early Christmas present: fibre-optic broadband.

I wouldn't want to spoil the festive season for the rest of you living in seriously inferior settlements, but what a joy it is to send an e-mail and not have to brew up a cuppa while waiting for the progress bar to complete. How ecstatic it is to click a news-site video and not be treated to stop-motion puppetry.

It almost didn't happen, after the town fathers questioned the need for such new-fangled jig-gery-pokery. That it would cost each and every one of us a whole €3 more a month almost sank the deal.

Fortunately thieves came to our rescue (not a sentence I ever thought I would write). They stole the town's copper feeder cable, twice, and the service



BROADBAND: Spain the world's 22nd-fastest.

Strike up the broadband

With Spain now 22nd in global connectivity speed, Terence Kennedy is in a fever about his new fibre.

provider decided to give us fibre whether we wanted it or not. As indeed did Mr Kellogg all those breakfasts ago.

For the less fortunate, there are things you can do to improve your connectivity, other than lob-

bing your service provider and local authorities. Or moving. Or indeed stealing the copper cable.

If you're still on prehistoric ADSL as we were (1.5 Mbps on a really good day, courtesy of that excellent site for testing your broadband

speed, www.speedtest.net), you may have two other options: mobile, or satellite.

Satellite is the ultimate and perhaps only choice for those far out 'en medio de la nada'; but it's expensive and prone to crippling traffic jams, especially when the kids get home for a happy evening of slaughtering people online.

If you're lucky enough to be in range of a cellular tower, you could 'go mobile,' especially now that mobile data packages are dropping in price.

Unless you're contemplating watching Game of Thrones online instead of on telly like the rest of us, 10 or 20 GB of data a month should do nicely thank you, at an affordable price.

You don't even have to buy a special modem to do it; just turn on your smartphone's hotspot and bingo, you've got your own new WiFi source in the house, driven from your SIMcard.

So go on: if you're still limping along on snail-paced broadband but you've got a reasonable 4G or even 3G signal within reach, why not? All you need is a smartphone with data and Roberto's your tio.

Selling cellular

ACCESSING mobile data is not just the preserve of phones and tablets.

You can buy a MiFi gadget for home and mobile use for €100 or less. Insert a data-enabled SIM card, plug it in or use its battery, and you've got a 3G/4G WiFi 'router.'

The cheaper solution is firing up your smartphone's WiFi hotspot, activated in your phone's settings. Do be aware though that leaving it on continuously will hammer your phone's battery, so keep it on charge.

You can continue using your phone throughout. But perhaps you have an old smartphone lurking in a drawer which you could dedicate to hotspotting?

Or just bite the bullet, buy an €80 second smartphone and away you go. Because you're worth it.

THURSDAY THOUGHTS

By Graham Braben, Almería

Chocolate treats

MY daughter Alice and I were wandering through a local shopping centre a few weeks ago and came across a new chocolate shop. We ventured in with visions of leaving laden with scrumptious chocolate treats. That was until we saw the price. I paid less for my first ever car! But nevertheless, I have a weak spot for chocolate, and 'I'll save it for later,' isn't a phrase that springs immediately to mind!

This makes the story of a man in Pwllheli, North Wales even odder. I know Pwllheli very well and although you risk damage to your tongue trying to pronounce it properly - though not a patch on Llanfairpwllgwyngllgogerychwyndrobwillantysilllogogoch - it's somewhere I have spent a great deal of time in for many years, so I can say quite categorically, that apart from Funland and a few nice cafes, there's not a lot to do in the town. Perhaps this explains it.

For the last 25 years this particular chap has been collecting chocolate bars hoping they'll become worth more money than he paid for them. I think there's a flaw in that premise don't you? Would anyone really pay over the odds for a bar of chocolate that cruised by the sell by date decades ago? No, I don't think so either!

Apart from taking over huge swathes of this Pwllheli resident's home, chocolate, as The Beach Boys may have said, does get around. Apparently, in China, for Valentine's Day, a VW Beetle was smothered in chocolate and displayed at a Volkswagen dealer.

I'm not tempted to horde my chocolate or smother my car in it, I'm going to be boring and just eat the stuff. While I eat it I'll feel sorry for poor old Will Shakespeare, they didn't have chocolate in England until the 1650's, over 30 years after he died. No wonder he wrote so many tragedies!

columnists@euroweeklynews.com

Readers interested in submitting articles for this guest column should send articles of around 250 words on topics felt to be of interest to the cosmopolitan EWN readership to editorial@euroweeklynews.com.

Opening the door to advent calendars with a festive difference

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

IT must be Christmas - with the advent of all the usual political correctness! First off, there's Father Desmond O'Donnell, an Irish Catholic priest, urging Christians to abandon the word 'Christmas' because, for him, the words 'Christmas' and 'Easter' have lost all sacred meaning. Then there's the vicar who banned 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' from Christmas services.

Speaking of 'advent,' what about all the advent calendars around now? For starters, the erotic calendars from Selfridges. Next Asda's cheese-filled ones, while the Master of Malt website had a small bottle of rare whisky behind each window - provided you were happy with the £1,000 price tag. Then, Greggs the bak-



Photo by The Church Sofa / Twitter

ROLL IN THE HAY: Greggs' sausage roll nativity scene caused uproar in some religious circles.

ery chain was, er, roasted for replacing Jesus with a sausage roll in its nativity scene advert for its calendar.

Which reminds me of the latest Christmas cracker joke: "Why don't Southern Rail train guards share advent calendars?" Because they want to open the doors themselves...

But please can we stop calling these things 'Advent' calendars? (There were just pictures behind doors in the ones of my childhood.) They have nothing to do

with Advent - 'Countdown' calendars possibly, although 'Rip-off' (in every sense of the word) might be more accurate.

Christmas seems to be not only more and more politically correct, but more commercial each year. Starting way before Halloween, punctuated by ghastly, sentimental, elaborate advertisements and topped by Black Friday.

Ah, with all this talk of political correctness, it's already beginning to feel like Christmas. And a

sure sign Santa's sleigh's already having its annual checkup at Kwik Fit. As for me, not exactly a hard 'BrXmas' here, but again no free movement of loads of relatives - I'm too busy writing my latest thriller!

And another year comes to a close - eight years of this column every single week and over 400 articles later! Many thanks to all you readers out there for all the great comments here and to my website. Great to be appreciated and pleased the odd (yes!) joke cheers you up in these troubled times. HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

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

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THURSDAY	BBC one	BBC TWO	itv	CHANNEL 4	CHANNEL 5	sky sports main event				
21 DECEMBER	4:35pm	Wallace and Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit	3:00pm	Natural World	5:00pm	Tipping Point	3:15pm	Christmas with the Andersons	11:00am	Premier League Daily
	5:50pm	Merry Madagascar	4:00pm	Victorian Bakers at Christmas	6:00pm	The Chase	4:00pm	Lost and Found	12:00pm	Sky Sports Daily
	6:15pm	Pointless	5:00pm	Back in Time for Christmas	7:00pm	ITV News London	5:00pm	A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun	1:00pm	SKY Sports News
	7:00pm	BBC News at Six	6:00pm	The Lake District: A Wild Year	7:30pm	ITV Evening News	6:00pm	Kirstie's Handmade Christmas	2:00pm	SKY Sports News
	7:30pm	BBC London News	7:00pm	Sacred Rivers with Simon Reeve	8:00pm	Emmerdale	7:00pm	The Simpsons	3:00pm	SKY Sports News
	8:00pm	The One Show	8:00pm	Inside the Christmas Factory	8:30pm	Tonight	7:30pm	Hollyoaks	4:00pm	SKY Sports News
	8:30pm	EastEnders	9:00pm	MasterChef	9:00pm	Emmerdale	8:00pm	Channel 4 News	5:00pm	SKY Sports News
	9:00pm	DIY SOS The Big Build	10:00pm	Joanna and Jennifer: Absolutely Changers	9:30pm	Coronation Street	8:00pm	The Supervet at Christmas	6:00pm	SKY Sports News
	10:00pm	Love, Lies and Records	11:00pm	Absolutely Fabulous	10:00pm	Gordon, Gino and Fred's Great Christmas Roast	9:00pm	Christmas Lights	7:00pm	SKY Sports News
	10:00pm							10:00pm	Donny Osmond's Easy Listening Christmas	8:00pm
FRIDAY 22 DECEMBER	6:00pm	Puss in Boots: The Three Diablos	5:15pm	Back in Time for Christmas	4:00pm	Dickinson's Real Deal	4:00pm	5 News	12:00pm	Sky Sports Daily
	6:15pm	Pointless	6:15pm	Nativity 2: Danger in the Manger!	5:00pm	Tipping Point	5:00pm	Mariah Carey's a Christmas Melody	1:00pm	SKY Sports News
	7:00pm	BBC News at Six	8:00pm	Inside the Christmas Factory	6:00pm	The Chase	5:30pm	Mrs. Miracle	1:30pm	Live World Championship Darts
	7:30pm	BBC London News	9:00pm	Mastermind	7:00pm	ITV News London	6:30pm	The Gadget Show	5:30pm	SKY Sports News
	8:00pm	The One Show	9:30pm	Only Connect	7:30pm	ITV Evening News	7:00pm	Christmas with the Dog Rescuers	7:00pm	SKY Sports News
	8:30pm	A Question of Sport	10:00pm	Saturday Night Fever - The Ultimate Disco Movie	8:00pm	Emmerdale	8:00pm	Celebrity 5 Go in Search of Santa	7:30pm	Carling in Off the Bar Pre-Match
	9:00pm	EastEnders			8:30pm	Coronation Street	9:00pm	In His Own Words	8:00pm	Football
	9:30pm	Miranda			9:00pm	You've Been Framed!	10:00pm	Super Casino	11:30pm	SPFL Matters: Old Firm Special
	9:30pm	Have I Got 2017 News for You			9:30pm	Coronation Street				
	10:00pm				10:00pm	AI Murray's Make Christmas Great Again				
SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER	6:30pm	Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme Christmas Special	3:40pm	Talking Pictures	2:35pm	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	5:00pm	Kirstie's Handmade Christmas	12:00pm	Soccer Saturday Pre-Match
	7:00pm	BBC News	4:10pm	Mildred Pierce	5:30pm	Despicable Me	6:00pm	Channel 4 News	12:30pm	Football
	7:10pm	BBC London News	6:00pm	Natural World	7:30pm	ITV News London	6:10pm	Gogglesprogs	3:30pm	Live World Championship Darts
	7:15pm	Pointless Celebrities Christmas Special	7:00pm	Bill	7:40pm	ITV News	7:10pm	Christmas Special	6:00pm	My Icon
	8:10pm	Even Better Than the Real Thing - Christmas Special	8:30pm	Lenny Henry: A Life on Screen	8:00pm	You've Been Framed!	7:10pm	Crocodile Dundee	6:15pm	Football
	9:05pm	Casualty	9:30pm	Dad's Army	8:30pm	Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway	9:00pm	The World's Best Christmas Lights: From Liverpool to Bethlehem	8:30pm	Football
			10:00pm	Feud: Bette and Joan	9:00pm	The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies	10:00pm	The Wolverine	11:00pm	Live World Championship Darts
			10:50pm	Feud: Bette and Joan	11:35pm	ITV News				
			11:35pm	What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?						
SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER	3:20pm	Monsters University	2:20pm	Alex Polizzi's Christmas Fix	5:00pm	Cannonball Christmas Special	6:20pm	The Snowman	9:00am	Christmas Eve Total Goals
	4:55pm	Doodlebugs	3:20pm	Natural World	6:00pm	You've Been Framed!	6:55pm	The Snowman and the Snowdog	10:00am	Christmas Eve Total Goals
	5:10pm	Home	4:20pm	Guys and Dolls	6:30pm	ITV News London	7:20pm	Channel 4 News	11:00am	SKY Sports News
	6:35pm	BBC News	6:45pm	Carols from King's	6:35pm	ITV News	7:30pm	The Muppet Christmas Carol	2:00pm	SKY Sports News
	6:50pm	BBC London News	8:00pm	Dad's Army	6:50pm	A Christmas Chase: Celebrity Special	9:00pm	Child Genius v Celebrities Christmas Special	2:30pm	Cricket
	7:00pm	Countryfile	9:00pm	Christmas University Challenge 2017	7:40pm	All Star Musicals	10:00pm	Gogglebox 2017	6:00pm	SKY Sports News
	8:00pm	Mary, Mel and Sue's Big Christmas Thank You	9:30pm	Winter's Weirdest Events	9:30pm	Maigret in Montmartre	12:05am	The Inbetweeners	6:30pm	Live NFL
	9:00pm	EastEnders	10:30pm	The Great Gatsby	11:25pm	ITV News			10:00pm	Live NFL
	9:30pm	Michael McIntyre's Big Christmas Show							2:00am	SKY Sports News
MONDAY 25 DECEMBER	4:10pm	Cinderella	6:35pm	The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show 1977	12:10pm	Mr Bean's Holiday	3:25pm	Channel 4 News	3:00pm	Hamilton: My 4th World Title
	5:45pm	The Highway Rat	7:45pm	Winter's Weirdest Events	1:50pm	Santa Claus	3:30pm	The Alternative Christmas Message	3:30pm	Best of Moeen Ali
	6:15pm	BBC News	8:45pm	Dad's Army	4:00pm	HM the Queen	3:35pm	Scrooged	4:00pm	Phil Taylor the Greatest
	6:30pm	Doctor Who	9:25pm	Upstart Crow	4:10pm	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	5:30pm	Dumbo	5:00pm	Sky F1 Christmas Special
	7:30pm	Strictly Come Dancing	10:00pm	Tom Jones and Beverley Knight's Gospel Christmas	6:50pm	Emmerdale	6:50pm	Home Alone	6:00pm	Info not available
	8:40pm	Call the Midwife	10:00pm		7:50pm	ITV Evening News	8:40pm	The Great Christmas Bake Off	7:30pm	AJ - The Knockouts
	10:00pm	EastEnders			8:00pm	Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs	10:00pm	First Dates at Christmas	8:00pm	Boxing's Best of 2017
	11:00pm	Mrs. Brown's Boys			9:00pm	Coronation Street	11:00pm	Alan Carr's Christmas Chatty Man	10:00pm	Live NFL: Pittsburgh @ Houston
	11:35pm	300 Years of French and Saunders			10:00pm	Victoria				
	12:25am	BBC News								
TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER	3:10pm	Shaun the Sheep Movie	2:20pm	The Eagle Has Landed	10:25am	Ferris Bueller's Day Off	1:10pm	Alvin and the Chipmunks	3:10pm	Balmoral: A Hidden History
	4:30pm	Doodlebugs	4:30pm	The Repair Shop at Christmas	12:25pm	Cats and Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore	2:55pm	Channel 4 News	5:10pm	Sandringham: The Queen at Christmas
	4:45pm	Mary Poppins	5:30pm	Final Score	2:00pm	ITV Racing: Live from Kempton	3:00pm	Child Genius v Celebrities Christmas Special	6:15pm	A Royal Night Out
	7:00pm	BBC News	6:35pm	Matthew Bourne's Cinderella	4:30pm	E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial	4:05pm	The Great Christmas Bake Off	8:00pm	The Strictly Story: Fake Tan, Tangos and a Ten From Len
	7:20pm	BBC London News	8:30pm	Christmas University Challenge 2017	6:50pm	ITV Evening News	5:20pm	The Little Mermaid	9:30pm	Dirty Dancing: Making Movie Magic
	7:30pm	Snow Bears	9:00pm	Reindeer Family and Me	7:10pm	Emmerdale	7:00pm	Back to the Future	11:00pm	Dirty Dancing
	8:30pm	EastEnders	10:00pm	Dragons' Den	7:40pm	Jurassic World	9:00pm	Travel Man		
	9:00pm	Little Women	11:00pm	QI	10:00pm	Coronation Street	10:00pm	Big Fat Quiz of the Year		
	10:00pm	The Miniaturist								
	11:30pm	BBC News								
WEDNESDAY 27 DECEMBER	8:00pm	Celebrity Mastermind	3:20pm	World's Most Extraordinary Homes	4:00pm	Tenable	4:10pm	Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny	10:10am	Mofy
	8:30pm	A Question of Sport	4:20pm	Inside the Factory	5:00pm	Tipping Point	5:15pm	Channel 4 News	10:15am	Cruising with Jane McDonald
	9:00pm	Little Women	5:20pm	The Man Who Never Was	6:00pm	The Chase	5:30pm	Back to the Future Part II	10:30am	World's Strongest Man 2017
	10:00pm	The Miniaturist	7:00pm	Tropical Paradise	7:00pm	Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs	7:30pm	Hollyoaks	11:30am	North Sea Hijack
	11:00pm	BBC News	8:00pm	Dad's Army	7:30pm	ITV News London	8:00pm	The Supervet at Christmas	1:25pm	Operation Crossbow
	11:20pm	BBC London News	8:30pm	Christmas University Challenge 2017	7:45pm	ITV Evening News	8:00pm	Supersoppers Sales Special	3:40pm	Operation Daybreak
	11:30pm	Mrs. Brown's Boys	9:00pm	Six Robots and Us	8:00pm	Emmerdale	9:00pm	Miranda Does Christmas	5:55pm	The Guns of Navarone
	12:00am	Not Going Out	10:00pm	Alan Partridge	8:30pm	Coronation Street	10:00pm	World's Strongest Man 2017	9:00pm	World's Strongest Man 2017
	12:40am	Comic Relief 2017: A look at some of the projects helped by Comic Relief 2017.	11:00pm	Oasis	9:00pm	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire			10:00pm	Most Shocking

|| The schedules for the television programme pages are provided by an external company: we regret that any changes or errors are not the responsibility of Euro Weekly News.



Mince pies, Crowns and the odd disaster

THE CROWN (Netflix) has returned with all the drama, excitement, and Royal insight we were drawn to in Season One. Claire Foy continues to play a wonderful Elizabeth II, knocking the socks off a couple of Dames who have gone before her, but what has happened to her accent? I was reaching for the subtitles at one point.

Surely if anyone should speak the Queen's English, it's Claire playing The Monarch? Stick with the accent though, Season Two doesn't disappoint.

If you enjoyed *The Real Marigold Hotel* series, check out *The Real Marigold on Tour* (BBC1 and 2 and *Catchup*). The original gang are split into two groups of four this time around, exploring what it is like to grow older in countries around the world.

The series started in China, followed by Cuba, Iceland (where it was cold, who knew...) and will conclude in Thailand. Don't be put off that the BBC didn't venture to Spain, *Marigold* is just as good in Global Tour format.

I'm not sure that any of the celebrities will be persuaded to uproot and move home though. It's a good job



GREAT WATCH: *The Real Marigold on Tour.*



WONDERFUL: Claire Foy in *The Crown.*

too, where would the lovely Miriam Margolyes get her clothes and I'm not sure anyone but the Brits would understand Wayne Sleep, but it is an interesting way to sample life, albeit with a walking stick. I just hope our celebrities were able to fly First Class between filming.

With no spoilers over the mince pies, what is happening in Soap Land as we head for Christmas?

For the *EastEnders* (BBC1, nightly) we know there is trouble when Sharon Mitchell (still played by Letitia Dean) announces 'Good knees up at The Vic, that's what Christmas is all about.' Well, not in my house Sharon, not even if Peggy was serving the drinks around the pool.

We already know that Max Branning (Jake Wood) is consumed by revenge and wants to get back at every-

one who has wronged him. There is also a catastrophic event coming up for the Branning family. Feliz Navidad Albert Square.

It looks as though life risks turning into a wild west show for the residents of *Coronation Street* (ITV1, nightly). Billy Mayhew is set to ride down the street guns blazing as Peter Barlow drives Todd Grimshaw and Summer out of Wakefield before taking revenge on

the vicar for being part of Susan's death. All that's needed are saloon doors on *The Rovers* and a stage coach rattling down the cobbles. Ken Barlow in a stetson anyone?

Meanwhile on the farm, the cast of *Emmerdale* (ITV1, nightly) aren't going to be fooled by Charity Dingle's personal life apparently settling down. She deserves it given recent story lines, but has an explosive New Year coming up, rocking the all too short Christmas calm. I hope she has a Merry, but quiet Christmas.

To finish this week, my Christmas Eve and Christmas Day recommendations include *Dad's Army* (BBC2, Christmas Eve) is pure genius for those of us old enough; *The Queen's Speech* (BBC & ITV, Christmas Day) isn't Jungle winner Toff eating bugs, but the annual message from Her Majesty and finally the Christmas episode of *Victoria* (ITV1, Christmas Day).

This episode of *Victoria* has been in development for over a year now. Expect snow, Prince Albert enjoying too much Christmas spirit and watch out for the number of Christmas trees, the Royal children had one each apparently.

Happy viewing and Merry Christmas everyone.

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Courtesy of: Hunt Trip Spain/ Facebook

FAMILY AFFAIR: Hunting is often marketed as a family holiday.

A PROUD father kneels beside his three sons, each broadly smiling while squinting as the sun lights up the picturesque Spanish countryside.

Beneath the smiles lies a Southeastern Ibx, slain so that it can play its part in this uncomfortably joyous photograph.

In truth, it is a portrait that most families won't have in their photo albums.

However, when trawling through the 'Trophy Album' on one of Spain's most popular hunting tourism websites (Hunt Trip Spain) it is an image repeated time and again.

Be it fathers proudly standing between their kill and smiling sons or husbands embracing grinning wives while their guns rest against a defeated Red Stag, the frequency of the family kill portrait says a lot about the nation's obsession with hunting.

A favoured Spanish hobby (or sport,

if that is the appropriate term), hunting has long been a tradition from the north to the south of the country.

After France, Spain has the largest number of hunters in Europe, according to a recent report published by the Círculo Fortuny.

In total, there are an estimated 850,000 official hunting licences in Spain. That represents a slight drop since 2010, when the number exceeded one million.

However, the fact that 2 per cent of the population still retains a hunting licence, proves its lasting popularity.

To put that into context, those figures equate to one in every 54 Spanish residents owning a hunting licence.

Outside of the Nordic countries that is the highest percentage in Europe.

And it is a nationwide fascination. Andalucía, Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla y León register the highest number of licences, with Cataluña and Navarra also generating plenty of interest.

But why, with another New Year about to be rung in, does hunting still garner so much interest?

On hunting tourism website, the Stalker Group, Spain's geographical beauty combined with its colourful history is used as a

2% of Spaniards have a hunting licence, the biggest percentage in Europe

way of portraying hunting as part of the nation's culture, drawing on its architecture and artists as parallels.

The website says: 'Geographically, Spain's diversity is immense. There are endless tracts of wild and crinkled sierra to explore, as well as some spectacularly rugged stretches of coast between the beaches. Culturally, the country is littered with superb old buildings, from Roman aqueducts and Islamic palaces to Gothic cathedrals. Almost every second village has a medieval castle. Spain has been the home of some of the world's great artists: El Greco, Velazquez, Goya, Dali, Picasso, and has

With animal rights groups and hunters Noon takes a deeper look into Spain

museums and galleries to match.

The country vibrates with music of every kind, from the drama of Flamenco to the melancholy lyricism of the Celtic music and gaitas (bagpipes) of the northwest."

It continues: "This is great chance to bring your family with you and enjoy both hunting and Spanish culture. Come and bag your magnificent Red Deer, Fallow Deer, Roe Deer, Mouflon, four species of Ibx and Chamois here. Traditional 'Monteria,' the royal hunting, is also available in Spain."

Again, hunting is dressed up as a family day out. Coupled with immersing yourself in the country's culture and

brehtaking landscape, it all sounds pretty idyllic.

But for everyone who supports or partakes in hunting, there is an equal number against it.

One British expat who has seen the negative impact of hunting first hand is the president of dog rescue centre Adana.

Based on the Costa del Sol, Mary Page has had to tend countless hunting dogs beaten and then abandoned by their owners.

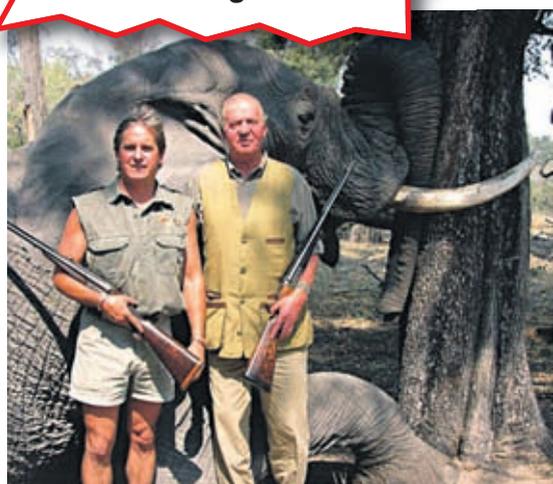
"Some of the hunters who use dogs are 100 per cent hijos de -----," Page told the EWN. "They can be extremely aggressive. I have called the police about it several times.

"We have experienced countless injured dogs, dogs cruelly disposed of - be it hanging, drowning or clubbing to death - or left to starve to death.

5% of the world's trophy kills are imported to Spain

85,000 signatories called for King Juan Carlos to be removed from WWF position after hunting scandal

ROYAL SHAME: King Juan Carlos on hunting trip



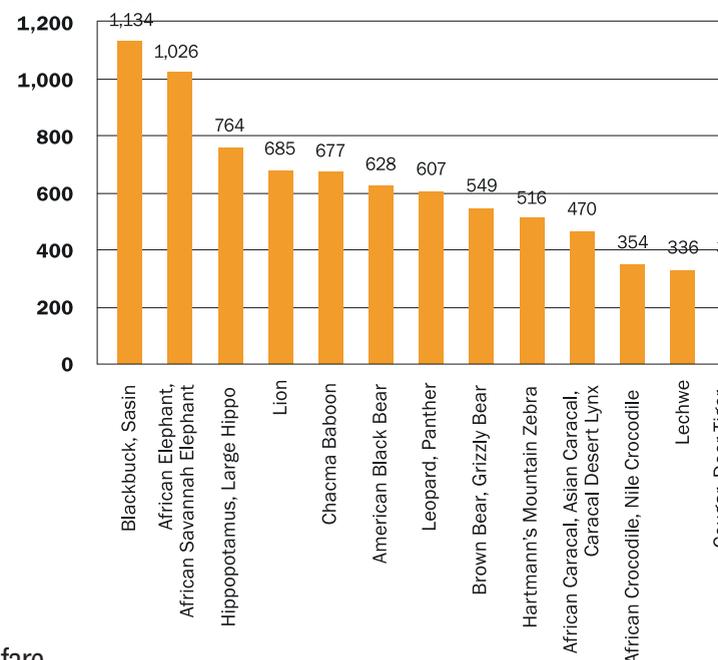
Trophy obsession

SPAIN is Europe's biggest importer of trophy kills, accounting for 5 per cent of all global imports. Here are the 'trophies' making their way to Spanish homes from overseas.

HUNTING TROPHIES: The groups that are threatened.

Source International Fund for Animal Welfare

Top 20 threatened taxa for imported (2004 to 2014) to Spain



Man's hunting story Trophy tragedy

Constantly at loggerheads, David
in's controversial pastime

"We have even had hunters on our land firing at rabbits or boars."

She added: "Personally I detest anyone who kills animals for sport, but what these hunters do to their own dogs is especially repulsive."

And the numbers speak for themselves. According to a *National Geographic* report, around 10,000 hunting dogs - galgos - are massacred each year.

Deemed unfit to hunt, the dogs are either destroyed en masse or abandoned and left to starve to death.

And yet, despite the tremendous number of hunts that take place, the animals on offer in Spain are seemingly not always exotic enough to satisfy all hunters.

Spain is the highest European importer of 'trophy kills,' accounting for 5 per cent of all imports around the world, according to the International Fund for

Animal Welfare report *Killing for Trophies: An Analysis of Global Trophy Hunting Trade*.

Of that number some 10,334 imports between 2004 and 2014 were from threatened species.

Only the US accounts for more imports of trophy kills, with a staggering 71 per cent of all overseas kills being shipped to the US.

The most popular imports into Spain were blackbuck (Sasin), African elephant, hippopotamus, lion, and chacma baboon (see graph). Some 87 polar bears were also imported into Spain during the decade-long study.

Equally worrying is the number of trophy kills going the other way. The Aoudad (or Barbary sheep), a North African species that also inhabits the Iberian Peninsula, is the most exported threatened species heading out of Spain.

And it is not just the trophy kills that get the Spanish reaching for their shotguns.

Game and migratory Mediterranean birds face an unpleasant welcome when they choose to touch down.

Yet much like bullfighting, hunting has found itself in the spotlight as animal activists mount pressure on the government to put an end to what

When a disagreement goes too far

WHETHER for or against hunting, the tragic death of Melania Capitan earlier this year was a horrendous result of bitter quibbling between hunters and animal activists.

A female hunter aged just 27, Capitan took her own life in July after she was reportedly threatened by animal rights activists on social media.

Capitan, from Cataluña, regularly posted detailed personal hunting methods on her blog, with these attracting thousands of followers.

These posts attracted much controversy and she had been subjected to threats online.

And while several animal rights spokespeople condemned the online bullying of Capitan, the bullies couldn't resist one last dig.

As the news of her death spread, many took to her



TRAGEDY: Melania Capitan.

Facebook page, which has more than 32,000 likes, to leave comments apparently welcoming the news.

"You have done a favour to humanity! Bye bye," one comment read.

"She was so bitter that she had to pay for her hate killing innocent animals, thank God she killed herself, the only good thing she did lately," another comment said.

Whatever you think of hunting or thought of Capitan, celebrating somebody's suicide is a low that cannot be allowed to happen again.

10,334 endangered trophy kills were nationally imported from 2004 to 2014

many consider a family pastime.

It is true that in recent years the process (and cost) of obtaining a hunting licence has become less appealing.

To obtain and maintain a hunting licence in Spain, it is mandatory to have a gun permit, which costs around €20 a year, a hunting permit for about €80 a year, plus civil liability insurance which is around €40 per year.

In addition there is the €150 fee that the psycho-technical exam costs.

However, Spain's government has done little to appease the protests. In fact, it has seemingly done everything in its power to irritate them further.

In 2014, the ruling PP government angered animal rights groups after the Senate steamrollered through an amendment to Spain's National Parks Law to extend a moratorium on a ban on hunting in these specially protected areas.

The law as it stood said that hunt-

ing on private estates which fall within one of Spain's 15 national parks must end by 2017.

However, they have since extended that to 2020 to the frustration and bewilderment of environmentalists.

Slammed by the likes of the WWF, Ecologists in Action and BirdLife, the PP was accused of taking backhanders and wilting to the monetary powers of the hunting communities.

And it is not just the government that has had its fair share of hunting critics.

The former King Juan Carlos was no stranger to hunting scandals himself. In 2006, it was alleged that he had shot a Russian bear that had been given honey laced with vodka.

Six years later, he was again facing a backlash when news broke that he needed hip replacement surgery after falling during a 2012 elephant trophy hunting trip in Botswana.

Photos then emerged of the monarch posing with dead elephants and African buffaloes, as the media turned on the

74-year-old monarch, who - by the way - had the audacity to be an associated member of Spain's branch of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

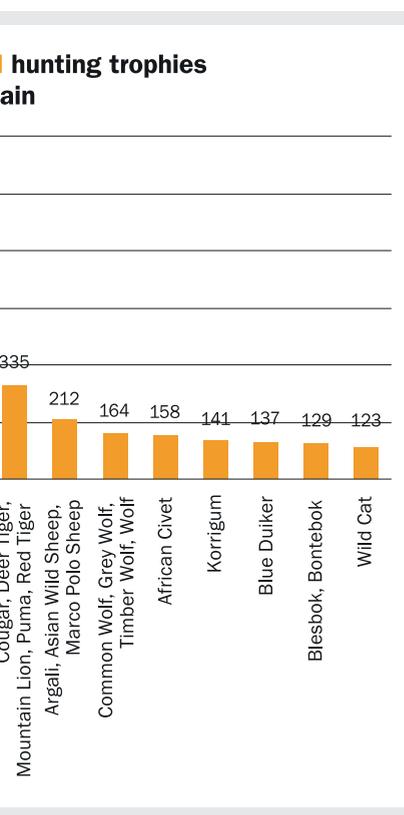
This was a double-blow for the King, who was slammed for his expansive lifestyle during the economic crisis.

More damning however, was the backlash from WWF. Around 85,000 signatures called for Juan Carlos' resignation as honorary president of WWF Spain.

A public apology followed, but failed to persuade those at WWF as 94 per cent of general meeting members voted to remove him from his honorary position.

With a government that refuses to stamp it out and a former recent monarch who actively revelled in it, the popularity of hunting is unlikely to diminish anytime soon.

Those against it can - and will - continue to make noise, in the hope that someone will hear their calls one day.



€140 annual cost of hunting licence

KILL OR BE KILLED: Hunting dogs



'They hunt anything'

HUNTERS are making life hell for expatriates in the Jalon Valley, Alicante.

"We are terrified here," said a 70-year-old grandmother formerly from Leicestershire in the UK who did not wish to be named. "I had a cat killed, lead shot come through the window and if you don't like it you just have to shut up."

Having moved to the scenic area five years ago after 15 years near the coast, she says that hunting dogs often jump the fence and run amok in her garden.

"My neighbour has built a huge fence to keep them out.

"The noise from July to February is ridiculous... they begin at dawn and we can't sleep!

"They hunt anything and the dogs are destroying the environment.

"Once I shouted at them from the roof, but one just put his finger up, then they spent hours parked at the end of my drive trying to intimidate me."

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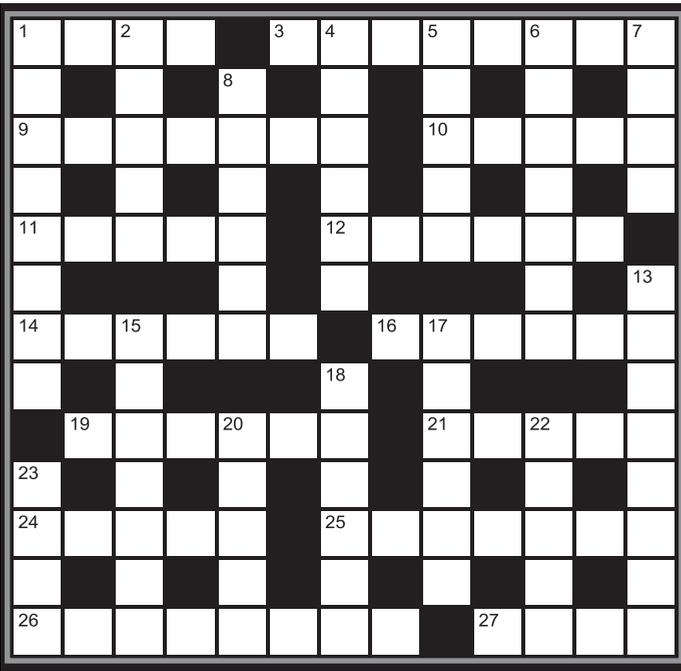
Cryptic

Across

- 1 Performs on stage, appearing after John (4)
- 3 Accepts devious beer scam (8)
- 9 Around lake there's poor cover (7)
- 10 Girl from German-Italian background (5)
- 11 Boy gets the French serving spoon (5)
- 12 Point to prime kind of silly smile (6)
- 14 Dehydration results from a scruffy T-shirt (6)
- 16 A predicament caused by disorderly capers (6)
- 19 Engineers model for peace of mind (6)
- 21 Jolly pirate emblem (5)
- 24 Old Testament character, New Testament incident (5)
- 25 Repeat some of the composite rates (7)
- 26 Late drink that goes to your head? (8)
- 27 Early historian's sleeping place on boat (4)

Down

- 1 A sailor, Spanish sun, mid-January, end of August and June, it's perfect (8)
- 2 Dainty daughter making cloth (5)
- 4 Gloomy doctor got up (6)
- 5 Kingdom in actual miles (5)
- 6 Throw me a rich fire-breathing



Greek (7)

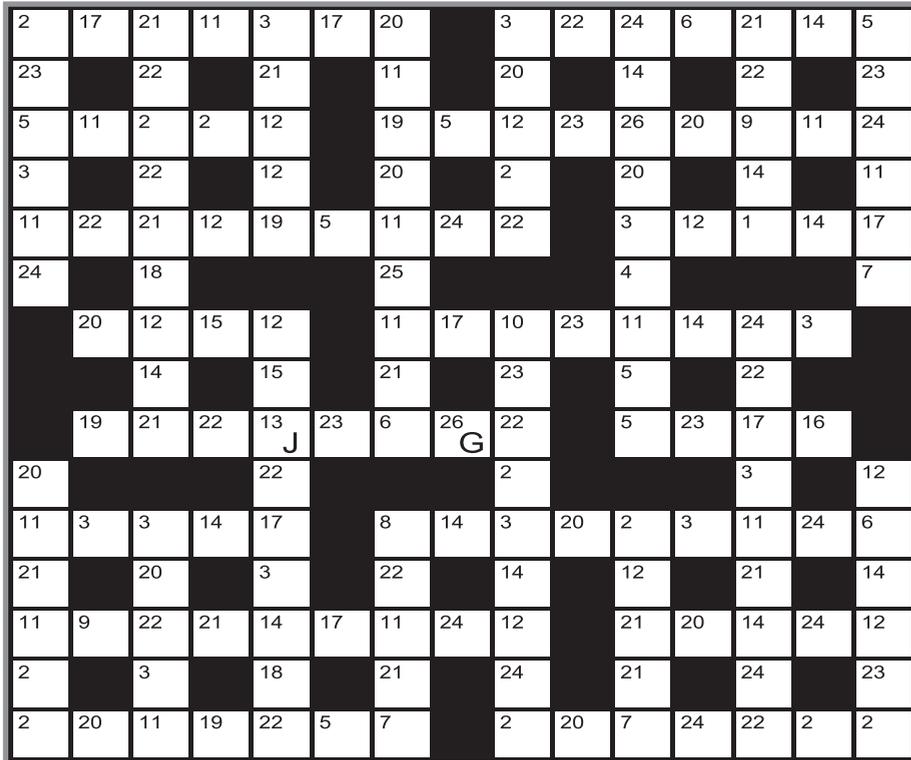
- 7 Hit one's friends back (4)
- 8 The rest from the Isley Brothers (6)
- 13 Dog with no tail - get back! (8)
- 15 Some nice Bergen sandwiches contain lettuce (7)
- 17 Floor covering from Oscar

Peterson's house (6)

- 18 About end product in a light-sensitive area (6)
- 20 A group of eight musicians etc to reform (5)
- 22 Amazing girl? (5)
- 23 An average sort of name (4)

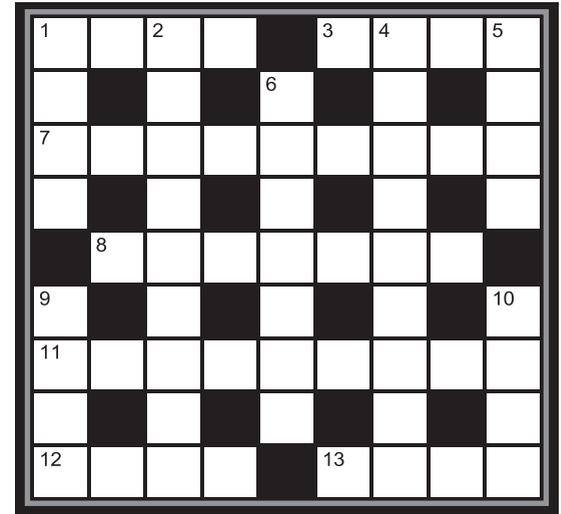
Code Breaker

Each number in the Code Breaker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In this week's puzzle, 13 represents J and 26 represents G, so fill in J every time the figure 13 appears and G every time the figure 26 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.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION FACING PAGE

Quick



Across

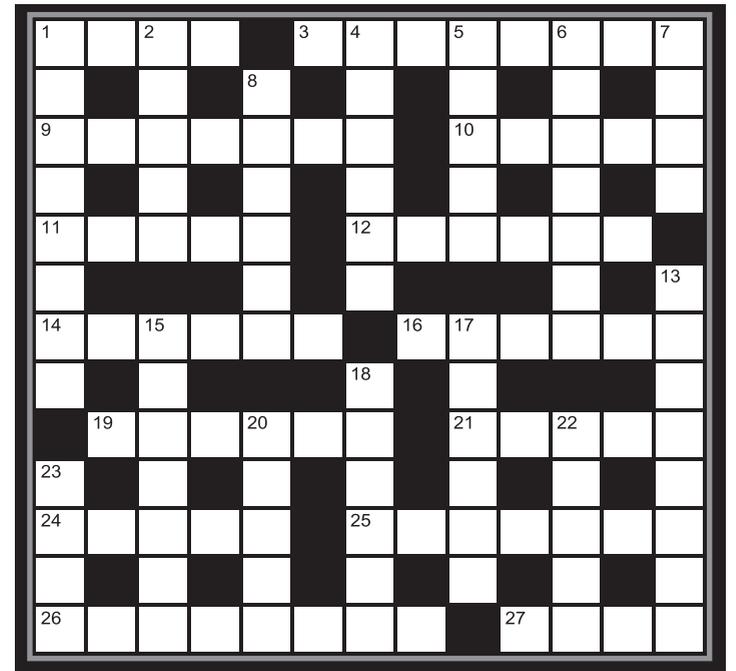
- 1 Neat and tidy (4)
- 3 Overdue (4)
- 7 Allured or enticed (9)
- 8 Mother of your father or mother (7)
- 11 Kept from happening or arising (9)
- 12 Digits of the foot (4)
- 13 Boundary of a surface (4)

Down

- 1 Snare (4)
- 2 Intervene (9)
- 4 Tried (9)
- 5 Finishes (4)
- 6 Frequented by a ghost (7)
- 9 Dot (4)
- 10 Not in action or at work (4)

English - Spanish

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



Across

- 1 Simpático (4)
- 3 Té de especias (5,3)
- 9 Pavos (7)
- 10 Mary (5)
- 11 Visita (5)
- 12 Uno de los renos de Santa (6)
- 14 Caramelo (6)
- 16 Hug (6)
- 19 Ivy (6)
- 21 Cometa (5)

Down

- 1 Natividad (8)
- 2 Corchos (5)
- 4 Inn (6)
- 5 Beds (5)
- 6 Card (greetings) (7)

Across

- 24 Reindeer (5)
- 25 Happiness (cheerfulness) (7)
- 26 Shepherds (8)
- 27 Himno (4)
- 7 To roast (4)
- 8 Sofá (6)
- 13 Tren de juguete (3,5)
- 15 Amigos (7)
- 17 Reñir (6)
- 18 Desfile (6)
- 20 Wish (5)
- 22 Alegre (5)
- 23 Envolver (con papel) (4)

CROSSWORD PAGE

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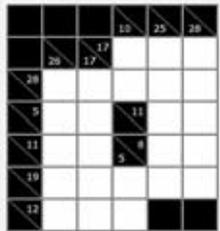
MADDOCKS'
VIEW ON LIFE



' IT'S SO BRIGHT THAT STAR COULD BE ANOTHER WORLD! '

Kakuro

Fill all the empty squares using the numbers 1 to 9, so that the sum of each horizontal block equals the 'clue' on its left, and the sum of each vertical block equals the clue on its top. No number may be used in the same block more than once.



Nonagram

How many English words of four letters or more can you make from the nine letters in our Nonagram puzzle? Each letter may be used only once (unless the letter appears twice). Each word **MUST CONTAIN THE CENTRE LETTER** (in this case **M**) and there must be **AT LEAST ONE NINE LETTER WORD**. Plurals, vulgarities or proper nouns are not allowed.



TARGET:

- Average: 15
- Very good: 29
- Good: 20
- Excellent: 38

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

able ably alee ally bald bale ball bell belt blat bled dale deal dele dell eely lade lady late lead leal tael tale tall teal tell yell alley badly baldy baled bally belay belle belly betel blade bleat bleed dally dealt delay delta elate label ladle lated table tally telly baldly ballet beadle belled belted elated lately tabled yelled belated belayed bleated eyeball labeled elatedly BELATEDLY

Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3X3 box contains the digits 1-9. There's no maths involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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

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

LOTTERY

UK NATIONAL LOTTERY

Saturday December 16



IRISH LOTTO

Saturday December 16



EURO MILLIONS

Tuesday December 12



Friday December 15



EL MILLON: TVX66431

LA PRIMITIVA

Thursday November 14



JOKER: 8 001 577

Saturday December 16



JOKER: 6 940 439

EL GORDO DE LA PRIMITIVA

Sunday December 17



YOUR STARS
FOR NEXT 7 DAYS

AQUARIUS
(January 21 - February 19)

It is difficult to avoid repeating mistakes made in the past. Your approach to certain situations has not changed and therein lies the problem. Someone who blames you for a mistake shows ignorance but that does not make it less upsetting.

LEO
(July 24 - August 23)

Your attention is needed on more than one front, and some decisions are at odds with your personal thoughts and attitudes. Being reminded that 'business is business' does nothing to relieve your conscience.

PISCES
(February 20 - March 20)

Who is trying to push you into a corner? Maybe it is being done so subtly that you have not even noticed. Who wants a decision from you? Appear to take pressure lightly and not give in to an irritation. There is some jealousy this week but refuse to be drawn into petty matters..

VIRGO
(August 24 - September 23)

Are you willing to take a risk on someone who has let you down before? Looking into their recent past is likely to tip the balance. What you find shows clearly if there has been a change of heart on their part or if they are trying to pull the wool over your eyes.

ARIES
(March 21 - April 20)

A rather slow start to the week leads you to feel bored but be assured that the weekend will be far from dull. A recent conversation or correspondence with an old friend leads to unexpected contact.

LIBRA
(September 24 - October 23)

A disagreement with a friend upsets you but is short-lived. To avoid such a situation in the future, look at how you should have dealt with it. There is always something to know that guides us to a better position. It will make you smile that someone has taken you for a fool because you have the last laugh.

TAURUS
(April 21 - May 21)

Everything on the home front is emphasised and there will be a flurry of activity. Get others involved in any changes. Work in the garden or painting is much more enjoyable and half the work if you enlist the help of someone you get on well with.

SCORPIO
(October 24 - November 22)

A great feeling of joy comes over you more than once in the week ahead. Your inner child has been set free, and this is likely to be because of recent restrictions, which are now lifted. Do not feel guilty about this because it is a choice that will serve you well in the future. Right now, things may seem like a bit of an effort for small reward.

GEMINI
(May 22 - June 21)

When discussing a holiday with others, be aware that agreement is not always easily met. Although you are not inclined to compromise, it is necessary to go with the majority decision.

SAGITTARIUS
(November 23 - December 21)

Travel arrangements may have to be changed at the last minute. Do not fret, however, because success is more likely later in the month. During a dream, or when reading a book, an idea comes to you. Can this really make a difference to your future? You may need to act quickly to start a new project but progress will require patience.

CANCER
(June 22 - July 23)

After the 22nd it is much easier to see the path ahead. This is particularly true of a financial situation, so there's no sense in fussing until you understand what needs to be done. Someone who has in the past been unco-operative is more flexible. You wonder at this and try to see an ulterior motive, but it is most likely that they have seen the error of their past actions. Is it possible for you to take them on trust?

CAPRICORN
(December 22 - January 20)

The need to plan ahead is frustrating when you know exactly what ought to be going on. Patience is something that you need to cultivate, or you risk upsetting someone close. Spending time with a colleague makes you realise how good things could be, but a lot of effort is involved.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

ENGLISH-SPANISH

Across:

- 1 Taste, 4 Screw, 10 Enter, 11 Miracle, 12 Opciones, 13 Cups, 15 Driest, 17 Museum, 19 Crew, 20 Patinaje, 23 Charlar, 24 Event, 25 Odiar, 26 Estar.

Down:

- 2 Attic, 3 Tortoise, 5 Caro, 6 Enchufe, 7 Reloj de cuco, 8 Amber, 9 Pensamiento, 14 Business, 16 Iceland, 18 Carry, 21 Arena, 22 Alba.

CRYPTIC

Across:

- 1 Steward, 5 Topic, 8 Reach, 9 Arizona, 10 Pale ale, 11 Upset, 12 Retire, 14 Tender, 17 Valet, 19 Ironing, 21 Scourge, 22 Hedge, 23 Doses, 24 Solvent.

Down:

- 1 Strip, 2 Epaulet, 3 Ash, 4 Drapes, 5 Tribune, 6 Plots, 7 Chatter, 12 Revised, 13 Retorts, 15 Dwindle, 16 Misers, 18 Lions, 20 Guest, 22 Hal.

QUICK

Across:

- 1 Spud, 4 Ache, 7 Miss, 8 Taps, 9 Sue, 10 Wish, 11 Roam, 12 Ohm, 13 Peru, 14 Ajar, 15/6 Set off, 16 Cede, 17 Hide.

Down:

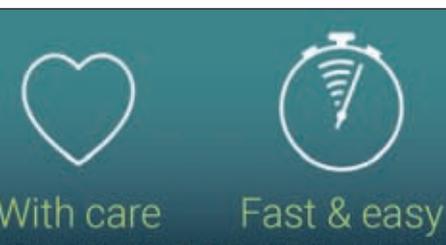
- 2 Privilege, 3 Dosshouse, 4 Aftermath, 5 Haphazard.

CODE BREAKER

1	I	X	W	M	T	C	J	O	U	G	E	P	D
14	L	N	Q	V	Y	H	R	K	Z	A	B	S	F

KAKURO

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



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YOUR PAPER - YOUR VOICE - YOUR OPINION

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A word of warning for expat drivers

SIR,

Two weeks into December I received a renewal notice from my car insurance company. The cost had gone up by €45. After experiencing yearly price increases, I decided to change to a cheaper firm.

The call centre said: "You should have done this before December 1: we shall renew your annual insurance on December 31 and we deny your request to cancel."

I said they had only informed me of the hike in a letter dated December 1, received on December 14! The operative cut across me and said loudly: "That is not our problem: you are wrong because you didn't give a month's notice."

I decided to explore this issue and quickly discovered my legal rights, as explained on the CAB Spain website (citizensadvice.org.es), where the wording of a 2015 law change states that a price rise should have been communicated two months before renewal!

I called back and told them what I had found, and they instantly said they would send me a form to sign and my insurance would be cancelled.

Eating in the fifties

PASTA had not been invented. It was macaroni or spaghetti.

Curry was a surname.

Taco? Never saw one till I was 15.

Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere.

Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time.

All chips were plain.

Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.

Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.

Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

Chickens didn't have fingers in those days.

None of us had ever heard of yo-



THE 1950'S: Tea was made in a teapot.

ghurt.

Healthy food consisted of anything edible!

Cooking outside was called camping.

Seaweed was not a recognised food.

Kebab was not even a word, never mind a food.

Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold.

Prunes were medicinal and stewed.

Surprisingly muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed.

Pineapples came in chunks or were round with a hole in the middle, in a tin; we had only seen a picture of a real one.

Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock.

There were three things that we never ever had on the table in the fifties - elbows, hats and mobile phones!

... and there were always two choices for each meal...

'Take it!' or 'Leave it!'

Anne Edwards, Mallorca

Clearly, they had been aware but tried to force me into renewing. This is disgraceful and I am making a complaint to the insurance industry regulator in Spain.

Gareth Thomas, Finestrat

Way to save

I HAVE lived in Spain for the last 12 years, and each Christmas have bought tickets to the El Gordo Lottery.

Normally I have bought these while shopping in Malaga City, or from street vendors in various locations nearby.

Each ticket has cost me around €23, which I thought was the official price, but this week I bought a ticket from my local tobacco shop in La Cala de Mijas, and was charged €20.

I do not begrudge individuals providing a service making a profit, but I wonder how many others might be like me... paying more in ignorance without realising that by calling at the local tobacco shop a saving of more than 14 per cent is possible.

M Gormley, El Faro

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.euroweeklynews.com.

Pet goat mutilated in 'savage attack'

I hate the evil that permeates through the human race. Absolutely gutted for the poor goat and his owners. *Jim McClure*

Omg why would anyone do such a horrendous thing I hope they serve a long time when they catch them. *Tricia Hawkins*

How absolutely cruel poor little thing. *Pat Ward*

Ryanair and Vueling rated worst short haul airlines

If I leave Malaga and arrive in one piece in Glasgow three hours later and it costs me between 25 and 50 quid, I really don't care how they are rated. *John Grieve*

Fly with them both every three weeks, from Malaga to Manchester and back the day after, cheap fares, so no complaints as they make it possible for us to live in Spain. *Chris O'Hare*

I have flown Ryanair many times to Jerez (my nearest airport) from Stansted as they are the only direct route from the UK, but so much uncertainty over the last flight (which didn't get cancelled) that now I fly to Sevilla with easyJet - more of a drive in Spain but a bit more reliable... *Rob James*

Comments from EWN online

Well that's not much of a surprise as they both cancel flights whenever they feel like and with no bloody notice. Will never ever fly with any of them again especially Ryanair.

They cancelled my flight from Malaga to Edinburgh in October and I only found out through text message in the afternoon and my flight was early the next morning and it cost me hundreds of pounds and an overnight in Prague before eventually getting to Edinburgh later the next day.

Absolute shocking experience considering my flight had been booked months in advance. *Beverley Walker*

Once checked a flight starting at 24.99 with Ryanair that ended up almost 100 quid and that didn't include bags, just a carry on. Need to book seats as I am a nervous flyer. Extras were for carry on bag, seat selection and paying with credit card. It's the extras that always put me off. Have a friend who used Vueling and was treated very well indeed. Good and bad in all really. *Moirá Armitage*

Costa Blanca parade accused of racism

Why can they not leave children's traditions alone. First in Holland. Zwarte Piet. Translated is Black Piet. He helps Sinterklaas to bring the presents for the children December 5 and throws sweets for them. The troubles every year recently because he is black is unbelievable. It is Dutch tradition through the generations and suddenly some people try to stop it. Very sad! *Edith Farminer*

I think I'm right in saying that the reason he's black is because he came down the chimney and got covered in soot isn't it?? Nothing racist about that, people need to just leave things be, totally agree with you on this Edith Farminer. *Sarah Aldeguer*

Raiders loot death crash lorry

I do not see anything even remotely disrespectful in taking the tomatoes out of the truck. They would be disposed of anyway. As long as people take them for their own use I find it totally acceptable. *Peter Sauer*

This is just so disrespectful to the poor man who lost his life... Are people really hard up for a couple of tomatoes in La Cala? *Stéphanie Maire*

Disgusting! The driver died in that lorry! Not much surprises me any more. *Tessa Green*

Could be worse

I WAS interested to read on your website that Ryanair has been voted the worst short-haul airline. What short memories people have! Thirty years ago these no-frills carriers didn't exist meaning flights to Spain were way more expensive. Cheap flights are surely one of the backbones of expatriates' lives here!

Margaret Robins, Alfaz del Pi

Festive cheer

WHAT a wonderful place Spain is at this time of year. A heady mix of sun, sea and family values that we would never see the likes of in the UK! I for one cannot wait to tuck into my turkey on the terrace while friends and family shiver back home!

T Maidland, Torrevieja

Festive tear

THE way Spain has embraced Christmas over the last few years is truly depressing.

This over-commercialised spend-fest appears to have overtaken traditional celebrations like the Three Kings in many ways, and how confusing and expensive it must be for some Spanish families to buy two lots of presents, although presumably the kids love it!

Grumpy, Albox

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Cassandra Nash

A weekly look

- and not entirely impartial reaction -
to the Spanish political scene

TODAY's the big day! Roll up! Roll up to the greatest show on earth: politics in action! The Catalan elections!

According to some sources Carles Puigdemont, the exiled self-styled 'legitimate president of Catalunya,' nearly called elections instead of proclaiming the republic at the end of October.

Would Puigdemont and the separatists have had a victory if he hadn't chickened out and allowed himself to be bullied into action by his sidekicks Esquerra Republicana (ERC) and CUP?

According to some polls, pro-independence Catalans still prefer Carles Puigdemont as president even though most polls tend to be wise after the event, not before it.

What's more his Junts per Catalunya is unlikely to be the most-voted party when the ballot papers are counted up tonight. So good luck with that one, Carles.

Whose faces will wear smiles late tonight and early tomorrow morning? Who knows? But what we shall know by late tonight, Thursday December 21, is whether Catalans want independence as much as some of their politicians do.

Crunch time



BIG DAY: Will it be boom or bust for Catalan independence supporters and deposed leader Carles Puigdemont (inset).

Tomorrow's brainteaser

UNLESS one party manages to secure an overall majority, Ada Colau, mayor of Barcelona, could have the last say in today's Catalan elections.

The Catalunya en Comun coalition, with Podemos hanging onto its shirrtails, is nominally headed by Xavier Domenech and coordinated by

Colau but she has the last word as a rule.

She has been accused by separatists and constitutionalists of ambiguity and ambivalence regarding independence, waiting to see how best to use her influence to her own advantage.

She is likely to do this tonight, tomorrow and in the foreseeable future until a government can be formed. It's all going to be much easier for her than the independence parties, for the PSOE socialists, the Partido Popular and above all for Ines Arrimadas and Cs who are likely to give ERC a run for their money.

Owing to inter-party vetoes and vendettas the post-election argy-bargy will resemble those brainteasers where A will sit with D but not beside B who likes C and detests E. It might be complex, but not for Colau because she has the crib.

A contagious ailment

PSYCHOLOGISTS who collaborated following the August 17 terrorist attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils that killed 16 people have offered assistance for those affected by the Catalan crisis.

Experts and doctors in Catalunya have noticed an increase in patients with acute stress, depression, anxiety and dejection.

Vote-catcher

THAT Miguel Iceta, socialist leader in Catalunya, is homosexual came as news to many, the majority of whom shrugged and got on with their own lives.

This emerged following Twitter insults from pro-independence academic Jordi Borrrell, director of the Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, who apparently objects to Iceta's sexual preferences as well as his politics.

Not that the attack will harm Iceta who can now expect not opprobrium but, almost certainly, a few more votes.

Thoughtful of the experts, but they could spare a thought for those of us outside the region with the same symptoms.

Easy come, easy go

IN a pre-election debate the Partido Popular leader Xavier Garcia Albiol pointed out that more than 1,000 companies had left Catalunya as a result of the process towards independence.

Roger Torrent from ERC retorted that this happened because the national government had made it so easy for companies to change their fiscal residence. That's undeniable, but it doesn't explain why they wanted to go in the first place.

columnists@euroweeklynews.com

A Christmas Eve visit to Mojacar's church!

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.

IF you plan on continuing to live here, attendance to the Christmas Eve mass is obligatory. It is simply a matter of paying your respects to your newly adopted country and blessing their dark skinned baby boy.

Modern day Spain is still similar to those old almost forgotten times. All remarkably taken place under the backdrop of German artist, Michael Stuker's phenomenal church fresco and gift to his adapted village of Mojacar. If you have some spare change it is a must to pick up some of his paintings.

Outside the church you may touch the Macael white marble statue of La Mojaquera so aptly placed in the tiny plaza just in front of the main doors. The village is always fun at night, but

this one night is special, unique and holy. Worth the visit.

If by chance there are carol services all the better. In years well gone by, local singer, Davina Burten-Shaw entertained all with lovely seasonal music that still remains magical and nostalgic on reflection.

Worry not about being transformed into any type of religious fanatic yet, old songs often bring back old memories, once locked away in the deepest recesses of the gray matter, just yearning to come out and smile again or glow.

It was my mother that corralled us all into going up for the service and none of us were disappointed. Our world seems to lack poignant moments. Pauses that give us a nano second to remember what once was, could be again.

A wisp of dignity to cloak and shield us from unsettled times. A chance for renovation, rejuvenation and renaissance to souls that have long slumbered dormant and entombed.



MAGICAL: Worth the effort on Christmas Eve.

All of this allows the forgotten spirit to re-emerge once again, if only for a night. The distant glimmering stars reflect the shared peace on earth and goodwill to man.

Once you've done the above you can retire once again to your common life style. The beer will taste better, the wine go down easier and the jokes once again sound new and funny.

The village still contains a plethora of characters to talk with and entertain you. All drawn here by the same magical ley lines that attracted yourself. Enjoy, almost all have a story to tell, as you do too. Share in the moment.

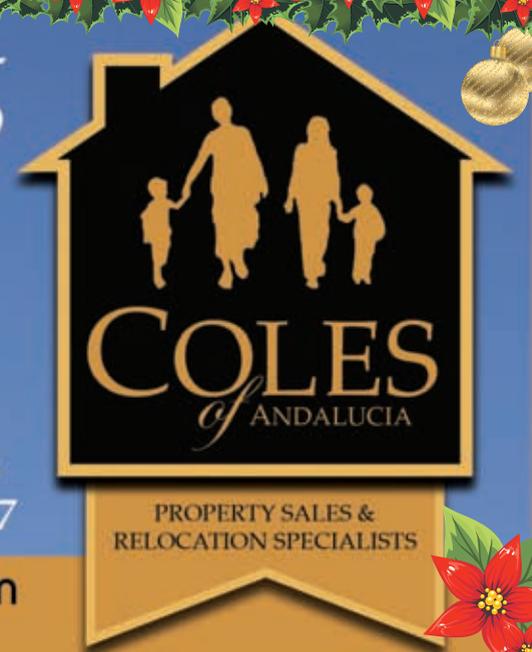
The place is also full of wonderful artists, writers, poets, painters and witches that need to be heard. Don't lose your perspective. All that glitters is not gold nor are the forlorn stories necessarily as true as suggested. Nevertheless, it provides a special night out that should keep you reminiscing for some weeks to come.



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So at last a merry Xmas!

Mike Senker

In my opinion

Views of a Grumpy Old Man



'TIS the season to be merry! I don't think so! Certainly not if you are trying to deal with multi-nationals. I'm going to the UK in January. I found a flight with Ryanair for €39 return which is a great price.

Then I go to hire a car. I might have mentioned this before but I have dealt with Hertz since the mid '90s. The best they could offer was £160. I thought that seemed a bit expensive.

I then recalled that Ryanair did car rental so I had a look at their prices and lo and behold they were offering the same car, from the same Hertz location for £55 so I booked it. Everything was the same - insurance, mileage etc.

Done deal you might think. Nah, not Mr Grumpy. I got to thinking that's not right so I tweeted Hertz and asked them how this could be. That's when the fun started. They replied that third parties are cheaper but they often sell cars Hertz don't have in stock.

'Not a good answer,' I replied, and simply said that you should never be able to get

something cheaper from a third party than going direct. I pointed out that most hotels have a price match policy otherwise what's the point joining their loyalty programmes.

Anyway, we to-and-froed for two days and they just kept sprouting some company policy BS saying that I wouldn't get loyalty points and gold member service. I replied, 'stuff your points and I'll wait in line for 10 minutes to save a £100.' I gave up with them and found a live chat option in their contact details so I went there.

Even less joy! They said, 'if you don't like the price, book it somewhere else! It's supply and demand.' They finished with, 'have a nice day and a Merry Christmas.'

Now I was steaming! I'm pretty relentless so I found a number in Oklahoma, called it and spoke to a lady called Terri. I explained the situation and two minutes later she says, 'I can match that - sorry for the inconvenience.' What? It's as simple as that? 'Yes,' she said, 'I don't know why nobody told you to call us in the first place.'

I asked to speak to her supervisor and told her how Terri had kept Hertz a customer so for once there was a happy ending. Oh and Ryanair cancelled my booking no problem so at last a Merry Xmas!

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Email:mikesenker@gmail.com

LEGALLY SPEAKING

Staying safe this festive season – part one

WE answer some common driving questions, kindly provided by members of the Guardia Civil based in Torrevieja, Costa Blanca, who set up the N332 website and Facebook page to help break down barriers.

ALTHOUGH no specific threats have been received and the threat level in Spain remains the same as it has done for some time, it is inevitable that security measures will be increased to ensure that the festive period passes as safely as possible.

Guardia Civil and police checkpoints will be in place in various locations.

Although many of these will be traffic related, there will also be many others which are checking vehicles for security reasons. Once

again we remind everyone of the importance of not sharing the locations of these checkpoints should you see them, such as through social media, as this often gives those who may be intent on criminal activity the opportunity to avoid detection.

If you are stopped at a checkpoint the advice remains the same too. Stay calm and act on the instructions of the officers involved. If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear and you will be on your way in a very short space of time.

It's not only on the roads where danger lurks at Christmas time, which is why the police also offer a wealth of advice on how to stay safe, with the hope of making shoppers and traders aware of potential risks, thus hoping to reduce the number of scams, thefts and robberies that often occur in areas where large crowds gather.

A greater presence of police officers will be



FESTIVE SAFETY: Take care out there.

noticeable in key areas, as more officers are being deployed, not only on foot, but on horseback and supported by their canine colleagues as well.

A guide book was previously produced, and is still available, warning of the dangers, and current information can always be obtained through the three Twitter accounts, @policia, @interior gob and @polprvalencia, which are the National Police, Interior Ministry and Valencia Police respectively.

One of the most frequent incidents the police have to deal with is lost children.

The police recommend the obvious, keeping a close eye on children at all times, but also the less obvious, such as ensuring the child knows their name and a telephone number to contact in emergencies. They also recommend a wrist band or bracelet with the name and contact number of the parents printed or engraved on it.

For more news and articles visit www.n332.es or search N332 on Facebook.

Has he got an unpaid traffic fine?

Q. You once wrote that traffic and parking fine violations expire if the authorities do not notify you within three months. I hired a car in Malaga and four months later the car hire company took 40 euros from my account. It took them a month to tell me that this was for 'administration' then two further emails to get them to tell me that this related to a parking violation. Six months later, I have had no notification from Trafico, and searching the Internet with my NIE number and the car registration number reveals no outstanding fines. Does the three-month rule apply to me? Will there be a big fine accumulating somewhere?

A S (Costa del Sol)

A. Relax. Here is what probably happened. You got a parking ticket. The ticket was charged to the car hire company and they paid it. Standardly, park-

David Searl

You and the Law in Spain



ing tickets are €60 or half that if paid in 20

days. So the company charged you €30 for the ticket plus a €10 fee for administration. No further action required and no big unpaid fine is accumulating.

Send your questions for David Searl through lawyers Ubeda-Retana & Associates in Fuengirola at Ask@lawtaxpain.com, or call 952 667 090.

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THINK you are teaching your children responsible drinking by giving them a glass of wine with that meal?

It might be time to think again after researchers claimed allowing youngsters to drink before 14 could harm their development.

The technique employed by many parents to slowly introduce their children to alcohol in a controlled environment was previously thought to encourage healthier attitudes towards alcohol later in life, preventing binge drinking. Proponents often point out that the French, who are known to have more liberal attitudes towards giving children alcohol, have fewer problems with anti-social street drinking.

Researchers at University College London have found this argument does not stand, however. Professor Jennifer Maggs, the study's lead author, explained, "that is a myth," adding, "street drinking is more of a problem in the UK than Europe, but heavy drinking at home is



STAY SOBER: Giving them alcohol at a young age could harm children's development.

still a problem."

The Katherine Brown, chief executive of the Institute of Alcohol Studies, Katherine Brown, agreed with the findings, saying, "the Chief Medical Officer recommends that an alcohol-free childhood is best, with children not drinking any alcohol before the age of 15." She added, "this is important guidance because alcohol can harm children given their bodies and brains are not yet fully developed. It is worrying to see that this advice may not be getting across to parents, who are trying to do their best to teach their children about alcohol."

The study showed middle-class parents were most likely to give their child alcohol. Parents with "routine" or "semi-routine" jobs were 43 per cent more likely to give their children alcohol than unemployed parents, while those in "managerial" or "professional" jobs were 66 per cent more likely, and those who are self-employed 82 per cent more likely.

Off the bottle

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Sunscreen still matters

AS THE Baz Lurhmann song goes, we all know we should wear sunscreen.

And even though it's not nearly as sunny in Spain as in the summer months, harmful UV rays still pierce clouds, reaching our skin with potentially harmful consequences.

But it's not just enough to remember to wear sun lotion, it also matters how you apply it according to dermatologist Dr

Natasha Cook.

Speaking to one publication, Dr Cook explained there are several cardinal sins most of us are guilty of when apply sunscreen, beginning with not applying enough. She explained, "There is an exponential dose-protection level relation, which means if you under-apply by half, you are effectively getting only a

quarter of the correct SPF protection," clarifying, "If it's a teaspoon per face and one for each limb - let alone your back - a 100mL bottle will only last you a couple of applications." She also explains we should wait at least 20 minutes after applying before going in the sun.

Next, the dermatologist says we should be applying lotion more frequently, aiming for twice every two hours as these creams are not sweat and water proof even if they are resistant. Dr Cook also warns we should

not make the mistake of believing a tan will give us any sun protection, explaining this skin colouration is instead a sign of damage. She explained, "it's a warning your DNA is being damaged and not the signs of a healthy glow."

Lastly, she explains using aerosol sprays or covering up with a t-shirt will probably not give us enough protection, explaining UV rays get through white fabrics while aerosols leave us with a too-thin layer of sunscreen.

KEEP SAFE: It's still important to wear sunscreen in winter months.

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Appendicitis - symptoms vary



SPECIALIST: Doctor Luis Perez Belmonte.

What is the appendix for?

The appendix is an elongated structure found in the large intestine. Although not a vital structure, it has functions that relate to the immune system and defensive capacity of the body.

What is appendicitis?

Appendicitis is an inflammation of the structure which causes it to increase significantly in size and cause a potentially dangerous infection.

When does it usually happen?

This is variable and there is no fixed rule. In general, appendicitis occurs when the appendix is obstructed by faecal debris, which is the main reason it becomes inflamed and infected.

How do you know if someone has appendicitis?

Appendicitis normally causes acute abdominal pain below the navel on the right-hand side of the

body, alongside discomfort, fever and diarrhoea, although this can vary with symptoms emerging slowly over time.

It can sometimes cause an infection that is transmitted to other parts of the abdomen - known as peritonitis - or even pass to the rest of the body via the blood. The latter scenario is potentially deadly.

Surgery to remove the infected appendix and a course of intravenous antibiotics may then be necessary.

When should I get medical help?

If you have pain in the lower right abdomen coupled with some of the above symptoms you should go to the hospital urgently. If appendicitis is suspected they will run a series of blood tests, ultrasound, or even x-rays.

Is there any way to prevent appendicitis?

No, there is no clear evidence of any measure which stops appendicitis.

If you have any questions for Dr Perez Belmonte, please send them to:
jefemedico@helicopterossanitarios.com

A different kind of market

By Lindsay Hutchison

A VIBRANT artisan market, tucked away in rural Cariatiz, Almería, opened to visitors for the final time this year and will reopen again in 2018 on the last Sunday of January.

El Cortijo de Arte, La Barquilla, originally an old farmhouse, was restored and converted into both a home and an art exhibition gallery, by an intriguing middle-aged couple, German-born painter Thomas Neukirch and Frederique Edy, a sculptor who studied in France, is fluent in many languages and exhibits her art all over Europe.

Together, Neukirch and Edy have created a specialised centre, on Calle Las Fanegas, where artificers can collectively meet and present their projects or organic produce, as part of a non-profit, community-building organisation.

Dozens of brightly coloured stalls lined the outer circle of their courtyard and gentle folk music drifted through the air as people of all different nationalities ambled around, chatting, laughing and drinking coffee.



JAMS: A tasty organic treat.

At one end of the paved garden, a group sat around a circular table, in the Philosophers' Café and took place in a discussion about Nihilism, a theory which relates to the intrinsic meaning of life. Open to all, individuals stopped and listened to the debate or continued past, to peruse the enormous range of natural, handcrafted goods available all

around them, or to join in the musical workshop which followed the talk.

From ceramics and jewellery to organic vegetables and clothes, books by local authors, home-made food including tortilla and traditional Spanish pastries, an absolute treasure trove of delicacies were on offer. Locally farmed honey and olive oil, handmade bread,



ORGANIC: Locally farmed produce at EL Cortijo de Arte.

sweet cakes and walnuts were just a few of the sustainable, home-grown wares available to buy every month.

Guests were also welcomed into the main house to view impressive paintings, sculptures and photographs exhibited around the first and second floors of the charismatic residence, in the cortijo's very own open art gallery.

Full of joie-de-vivre and standing behind a stall of her own biological, hydro-lated, facial creams Frederique Edy, aged 39, said contentedly 'this is a place where people are free.'

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It's only Rock 'n' Roll

SOME of Andalucía's top bands have signed up for the sixth edition of the Juergas Rock Festival. The hugely popular annual event takes place from August 1-4 in Adra next year.

“ Juergas has made a name for itself as one of the best value for money rock festivals in Spain.

Juergas has made a name for itself as one of the best value for money rock festivals in southern Spain. It brings some of the biggest bands in the region to the Costa de Almería with the line-ups getting more ambitious in line with its success.

Now confirmed for 2018 are La Raiz, Green Valley, Gatillazo, Los de Marra and O'Funk'illo. Among them La Raiz (The Root) are perhaps the most well-known among Spanish rockers. Hailing from Gandia, they comprise 11 musicians and span a



POPULAR: La Raiz will perform in 2018.

range of genres, including ska, punk, rock, and reggae. They have toured across Europe and employ pipes, trumpets and trombones to provide an unforgettable live experience to crowds everywhere.

Gatillazo are a hardcore punk band who have performed at every single Juergas Rock Festival to date. Green Valley are a sextet known for their reggae-infused rock. O'Funk'illo has

pioneered an Andalusian funk and counts one of the best bass players in the country, Pepe Bao, among its members.

Tickets are already on sale for the 2018 festival. They can be bought online at the festival website and through www.wegow.com. Tickets start at €40 and there is a free camping area.

Almeria becomes heartthrob city

TICKETS are now available to catch two of Spanish pop's biggest heartthrobs play live in Almería. Manolo Garcia and Antonio Jose have confirmed dates for 2018 and tickets are expected to sell fast.

Garcia, who shot to fame with his pop-rock and flamenco band in the 1980's will play the Roquetas Auditorium on Saturday May 12 at 9pm. Now aged 62, the Barcelona native has a huge following in Spain and Latin America.

Two weeks later on Saturday May 26, Antonio Jose plays the same venue. The young man from Cordoba has been singing since he was a toddler and represented Spain at the Junior Eurovision Song Contest.



CLASSICS: Noelia Rodiles brings Tchaikovsky to Almería.

Enjoy Christmas classical theatre

THEATRE lovers have no shortage of options in Almería this Christmas. The city's Maestro Padilla Auditorium has a wide range of musicals, plays, concerts and ballets lined up over the festive period.

The next few days are devoted to Christmas concerts. Tonight the city's famed municipal band are playing from 9pm. On Saturday evening the San Indalecio Musical Group will be performing their own Christmas carols and numbers.

After Christmas things take a classical turn. On Saturday December 30 the Moscow Ballet on Ice will be returning with two performances. At 6pm they will capture the magic of The Snow Queen, which inspired Disney hit film Frozen. Then at

9pm the 14 skaters, who include former Olympic champions, will perform Cinderella to a captivated audience.

On Wednesday January 3 there will be a special classical music concert to help usher in the New Year. The famous Concerto No 1 Op. 23 from Tchaikovsky will be performed on piano by Noelia Rodiles. The internationally renowned Spanish star will be accompanied by a full orchestra, which will perform pieces from Strauss in the second half of the show.

The following day, Thursday January 4, there will be a rush for the free tickets for Puccini's La Bohème. The four-part opera will last for more than two hours and begins at 8pm.

What's on!

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Photo credit Facebook

PARTY PLAZA: Plaza Fronton will ring in the bells.

Get the party started

TOMORROW night there will be a special Christmas performance from Mojacar's municipal band and other musicians. The show, entitled Tu Banda Me Suena takes place at the Multiple Uses Centre from 9pm and entrance costs €3.

There will be covers of Grease, ABBA, Enrique Iglesias, Rafael and more.

The event is the prelude to a packed Christmas week

that will see Mojacar live up to its reputation as one of Spain's prettiest and most happening pueblos.

New Year's Eve will be the biggest celebration before the Three Kings parades of early January. From 11.30pm residents and visitors are invited to gather at Plaza Fronton. As much free cava and grapes as the council budget allows will be offered just before the bells.

The biggest Three Kings parade takes places in the early evening on Friday January 5 after which gifts will be dished out to local children.

Mojacar Parish Church will be offering midnight mass on Christmas Eve, a Christmas Day mass, a New Year's Day mass and the Three Kings' mass on Saturday January 6 which will feature the local Rociero choir.

RIOJA may be the most famous national wine region, but Ribera del Duero is no slouch.

A Spanish Denominacion de Origen (DO) located within Castile and León, Ribera del Duero is one of several wine-producing regions along the Duero river where the mainly flat and rocky terrain undulates between 750 and 911 metres above sea level.

The rainfall is moderate with long dry summers and temperatures of up to 40c, followed by harsh winters. Viticulture arrived in the region with Benedictine monks in the 12th century although wine was produced locally 2,000 years ago.

Ribera del Duero DO wine is derived almost exclusively from red grapes, in particular Tinto Fino (local name for Tempranillo), and often complemented with Cabernet Sauvignon, Mal-



RIBERA DEL DUERO: Intense, long-lived wines.

Serious fame seeker

bec and Merlot. These well-ageing, full-bodied and deep ruby colour wines with aromas of strawberries, fresh tobacco, leather and often

highly oaked are excellent with grilled vegetables and red meats.

Whereas Rioja and Ribera del Duero are distinctive as a result of the different terrains, both regions produce wines selected for long ageing with complex vinification procedures.

These lead to intense, ex-

remely long-lived wines.

The ageing requirements for Ribera del Duero are the same used in Rioja. Wines labelled as Crianza must age two years with 12 months in oak; Reserva for at least three years with at least 12 months in oak while Gran Reserva must spend five years ageing prior to release, including two in oak.

Famous regional producers are Viña Sastre, Vega Sicilia, Bodegas Arzuaga Navarra and Dominio de Pingus, with the British Royal family among customers.

Happy tasting!

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by Lorenzo Barbareschi



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Photo credit Twitter

TASTY: Thousands popped along to Fines food fair.

Tastes like heaven

THE fifth edition of Almeria Tiene Norte turned Fines into a regional festival of food and music. The sports and gastronomic fair saw more than 30 merchants from across Almeria Province and Granada set up market stalls in the Almanzora Valley over the weekend.

All sorts of products, from food to olive oils and handicrafts, were on display. There were children's activities, a pottery workshop and a Christmassy theme with stalls offering something a little different to last minute shoppers.

The weekend kicked off early on Saturday morning with a friendly bike race organised by

the Sin Limites Association. Later that afternoon festival-goers were treated to a live flamenco performance.

Sunday saw more music, a green awareness campaign with a special recycling workshop and hundreds of Almeria-grown products up for grabs, including sausages, cheeses, craft beer and jams.

The weekend concluded with a live pop-rock performance from a local band after a 4pm Zumba exhibition got the crowd warmed up.

Fines mayor Rodrigo Sanchez thanked everyone who made the journey and purchased products from local entrepreneurs and producers.

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Breaking the bank



Photo credit Twitter

ACTION PLAN: Torrecillas (centre) and his council team.

A BUDGET of just over €8 million has been proposed for 2018 by Albox mayor Francisco Torrecillas. Weakened by changes in the council, the mayor will have to compromise with other parties but has made an initial proposal.

A figure of €8,177,362 has been put forward by the council accountants. The expense section has €7,277,362 earmarked for spendings.

The difference of roughly €900,000, said Torrecillas, is for reducing the hefty municipal debt.

“These are realistic accounts which are designed for

the sustainable development of Albox in the best interests of its residents,” the mayor declared.

Infrastructure spending makes up the biggest chunk of the pie at €2.3 million. This includes €200,000 to renovate the old convent and €100,000 to fix up Plaza de Abastos. Another €200,000 will go to the continued works at Plaza Mayor. Further funds will be spent on new sports courts and road maintenance.

Torrecillas has invited dialogue and says consensus on the budget is in everyone’s interest.



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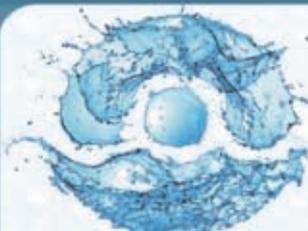
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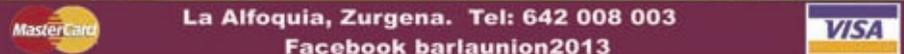
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Greenest route in Spain

Railway path resurrected



Photo credit: Quere-mostren/twitter

TEAM WORK: Local politicians want bigger Alanzora Via Verde.

PLANS to expand the Alanzora Via Verde (Greenway) could make it one of the longest all-natural walking routes in Spain. It presently runs 12 kilometres along the old Guadix-Almendricos railway.

Different Alanzora Valley municipalities now want to extend it to 100 kilometres, covering the full railway route.

A connection between Huerca-Overa and Almedricos in

Murcia has already been settled. Now negotiations are in place to extend the hiking route in the other direction, from Huerca-Overa to Alcontar.

Alcontar mayor Antonio Ramon Salas is meeting with his Huerca-Overa counterpart Domingo Fernandez to agree on a plan. Once the details are sorted they will present the expanded walking route to the national government to seek permission to begin.

Plans include a 37 kilometre stretch from Hijate to Olula del Rio that would be entirely free of traffic. The path would then continue through Fines, Cantoria, Arboleas and Zurgena, before reaching Huerca-Overa.

The total cost of building the Alanzora leg of the natural path is estimated at €2 million. Residents and visitors will be able to walk, run, cycle, or even take wheelchairs down the path.

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DRONES are set to transform Spain's real estate market. New legislation due to take effect in 2018 will relax tight regulations on their use in urban areas.

That will enable real estate agents and property developers to use aerial cameras to show potential buyers detailed video footage of every angle of the home.

It will also be able to show the local environment, aspects of neighbouring homes, and drones can even fly inside to film different rooms.

With a bit of technological wizardry companies will be able to generate high definition video montages of each property, even throwing in a soundtrack if it suits the mood.

Legislation has prevented drones taking off properly until now. They are severely restricted in urban areas, near airports and over crowds.

But they are already being used to help sell industrial buildings and rural



SPY CAM: Drones offer buyers new perspective.

Buy in the sky

Drones debut in 2018

properties. Once the rules relax in 2018, residential real estate is the next big frontier.

Drone footage of properties is set to gel with the growing demand for virtual reality tours of potential homes. Properties which embrace video technology have been proven to outperform homes relying solely on photos when it comes to both sale price and speed of finding a buyer.

Advertising feature

Two bed apartment sold fully furnished

THIS penthouse with terrace and large private roof terrace is an absolute MUST SEE!

The apartment is located on the first floor of the very well maintained and vivid Torrelaguna complex. The apartment consists of a living room with dining area, an open American style kitchen with utility room, two bedrooms with fitted wardrobes and a fully fitted bathroom. In the lounge you have glass doors that lead to the terrace with external staircase to a large roof terrace (63m²) with tower room. This is the ideal spot for sunbathing, barbecues...

The property is sold fully furnished and comes with air conditioning. It has great rental potential being very close to the beach and the promenade of Garrucha.

The Torrelaguna complex with 128 apartments is a gated complex with security service throughout the year. The complex has a supermarket and a bar-restaurant (in high sea-

son). The complex has its own rental company and also provides a cleaning and laundry service. There are two outdoor pool areas and gardens.

The complex is located 250 metres from the beaches of Vera along the promenade that connects Vera with the Port of Garrucha. Only 45 minutes from Almería airport and one hour 15 minutes from Murcia airport.

Almería Property Investments is a real estate company specialising in selling beach properties (Mojacar to San Juan de los Terreros) and project management of new builds.

They are based in Vera playa, in the Baganvillas area, next to the Dutch bar 'Cactus' and the shop 'Luces.'

We offer a large variety of properties ranging from small budget apartments to large front line beach villas. All properties have the correct paperwork.



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Celebrating the festive season with your own decorated garden plants

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IT is always a challenge to prepare for the festive season with all the available decorations in the market place to complement the way you wish to celebrate the Christmas/New Year season.

If you have pot plants on your balcony, terrace or indoors, you

have the opportunity to infuse the festive spirit into your home simply by adding decorations to the plants and pots that you already have.

Just adding some ribbons or decorative paper around the pots gives a new perspective and interest in the plants that you may have been caring for all year.

A sprinkle of glitter and some

interesting objects to dangle from the plants that suit your preferences can inspire a new admiration for your plants and provide a festive environment for the home.

Larger plants can have Christmas lights added in proportion to the size of the tree or plant. There are so many different forms of coloured lights available, both so-

lar and mains power, to suit the location of the plants.

If you have a larger tree in your garden, adding lights really does change the ambience of the long, cold, dark winter nights into a brighter display to add the cheer that the festive season can bring.

The traditional Christmas tree is not always suitable for everyone's lifestyle. The type of Christmas tree used to celebrate the festive season varies in different countries according to the species of trees that are available in the region.

The most popular traditional

trees are conifer plants such as fir, spruce and pine but concern for harvesting any of the trees for only a few weeks use has an environmental impact that is well worth considering.

If space in your home is an issue then such large species of Christmas trees can be difficult to accommodate in a flat or apartment. It makes sense to look at local traditions.

In the Mediterranean the nativity scenes with miniature landscapes and figures has a stronger tradition than the Christmas trees which is a tradition that evolved

in the more northern regions of Europe.

If you have the time and plants it can be an interesting occupation to create your own miniature landscape no matter how small or large.

To make use of the plants that you have and perhaps obtaining a few additional, traditional plants, such as the poinsettia or other favourites for the creation of a decorative zone on the balcony, terrace or in the garden, will not only spruce up your green spaces but also add cheer and goodwill to your neighbourhood.

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HOUSESITMATCH: Enjoy the festivities.

Happy holidays from Housesitmatch!

FROM all of us at HouseSitMatch to all of you, we wish you a very merry holiday season!

At this time of year, we love to reflect on all the wonderful friends we have made through our special relationship with the Euro

Weekly News and David the Dogman (our hero and inspiration!).

We especially want to send a huge thank you to all of the readers of this column, and our customers in Spain who have helped to make this a very

special year for us.

We look forward to helping you again in 2018!

Our very best wishes of the season from Lamia, Wendy, David, Alex and Deborah the HouseSit-Match team.

Secrets to feeding your dog



David THE Dogman

LISTEN to David on TRE on Saturdays 10am to 11am
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DOG foods do vary in quality. So do the companies that make the foods. To some companies quality is only a word. To others, it's a way of life.

Ultimately, the quality of a dog food is best measured by your dog. How your dog performs on the food, how he looks, feels and acts are the best measures of the quality of any food. At least 80 per cent of my clients that report behavioural problems find that a

change of food changes the unwanted behaviour.

No matter what a food company claims, unless your dog has bright eyes, silky hair and supple skin, and is not overweight, then the food is not right for him.

Not all dogs do well on a particular brand of food some dogs simply do better than others.

Most foods are categorised as economy, regular, premium, super premium and performance. Regular and premium foods are not formulated like a super premium or performance food.

Dogs have simple stomachs and short digestive tracts for digesting meat. They also lack the saliva enzyme amylase, which is necessary for pre-digesting starch. Dogs have adapted to foods with high vegetable protein levels, however they perform better when fed foods high in meat protein and animal fats.

Checking the label of a super premium or performance food, an animal protein will be listed as the first or second major ingredient. These should include chick-

en, turkey meat, or poultry.

A least two sources of fat or oil should be included for adequate energy, as well as carbohydrates. Simple carbohydrates in dog food come from quality sources like rice, oatmeal, corn or wheat. These are easily digested when properly cooked.

Fibre, a complex carbohydrate is essential for proper digestion and stool formation. Beetroot and tomatoes are both high in fibre.

Vitamin and mineral fortification is an absolute necessity in nutritionally balancing any food for dogs. While the vitamins and minerals generally make up less than 2 per cent of the total food by weight, they provide some of the most crucial nutrients. These include 12 to 16 vitamins and 15 to 25 minerals. Super premium usually features more than one source for each vitamin and mineral. The ingredient list will be longer compared to non-premium foods. It is not recommended that you add anything by way of a food supplement or vitamin to super premium foods.

Register as either house-sitter or homeowner now with a special holiday offer of **50 per cent off introductory offer using coupon code SPECIAL50.**

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call Lamia on 00 44 (0) 777 214 2742 or email admin@housesitmatch.com

WHILE your pets may not understand why a big tree appears in the living room every December or why the same cheesy songs play on repeat for days on end, they can still get swept up in the excitement of Christmas nonetheless.

There's no better way to get animals involved than treating them like any other member of the family and spoiling them rotten.

The popularity of Christmas presents for

Festive ideas for furry ones

pets has increased tenfold in recent years. From dog cologne to advent calendars for animals, the list is seemingly endless.

Perhaps the most unusual new offering on the shelves, however, is Pawsecco, prosecco especially for cats and dogs.

While the fizz is non-alcoholic, it would certainly add an extra sparkle to festivities.

The special bubbly is made with elderflower, linden blossom and ginseng and can be poured over their food, or in a bowl on its own.

If your pet isn't really into wine, Woof and Brew (the company behind Pawsecco) also has a 'beer' for dogs on offer called Bottom Sniffer.

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TWELVE motorcycle legends have been shortlisted for inclusion in the Motor Sport Hall of Fame. Voting is now open to the general public which one among them is next to be immortalised in motoring lore.

It is the seventh year the Hall of Fame has been running a public vote on inductees. The 2018 winner will join the likes of Valentino Rossi, John Surtees, and Barry Sheene.

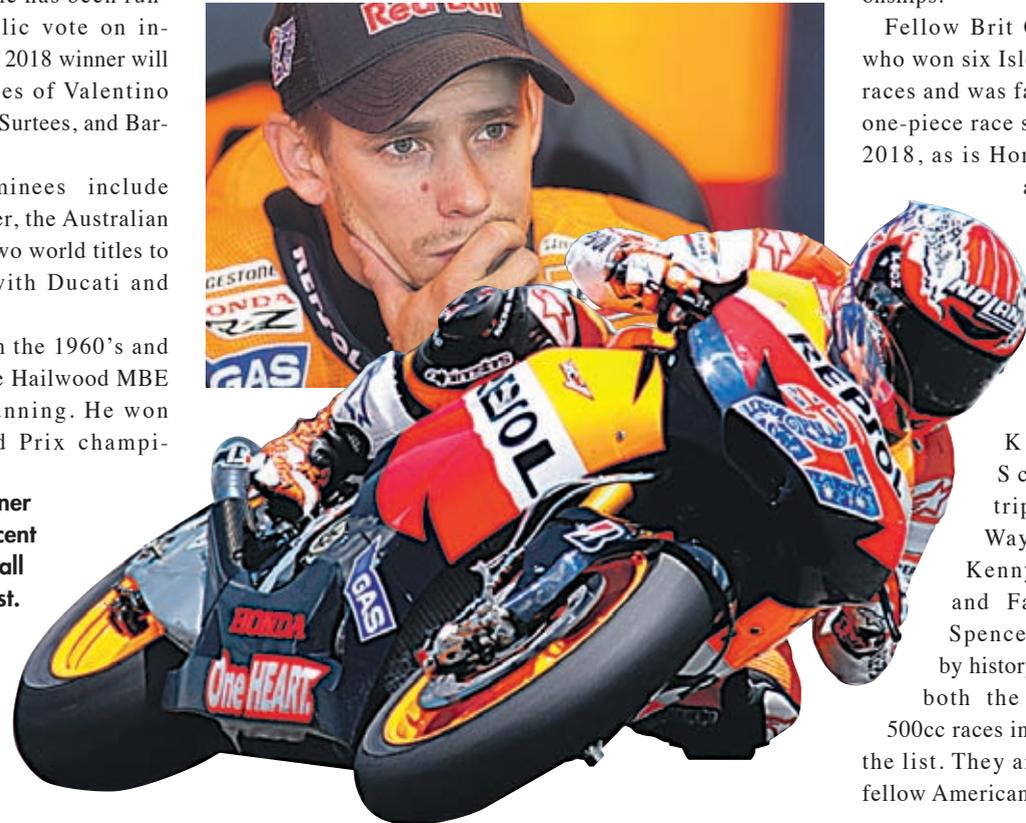
The nominees include Casey Stoner, the Australian racer with two world titles to his name with Ducati and Honda.

Icon from the 1960's and 1970's Mike Hailwood MBE is in the running. He won nine Grand Prix champi-

VOTE: Stoner is most recent racer of Hall of Fame list.

Hall of Fame

Choose your racing icon



onships.

Fellow Brit Geoff Duke who won six Isle of Man TT races and was famed for his one-piece race suits is up in 2018, as is Honda founder and Japanese

icon Soichiro Honda.

Americans, 500cc champion Kevin Schwantz,

triple winner Wayne Rainey, Kenny Roberts,

and Fast Freddie Spencer who made by history by winning both the 250cc and

500cc races in 1985 are on the list. They are joined by fellow American Eddie Law-

son, who has four world championships in the 500cc category to his name.

He is bettered by Australian Mick Doohan, who won five consecutive titles in the 1990s. The rest of the list is made up by British duo Joey Dunlop, who won 26 TT titles in a historic reign, and

Jim Redman, who won six world championships in the 1960's.

Those interested in voting for which of their motorcycling heroes should be inducted to the Hall of Fame next year can do so online. Voting is open through the website www.motorsportmagazine.com.

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ROAD TEST by Nick Fletcher

Honda Jazz SE

WHEN Honda created the current Jazz model, it aimed to make it much more appealing to younger buyers while retaining the loyalty of its older customers - and its designers have achieved this.

The Jazz now has smoother, more youthful styling, more connectivity features and more personalisation options, all of which should help lower the age profile of its buyers.

The Jazz competes in a tough sector which includes Fiesta, Corsa, Polo, and Clio but the micro-MPV character of the Jazz gives it specific appeal - its cabin is more spacious than most and its easy-move 'Magic Seats' score it top marks for day-to-day practicality.

Prices start at €16,009 (£14,115) for an S version but my test model, the better-equipped SE, is the popular choice, featuring cruise control, auto lights and wipers, alloy wheels, touchscreen infotainment,

parking sensors, DAB radio, Bluetooth and connectivity on its kit-list. It costs €17,708 (£15,615).

The Jazz uses a 1.3 litre 101 hp petrol engine with standard six-speed manual gearbox (a CVT auto version is available). The 0-100 kph time is a modest 11.5 seconds, top speed is 190 kph (118 mph).

Fuel economy is very respectable at 19.6 kpl (55.4 mpg).

Underway, the Jazz offers a smooth civilised drive, with composed handling and a very comfortable ride thanks to a revised suspension set-up. It is nimble in traffic and when parking,

and has good all-round visibility.

Inside, the dashboard is logically laid out, with a centre touch-screen which is easy to operate and quick to respond.

Seating is supportive and there is good headroom even in the rear. The large boot capacity - 354 litres - can be enlarged to a massive 1,314 litres with drop-down rear seats which form a flat load floor.

Such space and practicality are ace cards for the Jazz, which also benefits from Honda's outstanding record for reliability.

HONDA JAZZ: Offers a smooth civilised drive.



Model tested was UK-specification and equipment levels and prices may vary in other markets.

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PREMIER LEAGUE run-away leaders Manchester City are looking to pick up another three points against The Cherries of Bournemouth this weekend.

"People say the way we played in Barcelona, it is not possible in England," said City gaffer Pep Guardiola, in charge at Barcelona during 2008-12.

"It is possible. Always it is possible to play football, to keep the ball and to have the courage to play in England," said Guardiola.

On Saturday Everton meet Chelsea, Burnley host Spurs, Manchester United travel to Leicester, Brighton host Watford, Southampton host Huddersfield, Stoke host West Brom and Crystal Palace travel to Swansea.

Arsenal host Liverpool tomorrow (Friday) at The Emirates Stadium.

Burnley to KO United on Boxing Day

BURNLEY are out to KO Manchester United at Old Trafford on Boxing Day - with the minnows punching above their weight - in the Premier League.

"It's not easy to win games in the Premier League," said Clarets manager Sean Dyche, who took Burnley into fourth

Pep's Cherry pick



UK SPORTSCENE

with Andrew Atkinson

place this month.

"We're written off every year - we're used to that - so when you do have such a strong start people will find surprise in that," said Dyche.

Dyche, 46, who took charge at Turf Moor in 2012, led Burnley to the Premier League in 2013, and after relegation, returned to the top flight in the 2015-16 season.

"I think we're in a very healthy position, probably more so than I thought," said Dyche.

Underfire Mark Hughes takes his Stoke side to Huddersfield, in what can be described as a 'six-pointer': "When teams get beat a manager will come under pressure," said Hughes.

"When you win, the pressure goes away. That's the reality," said ex-Wales, Blackburn, Manchester City, Fulham and QPR boss Hughes, 54, at Stoke since 2013.

Cold turkey is on the menu this Christmas for Manchester United players and staff, after boss Jose

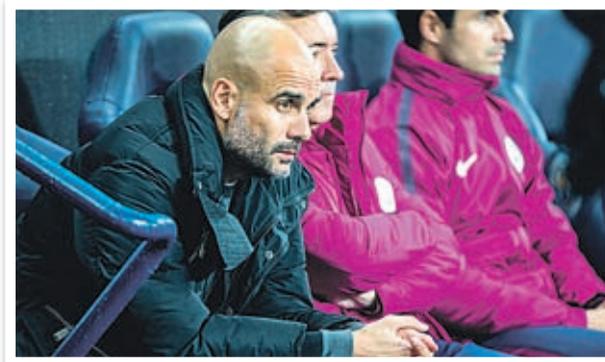
Mourinho told them of a training session on Christmas Day!

With games against Leicester on December 23; Burnley on December 26 and Southampton on December 30, Mourinho doesn't think the festive schedule is fair.

Mourinho points the finger at Arsenal's fixture list, saying: "I wish them a Happy Christmas - they are going to have a Christmas - while others play December 23-26."

Arsenal play Liverpool on December 22 and Crystal Palace on December 28. Manchester City play Bournemouth on December 23 and Newcastle on December 27.

Boxing Day fixtures: Spurs v Southampton, Watford v Leicester, Manchester United v Burnley, Huddersfield v Stoke, West Brom v Everton, Chelsea v Brighton, Bournemouth v West Ham and Liverpool v Swansea. Newcastle v Manchester City (December 27).



ON THE MARCH: Pep Guardiola and Manchester City.

Party poopers Football stocking fillers

CHRISTMAS parties have hit the headlines, one being Spurs when managed by Harry Redknapp, who banned players from having a Christmas party in 2009.

Spurs players drummed up a Christmas party collection, allegedly paying £2,000 each, and hired a private jet for an all-day Christmas booze-filled 'bender' in Dublin.

Sir Alex Ferguson was left fuming, after his Manchester United players arranged a Christmas party in a hotel, with an alleged plethora of women invited in a 15-hour drinking binge.

Football stocking fillers

IN 1957 a full schedule of 38 matches were played on December 25. The final English league match played on Christmas Day was Blackpool against Blackburn Rovers in 1965.

Champions League

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE draw last 16: Juventus v Tottenham; Basel v Manchester City; FC Porto v Liverpool; Sevilla v Manchester United; Real Madrid v

PSG; Shakhtar Donetsk v Roma; Chelsea v Barcelona; Bayern Munich v Besiktas.

RACING: King George VI Christmas cracker

MIGHT BITE, Thistlecrack and Sizing John are set to go head-to-head in the King George VI chase over three miles ½ furlong at Kempton on Boxing Day.

"We'll try and win the King George," said Might Bite trainer Nicky Henderson.

Thistlecrack, winner of the King George in 2016, returned at Newbury this month after suffering a tendon injury.

"Before the race at Newbury he did look as though he was burly. He's a big, heavy horse and needed the run," said trainer Colin Tizzard.

Sizing John's options remain open, with the March Cheltenham Festival in mind, having been backed down to 4-1 in the King George, with Might Bite best priced at 7-4.

"Sizing John has all the qualities for the King George - loads of speed, stays and gears - stamina in abundance," said jockey Robbie Power.

Rafa awaits transfer purse as Newcastle takeover talks continue

SPORTSCENE SPAIN

with Andrew Atkinson

MADRID-born Rafa Benitez is facing Christmas as manager of struggling Newcastle United as takeover talks with Magpies' owner Mike Ashley continue.

"I need to know how much money we will have for January as soon as possible, we have to improve the team," said Benitez, ahead of the January transfer window.

Benitez, the only manager in history to have won the UEFA Europa League, UEFA Super Cup, UEFA Champions League and the FIFA Club World Cup, was always cautious about results this season.

Former Liverpool and Real Madrid manager Benitez, 57, bounced straight back into the Premier League following relegation last season.

Newcastle are facing relegation again



WAITING GAME: Rafa Benitez.

after a woeful season, and Benitez rued: "I said it could be like this."

Ex-Real Valladolid, Osasuna, Valencia, Inter Milan, Chelsea and Napoli boss Benitez, who left Napoli to coach Real Madrid in 2015, joined Newcastle United in 2016.

Having failed in his attempt to save Newcastle from relegation, Benitez remained loyal, taking the club back into the Premier League, when winning the Championship last season.

Ashley who invested £134.4m in buying Newcastle a decade ago and has since put

£129m into the club, reportedly turned down Amanda Staveley and PCP Capital Partners Ltd's initial formal offer of nearly £300m.

PCP Capital Partners has access to around £28bn of Middle Eastern wealth.

A facilitator of football takeovers Staveley helped broker the agreement, which saw Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed al-Nahyan take control of Manchester City in 2009.

Benitez who has met Newcastle managing director Lee Charnley to discuss the transfer budget, said: "We're monitoring and talking to players."

Newcastle play West Ham on December 23; Manchester City on December 27; Brighton on December 30 and Stoke on New Year's Day, fixtures deemed crucial.

"I can only concentrate on preparing the team. We know what we need, can we get that? I don't know," said Benitez, linked to signing Liverpool's Danny Ings and Manchester United's Luke Shaw on loan.



Costa de Almería

Merry Christmas

21 - 27 December 2017

SPORT

www.euroweeklynews.com

FORMER Real Madrid star Kaka has announced his retirement from football. Over an illustrious career, the Brazilian won the World Cup, Champions League, La Liga, Serie A titles and he is also the last person other than Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi, to win the Ballon d'Or in 2007.

TO READ MORE

Costa de Almería's best guide to local sport

BOWLING CLUB DE ZURGENA held its first ever open competition on December 15 and 16.

The competition was run in conjunction with the Zurgena Town Hall who supported the event by providing the winner's trophy as well as refreshments for the competition entrants.

The competition took the form of a triples 'Round Robin' and was well supported by the local bowling clubs with a total of 18 teams of three taking part. The team entrants were divided into two groups and play was then over six rounds in each group. Points were awarded for winning each round and bonus points could be earned

Bowling Club de Zurgena host first Open



Jim Simpson (Zurgena Town Hall) presents the trophy to Jean Smallwood, Ian Jackson and Janet Jackson.

by winning individual ends.

The winners were the team with the highest number of points at the end of the two days. That honour went to the team of Ian Jackson, Jean Smallwood and Janet Jackson all from Cabrera LBC with a points total of 39.

The runners-up with a total of 36 points were the team of Chris Ewer, Eileen and John Phoenix from Almeria LBC.

As this was the first open competition the club had organised, the experience gained was invaluable and will make for an even better competition in coming years.

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