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Puerto Rey, Vera Playa, Vera Town, Antas El Real,
Los Gallardos, Velez Rubio and many surrounding towns

Recent discussions have brought up the question of ‘Dangerous Dogs’ – which breeds are so considered, and what you have to do to legally keep a dog that has been deemed dangerous.

Spanish national legislation considers 9 breeds dangerous, and apart from that, each autonomy can add to or subtract from this list. Even local town councils can decide for themselves if a certain breed is dangerous or not.

The overall rules, apart from breeds, state that dogs who through aggressiveness, size or jaw strength can put people’s and other dogs’ lives at risk are considered dangerous. Also those that have been trained for attack or have a record of aggressive behaviour are included in the list.

Potentially dangerous dogs include; Pitt Bull Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the American Staffordshire Terrier, Rottweiler, Argentine Mastiff, the Fila Brasileiro, Tosa Inu, the Akita Inu and Doberman.

This licence expires after 5 years and can be renewed in the same way with the medical centre. The licence can only be used by the named person; everyone that walks the potentially dangerous dog needs their own licence.

Documentation required:
Certified copies of applicant’s passport and residencia/NIE

Crime record certificate, issued by the Ministry of Justice in Madrid. There is a small charge for this certificate.

Certificate of physical capacity and psychological aptitude for the possession of potentially dangerous animals. This certificate can be obtained at a specialised medical centre, such as those that issue the certificate to obtain a driving licence, eg. Docthos Check in Albox.

It has an approximate cost of 40€.

Proof of payment of civil liability insurance policy for damages to third parties for a minimum cover of 175.000€.

Signed form taken along with all the above to the local Townhall, plus the applicable fee (cost varies depending on town hall)

Some important rules for dangerous dog licence owners:

The dog must always wear a muzzle when walked or taken to public areas and it must not be taken off under any circumstances.

The dog can only be walked by someone who has the dangerous dog licence, and the dog in question must have been registered at the town hall.

Leads of over 2m are not allowed.

Only one dog allowed to be walked by each licence owner at any one time.

If the dog gets lost or stolen, the police or town hall need to be advised.

Disobeying these rules can cause the cancelation of your licence, the dog being taken away and fines of up to 15.000€.

If you would like help in obtaining a licence then call or email C.A.T. Services to make an appointment.
The Region of Murcia is a uniprovincial autonomous community, meaning that it comprises only one province. It borders on Almería, Granada, Alicante and Albacete provinces as well as on the Mediterranean Sea.

The region is home to 1,493,898 (2019) souls of which at least one third live in the capital of the same name. Although it comprises only one province, the Region of Murcia is nevertheless Spain’s 9th largest autonomous community as far as surface is concerned, and the 10th with respect to inhabitants. In its status as province it is the 7th most populated of the 50 that constitute Spain.

The highest point in Murcia is in the Revolcadores Massif at 2,015 masl. Murcia is one of Europe’s largest producers of fruit, vegetables and flowers, and it is home to some of Spain’s most important wine growing areas such as Jumilla, Bullas and Yecla all of which produce DO wines (Denominación de Origen). The highest point in Murcia is in the Revolcadores Massif at 2,015 masl. Murcia is one of Europe’s largest producers of fruit, vegetables and flowers, and it is home to some of Spain’s most important wine growing areas such as Jumilla, Bullas and Yecla all of which produce DO wines (Denominación de Origen).

Murcia’s historic-artisanic heritage includes its famous cathedral, Santa Iglesia Catedral de Santa María, often simply called Catedral de Murcia, which is adorned by a baroque façade and a spectacular gothic interior.

It is thought that Murcia was founded by Abderramán II in 825 on top of an old Roman settlement. The city was very important during the Middle Ages under Moorish rule and continued to be so when it was incorporated into the Crown of Castile as the capital of the Kingdom of Murcia.

Murcia’s important services sector; it used to be known as an agricultural export centre thanks to the extensive arable farming in the surrounding area which was known as the ‘Orchard of Europe’, but the tertiary sector is the most important in the city today. However, industry is also plentifully represented, including alimentary, textile and chemical factories. The great majority of the industrial installations are to be found on the Polígono Industrial Oeste (Western Industrial Estate) which is one of the largest on the Iberian Peninsula.

The city also has a rich cultural heritage, and due to its agricultural history and background, one of the most outstanding institutions is the Council of Good Men, a consuetudinary court which rules over watering disputes amongst the farmers. Also with its background in the arable farming is the Fiestas de Primavera which are celebrated every year in the week after Easter. It is Murcia’s most important fiesta after the annual Fiesta de Murcia.

It celebrates the arrival of spring and the traditions, labour and culture of the area.

The Region of Murcia is based in Cartagena which turns this city into the ‘legislative capital’, but this denomination is not included in the autonomy statutes, and the city of Murcia is considered the capital of the region.

The city of Murcia has a very important services sector; it used to be considered the capital of the region.

The climate in Murcia is hot and dry, and the extensive fruit, vegetable and flower fields are irrigated by the rivers that flow through the region, notably the Segura River.

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Murcia is also an important university city. The first university was founded there 1272, and today there are two large universities, the public Universidad de Murcia and the private Universidad Católica San Antonio. Between them they have around 50,000 students.

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The Antonine Plague

In these days of the Coronavirus pandemic, it is natural to ask oneself when the first ever pandemic happened. The first known pandemic in the western world started in the middle of the second century AD when the Roman Empire was celebrating its golden age. The empire was vast and its expansion seemed unstoppable. However, the Antonine plague put a stop to all that.

In 165 AD the Roman Empire, under the Antonine dynasty, stretched over the greater part of Europe, northern Africa including Egypt, and a large chunk of the Middle East. Rome imposed its culture on all its conquered territories and thus achieved cultural and political unity which was kept together by a complex and extensive road system. The emperor at the time was Marco Aurelio Antinonio, also known as ‘The Wise’ or ‘The Philosopher’, who would end up as a victim of the plague himself; it hit high and low irrespective of position and fortune.

Historic sources reckon that between seven and ten per cent of the citizens of the Empire (estimated at some 50 million) perished in the plague. The plague raged from 165 to 180 AD and the most prevailing theory about its origin is that it all started in Mesopotamia when, in the year 165, Gaius Avidius Cassius’s troops sacked the city of Seleucia. This vapour was said to have started the pandemic. Whether the plague started as a divine punishment or the legionnaires caught the disease from locals in Mesopotamia, the troops brought it back from the middle east and it soon spread all over the Empire. This happened rapidly due to the frequent movement of people between towns and the extensive commercial and road network that covered all of the Roman Empire.

Death and desolation dominated everywhere that the plague touched; it hit the larger cities with dense populations the hardest, and at the height of the pandemic some 2,000 people died in Rome every day. The outbreak and symptoms were described by the eminent contemporary physician Galen of Pergamum who is considered ‘The Prince of Physicians’ even today. He wrote that purple and black eruptions appeared on the skin of the infected and ‘after a couple of days they dry out and peel off leaving ulcerous pustules all over the body, together with diarrhoea, fever and a feeling of burning inside.’

Just like today’s Corona Virus pandemic, the Antonine pest had a serious negative impact in the Roman Empire on social, financial, cultural and military levels. A large portion of the economy was paralysed, and the decimation of the troops forced Rome to sign peace agreements with various enemies and to recruit slaves, mercenaries and even criminals for the army.

The Romans believed that the gods were angry and that their anger had been provoked by the Christians who were gathering more and more converts all over the Empire. So the Christians were made scapegoats and were persecuted both for their faith and for treason to the Roman spirit and provoking the Gods. The Christians, however, thought that the plague was divine punishment for the persecution of the Christians by Marco Aurelio.

Due to the great pressure on the northern borders that the barbaric tribes were exercising, and the decimation of the Roman armies, the Emperor had stationed himself near the Danube to lead his army, when the plague caught up with him.

As he was dying, he pronounced his famous last words: ‘Do not cry for me. Think of the disease and the death of so many others.’ According to many historians, the Antonine plague was the beginning of the end of the Roman Empire. And the truth is that it never regained its former greatness and strength after the western world’s first pandemic.
A brand new all weather indoor Market is now open at the Longo’s site in Albox. There is a wide selection of stalls all under one roof.

Opening hours are Monday - Saturday 9am to 2pm

Calling all stall holders, this is a fantastic opportunity to run your own small business.

A warm welcome awaits you from Bob and Chrissie of the CANDY CORNER. A little haven where you will find all your favourite Olde English Sweets and more. Some of the sweets can be bought loose, weighed to your requirements - Rhubarb & Custard, Everton Mints and much more…..

SHARON’S JEWELLERY and Pet Tags sells bespoke hand crafted jewellery at affordable prices and has a range of engrvable pet ID tags. All pet tags will be ready next working day with your choice of words engraved. Certain items of our jewellery can also be personalised by engraving.

ARTISANA DEL COSTAS where you will find something different to give as a gift or to keep. Personalized Decorations, Wall Plaques and Wooden Jewellery. All handmade, unique and ideal for personalizing, colour and size your choice!

MICHELLE’S CRAFTY CREATIONS offers handmade gifts for any occasion including scented eco friendly soy wax candles, maxi tea lights and wax melts, personalised glassware and 3D frames, handmade LED bottle lights, handmade wine glass charms, garden decor, humorous plaques, wax melt burners and lanterns, Indalo gifts and weekly offers.

G’s GEMS an oasis of beautiful handmade jewellery, gifts, wall art and geodes. This stall is found behind the sweet shop and is a must to visit. Gilly makes her jewellery from vintage beads and recycled jewellery, as well as geodes and jewellery from Morocco. Her wall art is made from things she finds.

VANESSA’S FLOWERS has fresh flowers every day. Orders taken for all occasions, birthday, anniversary, thank you, congratulations, get well, new baby, new home, sympathy, funeral flowers and seasonal. Order ahead for in-store pick up. Bouquets, basket arrangements, plant arrangements. Special occasions, weddings and parties.

Life’s to short for boring clothes come and visit MODA LISA were you can find something for every occasion whether it’s a top for the beach or a nice glam dress we stock all uk brands on the high street and sizes range from a 6-24

CASA COLORIDA offer a wide selection of original gifts for you, your family, friends and the home. Including our tree of life range, hand painted gin glasses, our large selection of silicone drinks lids and much more.

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visit-andalucia.com

Businesses, towns, cities and villages. Its people and history, where to go and what to do. It’s all on the Visit Andalucia website.

Website owners, Nick & Julie, have taken most of the location photos themselves and visited many of the holiday destinations as well as places definitely off the tourist trail – the travel guides and suggestions come from direct knowledge: they have been there; sampled the restaurants; climbed the mountains; and seen the same views that you will see.

Their purpose at Visit Andalucia is to pass-on local knowledge, particularly for people wanting to know a lot more about Andalucia than they can glean from official channels and from holiday advertising.

It is also a great platform for local businesses and trades to advertise so that visitors to the website have a full insight of the locality.

To advertise or find out more please contact
tracey@catmediaservices.com

Where’s AL

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There are no prizes for guessing the answer this month because AL has been a very good boy and stayed at home with Karen (Ed).

He has been dreaming about all the different places he would like to visit but for now he will stay local, stay safe and stay at home.

By Vic Davey

......as I was saying......

Well, what a couple of months we’ve had! And who knows what the next few months will bring us. It would be very remiss of me if I did not give a big shout-out to and pay tribute to all those people who have soldiered on through this pandemic on our behalf.

The Medical staff at the Hospitals and Health Centres, Pharmacies, Care Homes, the Doctors, Nurses, Orderlies, Porters, Cleaners... the list is almost endless. All those people working tirelessly to keep us safe and alive under the most difficult and trying circumstances, OFTEN AT RISK TO THEMSELVES...never before experienced in our lifetime.

Difficult and trying circumstances, often at risk to themselves...never before experienced in our lifetime

And hopefully never to be experienced again.

THEMSELVES...never before experienced in our lifetime

And, of course, Karen and her staff at C.A.T.S....

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and the ‘social distancing’ required.

And, of course, Karen and the shelves remained stocked with essentials while maintaining our streets day after day, the Supermarket staff ensuring their

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Let us also not forget the unsung heroes in our neighbourhood, from the ladies manning the Service Station, mostly alone, to the guy driving the tractor and disinfectant machine around our streets day after day, the Supermarket staff ensuring their shelves remained stocked with essentials while maintaining the ‘social distancing’ required. And, of course, Karen and her staff at C.A.T.S....

To all these folk...WE THANK AND SALUTE YOU!!

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Cleaning your hot tub is a critical part of effective hot tub maintenance. Indoor and outdoor hot tubs are both prone to developing scum. Keep the waterline clear and maintain your hot tub's shell and jets to keep things tidy. Use it to scrub away the scum line at the water’s edge as well.

Make sure you clean the inside of your hot tub as often as possible, and do not forget to wipe down the shell, too. A weekly clean is essential hot tub care. But plan to drain your spa completely for a thorough cleaning every three to four months, and more often if you are using it often, or having a lot of guests in it, or both.

Don’t forget your filters – they are on the job whenever the hot tub’s running, and your hot tub filters need a good cleaning to work properly. You can clean them using three methods: rinse, spray, and soak.

Rinse your hot tub filters as often as possible with warm water or your garden hose.

Spray your filters every week or so with a hot tub filter cleaner to provide a deeper clean. Do not forget to rinse them after.

Soak your filters in chemical cleaner every time you drain and refill your hot tub. Rinse them thoroughly afterward.

When your filters get to the point where even a chemical soak does not completely clean them, it is time to replace them.

The Science of Soaking: Hot Tub Chemistry

A spanking clean spa makes another core component of hot tub maintenance: balance. The water chemistry is a key part of your hot tub’s water being safe. Balancing your hot tub’s water is similar to balancing pool water, but a bit trickier due to the maintenance involved.

To determine the pH and alkalinity levels, use a test kit. Test your water every week, either with test strips or a liquid test kit, and adjust your water chemistry as necessary.

But before you add anything to your spa, you need a baseline reading on your water chemistry. Once your hot tub’s full, test your water to determine the pH and alkalinity levels.

pH - Aim for a pH level of 7.4 to 7.6. Values below this range will be too acidic. The water might eat away at your hardware and will likely irritate your skin and eyes. Values above the range will be too basic. The water will reduce your sanitizer’s effectiveness, and will be prone to cloudiness.

Alkalinity - For alkalinity, shoot for 125 parts per million (ppm) to 150 ppm. If alkalinity gets too high, it can cause scaling and cloudiness.

Sanitizer - Add the sanitizer of your choice according to the instructions on the package, and test again to make sure your pH and alkalinity are within optimal ranges.

Shock - If you’re using your spa after a long period of inactivity or you’ve been using it heavily, it’s a good idea to shock your hot tub to make sure it’s completely sanitized. Make shocking a regular part of your scheduled hot tub maintenance to keep your water safe and clean. Test your water every week, either with test strips or a liquid test kit, and adjust your water chemistry as necessary.

What a strange couple of months! The virus and lockdown created an unusually quiet, almost surreal feel to us humans, the animals and plants however just did their usual thing!

Living above a rambla here at Olive Tree Farm and being used to getting rained in and stuck for days at a time, we were quite well organised in the scheme of things. The freezer was full, the cupboards well stacked; it was just the elusive loo roll and pasta that were in short supply, and of course yeast!

The lads sorted out the pasta and loo roll shortage, but yeast was going to be fun. Having tried to make yeast a few years ago, we quickly got to work, it was going to take at least a week for it to grow. Flour and water were added to a jug, a heat mat was plugged in and the jug sat there. Every day some of the mix was discarded and our new ‘pet’ was fed with new flour and water.

By day 7 it was looking rather good. It had a nice smell, bubbled up happily after it was fed and grew at an alarming rate. It seemed a waste to throw the discard away, which had to removed prior to its daily feed. So, we experimented with pancakes, and crumpets, pancakes and crumpets, but before you add anything to your spa, you need a baseline reading on your water chemistry. Once your hot tub’s full, test your water to determine the pH and alkalinity levels.

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What a strange couple of months! The virus and lockdown created an unusually quiet, almost surreal feel to us humans, the animals and plants however just did their usual thing!

Living above a rambla here at Olive Tree Farm and being used to getting rained in and stuck for days at a time, we were quite well organised in the scheme of things. The freezer was full, the cupboards well stacked; it was just the elusive loo roll and pasta that were in short supply, and of course yeast!

The lads sorted out the pasta and loo roll shortage, but yeast was going to be fun. Having tried to make yeast a few years ago, we quickly got to work, it was going to take at least a week for it to grow. Flour and water were added to a jug, a heat mat was plugged in and the jug sat there. Every day some of the mix was discarded and our new ‘pet’ was fed with new flour and water.

By day 7 it was looking rather good. It had a nice smell, bubbled up happily after it was fed and grew at an alarming rate. It seemed a waste to throw the discard away, which had to removed prior to its daily feed. So, we experimented with pancakes, and crumpets, pancakes and crumpets, but before you add anything to your spa, you need a baseline reading on your water chemistry. Once your hot tub’s full, test your water to determine the pH and alkalinity levels.

pH - Aim for a pH level of 7.4 to 7.6. Values below this range will be too acidic. The water might eat away at your hardware and will likely irritate your skin and eyes. Values above the range will be too basic. The water will reduce your sanitizer’s effectiveness, and will be prone to cloudiness.

Alkalinity - For alkalinity, shoot for 125 parts per million (ppm) to 150 ppm. If alkalinity gets too high, it can cause scaling and cloudiness.

Sanitizer - Add the sanitizer of your choice according to the instructions on the package, and test again to make sure your pH and alkalinity are within optimal ranges.

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On the animal front, everything continued as normal. Spring was in the air and a new litter of pigs arrived. We were expecting them so not a surprise. The chickens went into overdrive and of course in normal circumstances we would have given some eggs away to friends and family or sold the odd dozen. Instead we had egg overload! I froze quite a lot and cooked all kinds of dishes that involved eggs, how we haven’t all developed feathers is a wonder.

The duck eggs we kept on one side for a few days and when we had harvested quite a lot of broad beans which are now coming to the end. Now that the sun is back out it means we will have to be more vigilant with watering, but they have certainly got off to a good start.

We have also enjoyed using an abundance of herbs, in particular, sage, rosemary and thyme, and we have just planted parsley and coriander, which are frequently used in the kitchen. And last but not least, the olive trees are looking great!

So on that note it is over and out, apart from saying, we hope everyone is OK after these strange times and that “normal”, or the least, the olive trees are looking great!

On the growing front, the massive amount of rain we have had has been a huge help. Although the farm resembled a mud bath, the veg is growing well. We are already using onions and garlic. The lettuce and rocket are being picked on a daily basis and are so tasty. The tomatoes are growing well, we planted plum and cherry tomatoes plus watermelon, aegilas, squash, peas and asparagus. We have also had goose eggs and duck eggs on top of the chicken eggs. The duck eggs we kept on one side for a few days and when we had enough they were in the incubator. Although D day will not be until June 13th, having candled the eggs 10 days in, it looks like we are definitely fertile. To candle them, you hold a torch to the bottom of the egg whilst the room is dark, and you can see the embryo and veins that have formed. We haven’t hatched ducklings for a long time, so we are looking forward to this.

If you are considering installing a swimming pool, it is likely you will have questions about all the types of pools, the most common kinds of swimming pool options can be found here along with some of the pros and cons of each pool.

Above-ground Construction: Above-ground pools are made from fabricated kits and are usually installed by a professional, although some kits may be simple enough that an amateur could figure out how to put it together. First, the installer levels the ground where the pool will be placed. A perimeter track that will support the outer wall (made of either metal or composite) will be assembled. Next, sand is spread in the pool area. Finally, the vinyl liner is placed over the pool walls, filled with water, and the liner is secured in place. Once the pump and filtering systems have been hooked up, the pool is ready to use.

Pros:
- This is by far the cheapest option if you want to have a pool at home.
- It is relatively easy to build and can go up in a very short amount of time.
- It can also be taken with you in a potential move.

Cons:
- Above-ground pools are less durable than other types of pools, and many people find them to be less attractive.
- Limited Shapes and depth options.
- Vinyl Liner need replacing eventually.
- They are less permanent—which could be a trait that goes in either the “pro” or “con” column.
Vinyl-lined pools are cheaper than other in-ground designs.

Pros:
- Customization: Vinyl pools are easier to maintain and install compared to Gunite.
- Flexibility: Custom design could offset the initial low price.
- Ease of Maintenance: Vinyl pools are easier to maintain and install.
- Aesthetics: The surface is smooth to the touch and customizable.

Cons:
- Lifespan: The life of a vinyl pool will be limited compared to Gunite pools.
- Repair Costs: Repairs can cost quite a bit and they do not maintain their value as well as other pools.
- Liner Durability: Vinyl liners may not last as long as Gunite liners, particularly in hot, humid climates.

Fiberglass Construction:

Pros:
- Customization: Fiberglass pools are made from a fiberglass composite that has been built in a factory controlled environment. It can be made into any shape or size and can accommodate even the wildest design features.
- Durability: If the pool is properly manufactured and maintained, the gel coat should outlast other pool surfaces.
- Aesthetics: Fiberglass pools are generally less work to maintain because the gel coat surface is nonporous and does not encourage the growth of algae.

Cons:
- Price: Fiberglass pools are generally more expensive than vinyl pools.
- Repair Costs: Repairing a fiberglass pool can be costly and aesthetically unappealing because repair work sometimes does not match the existing surface.

Whatever you decide is right for you and your budget, remember that your pool will become a focal point of your garden, where you will be able to enjoy many hours just relaxing and entertaining with friends and family during the hot summer months.

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Welcome Back, readers.

I am sure we can all agree that the last ten weeks (at the time of writing) have changed our lives in ways that we could not have ever imagined.

Throughout all the uncertainty, the one thing that has managed to keep people connected has been technology. Families have been able to keep in contact via Skype, Messenger & WhatsApp, some under very difficult circumstances. The stress of separation will have been testing beyond our normal capabilities. Mainstream media broadcasters have been forced to make more use of the same methods that we use on a regular basis. We have seen our celebrities being interviewed in their kitchens, wearing pyjamas instead of being polished and coiffured.

In the early days of Lockdown, many celebrities made good use of the forced spare time to keep people entertained. The quality was not as polished as normal, but this gave it a charm of its own. Wearing pyjamas instead of being polished and coiffured.

Not only have they been accurate but have given positive advice on individual matters. I would like to thank them on a personal level for their help and would hope that you all agree. Another personal special mention goes to Julie Davies from Piedra Amarrilla. Her regular rooftop Facebook “concerts” brought good cheer to her local community and she has kept up the positivity throughout. Hats off to you, Julie!

It has been very nice to see most of you back here safe and sound.

There are echoes of Wartime Spirit. Making the best of it. To experiment. Without the constraints of agents and publicists they have been free to express themselves.

As yet there is no cure for the previous outbreaks of S.A.R.S (2002) and M.A.R.S (2012) so a “cure” for Covid-19 is unlikely any time soon. These outbreaks were stopped by the same methods used during the current Pandemic, albeit on a much smaller scale. The Spanish Government has suggested using anonymous location data from mobile phones to track population movement. This would be overlaid onto infection maps and used to adjust treatment and policy (the same information that gives you your local weather on your phone, for example), subject to data-protections laws.

One mooted option is a phone application that automatically tracks who you have been in contact with and if you develop symptoms, you hit the red button and everyone is tested. It would only work if everyone used it.

Both have shades of Big Brother about them but realistically, we share much more personal information with our service providers (Google, Facebook etc) on a daily basis without a second thought. The important thing to consider is that this current crisis is properly dealt with.

The return to “normality” is likely to be the first stage of what will undoubtedly be a long road to recovery. The restrictions and curtailments we have endured have been a necessary evil and there will be changes we have yet to foresee. We have seen desperate times and have seen commitment and sacrifice beyond measure.

In rebuilding our lives we should focus on our immediate communities first and use the spirit and lessons learned during isolation. We have not forgotten the sacrifices that our Parents and Grandparents made, some 75 years ago. Let history show that we were every bit as honourable, selfless and resilient as they were.

Wishing you all the best!

Adrian.

Tech, TV, Gadgets & Gizmos

Welcome to our new section - the biggest problem I had was giving it a name that encompassed every aspect of the modern technology it includes. Here you will find advertisers offering all the help you need with computers, tablets, mobile phones, TV and Wifi etc (if you think of a better title do let me know - Karen (Ed)). Now over to Adrian our very own Tech Guru.....

Welcome Back, readers.

I am sure we can all agree that the last ten weeks (at the time of writing) have changed our lives in ways that we could not have ever imagined.

Throughout all the uncertainty, the one thing that has managed to keep people connected has been technology. Families have been able to keep in contact via Skype, Messenger & WhatsApp, some under very difficult circumstances. The stress of separation will have been testing beyond our normal capabilities. Mainstream media broadcasters have been forced to make more use of the same methods that we use on a regular basis. We have seen our celebrities being interviewed in their kitchens, wearing pyjamas instead of being polished and coiffured.

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It has been very nice to see most of you back here safe and sound.

For all its trials and tribulations, sacrifices and tragedies, I would hope that Lockdown has shown us how precious our lives are and how much we take for granted. It has also highlighted the unsung heroes amongst us. People that go above and beyond on a daily basis with no thought for themselves. At a time when our personal liberties have been necessarily constrained, these people have put themselves out there helping those in need. They have checked on the elderly and infirm, run errands and provided essential services where traditional sources have been unavailable. For that, I salute you!

The biggest Heroes during this crisis have undoubtedly been Healthcare and Emergency Services workers, both here in Spain and back in the UK. Once again, these people have shown us their commitment and have dug deeper than ever before, literally risking their lives on a daily basis. Our regular shows of support and unity (clap for our carers) have been a much-needed boost. I would hope that our support reaches beyond the end of this crisis.

We are all aware of the source of this Pandemic. The debate will rage on about the rights and wrongs of that for quite some time yet...

The principle question is how to manage our transition into our “new normality”.

The problem with a virus is that it affects each individual differently. It is possible to be a carrier and show no symptoms at all, whereas others – as we have sadly seen – will be hospitalised. This is where technology could play a part.

The ability to track a virus’ path can help to curtail it’s spread. The problem with Covid-19 is that it belongs to the Coronavirus family of viruses, which includes the common cold. These viruses interact with the host on an individual basis so a blanket cure would be nigh on impossible.

As yet there is no cure for the previous outbreaks of S.A.R.S (2002) and M.A.R.S (2012) so a “cure” for Covid-19 is unlikely any time soon. These outbreaks were stopped by the same methods used during the current Pandemic, albeit on a much smaller scale. The Spanish Government has suggested using anonymous location data from mobile phones to track population movement. This would be overlaid onto infection maps and used to adjust treatment and policy (the same information that gives you your local weather on your phone, for example), subject to data-protections laws.

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Wishing you all the best!

Adrian.
A donation of a nice 1960 Ferguson Radiogram got me thinking about the re-immerging of analogue recording techniques, vinyl records etc. Having got the set working to an “out the shop” condition, everyone who walked in and heard it playing away in the background has commented “oh that sounds nice”. Sure it does too. Not the most HiFi, but good on the ear, warm and comforting! In the early ‘80s, CDs and digital recording started to take over from the old vinyl albums and studio tape mastering machines. All good stuff because you could chop out and edit the rubbish. ‘80s music with ease, without using a razor blade and Scelotape. But there has always been a hard-core school of thought that says the resulting sound is not as nice to listen to.

To record and process the raw analogue musical signal to make a CD, it first has to be chopped up and made into electrical 1s and 0s, a process called quantisation loss. Purists say that it is noticeable. I agree. Try listening to an original recording of a piece of music, then the MP3 version. MP3 format has an even higher degree of loss of detail of tone and dynamic range (loud and quiet you want to go and, how much bass is present. Basically, the louder you go, the fatter the groove and this reduces how long the level crossing gates were shut. It seemed an age that we were waiting for the train to pass through, and I kept glancing across into Neila. Her eyes were closed, but she didn’t seem to have got any worse. Please God let me get her home in time.

I turned into my drive far too fast, and brought Ermentrude to an emergency stop inches from the garage door. I half fell out, ran to the front door and opened it – I figured that I wouldn’t be able to manage opening the door while carrying Neila. What if she is too heavy for me to carry? She’s only small, but she might be very heavy; there’s only one way to find out.

I unclasped her seatbelt, least in and put my arms under her legs and round her back, and very cautiously began to lift - I needn’t have worried, she was as light as a feather! I stepped back with my precious load, and stopped on Gruff, my Cairn terrier, who squealed. ‘Gruff, don’t you dare go out of the gate! Go back in the house!’ All I needed now was for my dog to disappear out of the gate, down the road into the traffic and get run over.

But Gruff followed right behind me into the house, I suppose he wanted to know what I was carrying.

I pushed the door to with my elbow and hastened to the sofa, where Gruff and Neila are sitting. Having got the set working to an “out the shop” condition, everyone who walked in and heard it playing away in the background has commented “oh that sounds nice”.

I needed now was for my dog to disappear out of the gate, down the road into the traffic and get run over.

But Gruff followed right behind me into the house, I suppose he wanted to know what I was carrying.
### Puzzle Time

Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row of each 9x9 cube must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

#### Rosetta

A Rosetta is made up of a centre coloured hexagon encircled by 6 white hexagons. To complete the puzzle, fill in all 7 Rosettas with each number between 1 and 7 in no particular order while ensuring that:
1. No number is repeated in a horizontal row
2. Each number for 1 to 7 are represented in the 7 grey hexagon cells

#### Samurai Sudoku

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 6 3 2 | 1 9 4 |
 1 5 9 | 2 3 7 |
 2 4 6 | 1 7 5 |
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**Indalo Partners at C.A.T. Services:**

Indalo Partners will be in the C.A.T. Services offices every Tuesday between 09:30 and 14:30 to provide the following services:
- Spanish Resident & Non-Resident Tax Returns
- Modelo 720 Declaration of Worldwide Assets
- Services at the Tax Office (Agencia Tributaria)
- Low Risk Investments
- Pensions
- UK Double Taxation
- UK Self-Assessment Tax Returns

If you would like to arrange an appointment, please contact Indalo Partners office 950 472 242 or email: Info@indalo.partners

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- Social Security
- Driving Licences
- ITV (Vehicle MOT)
- Annual Taxes
- Modelo 720 (Declaration of worldwide Assets)
- Double Taxation
- Wills
- UK Self-Assessment
- Services at the Tax Office (Agencia Tributaria)
- Low risk Investments
- Pensions

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### Indalo Partners

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### Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 73

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### Benefits Consultancy

© Engaged Learning
Right now is the high season for apricots and they are absolutely irresistible sweet and juicy at the moment. In the case of apricots, it is not a question of ‘persuading’ yourself to have a piece of fruit; if there’s any persuasion involved it will be to stop eating before you make yourself sick!

In other words: they are extremely moreish!

And like almost all other fruits and vegetables in season, they are full of health benefits. Here to mention but a few:

- They are stuffed with antioxidants (beta carotene). These help slowing down the ageing process and fight degenerative diseases.
- Their anti inflammatory properties calm down discomfort and pain.
- Their high iron content helps keep anaemia at bay.
- They help prevent several eye complaints, including reduced vision, retinal degeneration and loss of night vision.
- Apricots reduce liquid retention and thus help reduce high blood pressure.
- Their high fibre content improves your digestion and help against constipation.
- Their high content in natural sugar makes them a healthy soother when you have a sweet tooth.

However, in order to enjoy all these benefits you must make sure that the apricot is ripe when you eat it. Eating unripe apricots can have the opposite effect and cause indigestion.

The stone of the apricot is widely used in natural cosmetics, and also for producing the well known Italian liqueur, Amaretto. Beware, though, the kernel inside the stone of the apricot contains amygdalin, a poisonous compound.

When you buy apricots, go for the ones with smooth skin and a good colouring, free of marks and bruises. If they are not quite ripe, leave them on the kitchen worktop for a couple of days. Once they are ripe they will survive in room temperature for about 4 days and in the fridge for up to two weeks.

Once you get to know your apricots, you will be able to catch them at just the right time to eat them; too soon and they are hard and lacking in flavour. Too late and they become floury and weak tasting. And just on time, you couldn’t ask for a more delicious, delicate, sweet and juicy fruit.

If you can’t eat them just when they are perfect, use them for compote or purée and freeze them until you need them for puddings, cakes or smoothies.

Now that the markets are finally opening again, go to a fruit stall and ask the owner for a sample before filling your bag with these beautiful little orange and pink germs.

Buen provecho!
This month all my recipes are for two. From a batch I had in the freezer. Stringy bits which can clog up my machine. And I do, always using chicken breast, which is virtually without electricity so I could make my own. Sadly it’s hard to come by minced chicken here in our corner of Spain. So I persuaded my man to buy me an old fashioned meat mincing machine with a handle for Christmas (we don’t have mains electricity) so I could make my own.

And I do, always using chicken breast, which is virtually without stringy bits which can clog up my machine. I cooked three of these recipes on the same chicken; the mince came from a batch I had in the freezer.

This month all my recipes are for two.

**Chicken Curry (the Danish Way)**

In Denmark we don’t have the ‘British tradition’ for curries; however, this doesn’t mean to say we don’t have the spice called curry. And that’s what it means to us: Curry is a spice. I love making stock, but sadly I have limited freezer space in my gas fridge and can’t save great quantities. But on this occasion I had plans for all of it and didn’t have to occupy precious freezer space.

For the stock:
- 1 chicken
- Olive oil
- 2 carrots, scrubbed and cut into chunks
- 1 large onion, quartered
- Handful of fresh parsley
- 2 sticks celery cut into chunks
- 2 leeks, green part only, washed
- 2 bay leaves
- 3-4 sprigs fresh thyme or oregano (or a bit of dry)
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary (or a bit of dry)
- 1 tsp salt and 6-8 pepper corns

Cut one breast off the chicken and reserve it for the tarragon chicken with pasta you’re making the day after tomorrow.

Cut the rest of the chicken into quarters. Heat the oil in a large soup pan and throw in the chicken pieces. Brown them thoroughly on all sides - this easily takes ten minutes, don’t rush it. When they are browned to your satisfaction, throw in the rest of the ingredients.

Stir quickly, then cover with cold water, 2.5 – 3 litres.

Bring to the boil, cover and let it bubble at medium heat for an hour.

Turn off the heat and leave it all to cool.

Let it boil fiercely, uncovered, to reduce it to about 1.5 litres. Adjust the seasoning.

Let it cool for about a minute before adding the curry and mixing it in.

Add a slug of the stock, stir vigorously until you have a uniform mixture. Repeat until the thickness of the sauce is to your liking. If you run out of stock, use milk or water.

Let it bubble very carefully (use a heat diffuser if you have one) stirring from time to time, for about 15-20 minutes.

Throw in the meat, bring it back to the gentle boil and let the meat heat through for 5 minutes. Then add a slug of cream, stir and adjust the seasoning.

Serve with plain boiled rice and a green vegetable.

Nothing wrong with Danish curry, I assure you!!

**For the curry:**

**Ingredients:**
- The chicken you’ve left ready
- 30g butter
- 30g plain white flour
- 2-3 tbsp curry powder
- 600ml stock approx.
- Slug of cream
- Salt and pepper

Melt the butter in a large saucepan without letting it turn brown. Add the flour and stir well. Let it cook for about a minute before adding the curry and mixing it in.

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**Which Came First? The Chicken or the Tomato?**

I adore chicken, and the list of things you can do with it is endless. The tomato is my favourite ‘vegetable’ and it makes a great addition to most dishes.

I have combined them both in three of this month’s recipes.

I’m also a great minced meat fan (as you may have noticed), but sadly it’s hard to come by minced chicken here in our corner of Spain. So I persuaded my man to buy me an old fashioned meat mincing machine with a handle for Christmas (we don’t have mains electricity) so I could make my own.

And I do, always using chicken breast, which is virtually without stringy bits which can clog up my machine.

I cooked three of these recipes on the same chicken; the mince came from a batch I had in the freezer.

This month all my recipes are for two.
Tomato and Chicken Soup

Day 2, and we shall now use the reserved chicken strips and 600 ml of stock to make a really tasty soup.

You can leave out the fideos (soup noodles) if you want, or use kidney beans or chick peas instead, or even just serve some crusty bread with it.

Ingredients:
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 600 ml chicken stock
- 1 tsp cumin
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Cold chicken meat
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp sambal oelek or other chilli sauce
- 1 tin chopped tomato
- Cold chicken meat
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 600 ml chicken stock

Crush the coriander and cumin in a mortar and toast them in a hot saucepan until they start popping; be careful not to let them burn.

Add the oil followed by the onion, garlic, tomato purée and chilli sauce. Heat up the mixture for 2-3 minutes while stirring.

Add the tomato, stock and balsamic vinegar and bring to the boil. Let it all simmer, covered, for 10-12 minutes, then return the meat to the pan and let it bubble for another five minutes until the meat is cooked.

Adjust the seasoning and tarragon and if you want to thicken the sauce, use a bit of mashed potato powder.

Serve with rice or pasta and something green for eyes and palate.

My German man is very particular about how I thicken my sauce. If I use a quick mix of flour and water it detects it immediately and I can only get away with it if I let the dish simmer for 10-15 minutes after the addition.

This is not always practical, so I’ve taken to always have potato mash powder in the cupboard. It serves as a perfect thickener and any flavour it might have is far more acceptable than the flavour of flour!

Day 3, time to use the reserved uncooked chicken breast and the last 300 ml of your stock.

I can guarantee you that you will make this dish more than once!!

Ingredients:
- 125g mushrooms, cut into chunks
- Your reserved chicken breast, cut into chunks
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- Salt and pepper
- 100ml white wine
- 1 tbsp butter
- Sauce thickener
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 300ml chicken stock
- 2 shallots, sliced
- Slug of cream
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- 3-4 tbsp dried tarragon

Season the meat with salt and pepper and tarragon and brown it off quickly in the butter in a deep frying pan. Take it out and reserve.

Throw the shallots into the same pan and let them get transparent before adding the mushrooms and frying a bit more fiercely until they start turning brown. Add the garlic and tomato purée and let it all bubble for a minute.

Add the wine and bubble for three minutes. Pour in the stock, add some tarragon to the mix and bring to the boil. Let it all simmer, covered, for 10-12 minutes, then return the meat to the pan and let it bubble for another five minutes until the meat is cooked.

Adjust the seasoning and tarragon and if you want to thicken the sauce, use a bit of mashed potato powder.

Serve with rice or pasta and something green for eyes and palate.
Meat Balls in Tomato Sauce

Ingredients:

Meat Balls:
- 250g minced chicken
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ onion, grated
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 15g parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 egg
- 2-3 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 tsp fresh chopped thyme or oregano and rosemary

Sauce:
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 100ml red wine
- 1 tin chopped tomato
- 200ml water
- 1 bay leaf
- 2-3 stems fresh thyme or oregano
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Pinch of sugar

Mix the meat with the salt. Add the next four ingredients and mix well. Stir in the egg and add the chopped herbs. Shape the mixture into 8-10 meat balls and stick them in the fridge while you make the sauce.

Heat the oil in a frying pan and brown the meat balls all over. Stick them in the sauce and let it simmer on for at least 15 minutes more.

Retrieve the bay leaf and herb stems and add balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper and sugar to taste.

Serve this wonderful concoction with pasta and extra grated parmesan cheese. Yum!

Restaurant Wine

Last year I attended a family gathering at a Surrey golf club. Arriving early, I went to the bar and ordered a glass of white wine. Shock! Horror! Seven pounds, twenty pence. Yes, an eye-watering £7.20 for a glass of wine! I told the barman that, where I lived, I could buy a small house for that. OK, that was a bit of an exaggeration but I pointed out that £7.20 in Spain would buy three or four bottles of an ordinary, but decent, wine. Admittedly, the wine I was given that day was a pleasant New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc and the glass was a fair size but even so…

Back in the day, it used to be the norm for restaurants to add a mark-up on wine of 100%. So if the cost to the restaurant was a fiver, the wine would go onto the wine list at ten pounds. Today, the profit margin is more likely to be 200% or even 300% which, I suppose, reflects the culture of greed which seems to be pervading life in the old country.

Because of the cost, restaurant wine has always been a controversial subject. I am a fan of the Australian BYO (bring your own) system whereby customers can take their own wine to many restaurants and pay a small fee (sometimes nothing) to the restaurant who supplies the glasses, opens the bottle etc. Obviously the restaurant forgoes the wine profit but does not have to keep a large cellar, print a wine list and tie up quite a lot of money.

Luckily, here in Spain one can enjoy wine with a meal without having to take out a second mortgage. There is, however, one area ripe for improvement, both here and in the UK; the dreaded “house wine”. Invariably this is the cheapest plonk on the wholesalers list and the quality usually reflects the low price. To my mind it would make more sense to pay a few cents more and offer something which the customer would actually enjoy. It is often reported that the second wine on a wine list has a higher profit margin than the rest. The thinking being that the average punter does not wish to appear stingy so avoids the cheapest wine and goes for the next on the list. I don’t know if this is true.....

The wine waiter will normally pour a small amount into a glass for approval. The reason for this formality is to ensure that the wine is not “corky” which happens when a chemical compound (trichloroanisole) reacts with the wine to produce a musty, dirty smell. It is harmless but, believe me, your nose will know if the wine is corky and it should be refused. In the UK about 70% of all wines now have screw-cap closures so the problem does not occur but virtually all Spanish wines still use cork closures.

In the current situation, it makes some sense to purchase groceries from a local shop rather than travel to a distant supermarket and one good everyday, reasonably priced red wine I can recommend is “Castillo las Veras”. Made from 100% Tempranillo grapes by Vina Tridago near Tarragona, the wine is fresh, lively and fruity. It is fermented in stainless steel and does not see oak. It is bottled in November and is ready to drink by August. It is sold in a 6 litre box for 12.50 euros which is certainly makes “house arrest” more bearable.

© Bill Riley
Every summer hundreds of people die from heat stroke and every year there will be more as global warming makes itself felt. A heat stroke is the sudden internal crisis of your body when your temperature reaches 40°C or more, and it can be fatal. Even for young people.

Apart from the obvious things we can do to try to avoid such a dire fate—avoid going out in the heat of the day, avoid strenuous exercise, using sun hats etc.—what we eat and drink can also help us stay on the right track.

Rule number one is always: Drink lots of water! Doctors reckons that in summer we should drink 3 litres of water a day. However, many people do not actually like drinking water, and then what to do?

Eating fruit with high water content will help top up your water intake. Water melons and strawberries are 95% water and 5% matter, and other melons 80-85% water depending on the kind. Other fruits also have a high water contents and it is always a good idea to add fruit to your diet.

Vegetables also have high water content; stuff like lettuce, cucumber, celery and radishes contain 95% water and the humble tomato 94%.

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The final L this month is for carefully cooked before eating, where the seeds, leaves and pods are a food plant in parts of Africa and Asia. Some parts are poisonous although it is used as ornamentals we grow in our gardens, all with white seeds. As with thousands of other plants, ripe contain the distinctive black and bright purple seed pods which, when ripe, burst open in response to rainfall, scattering the seed in all directions. When the plant grows new leaves, they appear from this centre crease. As the new leaves grow, they feed from the old leaves until they die off and can be removed. The whole plant is basically a water storage tank!

The flowers also appear from the centre. Once the daisylike flowers die the seed capsule forms and once the seeds are ripe, the seed capsule will burst open in response to rainfall, scattering the seed in all directions.

If you keep your Lithops indoors or in a greenhouse they will need pollinating either by hand or by insect as they are not self-pollinating. If seed capsules form you can lightly spray the ripe pods with water to encourage them to open.

They are a fascinating plant and come in various different colour schemes and everyone has a unique pattern to it. Lithops grow actively in late autumn and winter to early spring so this is when they appreciate regular watering and feeding. Once early summer arrives, they start to shut down a bit and go dormant. This is when they need little or no water.

A potful of Lithops in full flower is a sight to behold! www.cactusinspain.com

...Continued from page 33
Like so many other animals in the wild, the otter is far from as prolific in Spain as it used to be, but it can still be found in many rivers and streams – as long as the water is clean, and the river bank offers cover in the shape of forest, thick vegetation or steep rock.

Oters are territorial creatures and the males usually commandeer 15 km of river, the females about 7. Once an otter has established its territory it will allow no other animal to feed in its stretch of the river, not even fellow otters. It marks its territory with its excrements.

An otter’s territory is his kingdom, and outside the breeding season he has no fixed abode within his territory, he roams about up and down the river and sleeps over in his various temporary shelters. The Iberian otter is not a sub-specie, it is the same as the rest of Europe’s otters, lutra lutra. It has a large, svelte body which measures between 59 and 85 cm, not including the tail which measures from 25 to 60 cm, more than half the length of the head and body together. Its fur is thick, shiny and waterproof, brown on the back and grey on the stomach turning to a dirty white under the chin.

The otter has webbed feet; it is an excellent swimmer and spends approximately a third of its life in and under water. It can dive down to 20 meters and stay underwater for up to eight minutes.

Oters have no special breeding season although the majority of litters are born in spring. When the otter comes into season it changes its habits; it goes out more during the daytime and forgets several basic everyday precautions. During the night, the male makes very distinctive whistle-like calls to attract the female. Once they start the initial mating games playing in the water they stay together during the whole mating period.

The gestation period is 9 weeks. A litter typically consists of 2-3 pups, although litters of up to 6 pups have been observed. The pups do not open their eyes until they are four to five weeks old, and at the tender age of 7 weeks they start venturing out of the lair. Once they are ten weeks old they play confidently close to the den until mum decides it’s time for them to learn to swim.

To teach them to swim, she puts them on her back, swims to the middle of the waterway and sets them down. They then have to swim to make their way back to the shore.

She suckles them until they are 14 years old, and when they are six to eight months old they go off to start their independent adult life.

The life span of an otter is 8-15 years. The otter’s daily, or rather nightly, routine consists of an inspection of his territory.

He comes out at nightfall and starts working his way upstream, partly swimming against the current, partly on foot along the bank. He then lets himself get carried back with the current, only travelling on the river bank if he has to negotiate rapids or waterfalls. Night time is also playtime, and the otters often play together in groups. They have slides that they slip down until they splash into the water.

The otter’s diet consists of fish, frogs, snails, eels, insects etc. – and even the odd piece of fruit. They mainly go for sick or flawed specimens thus helping the surviving stock stay healthy.

They are much maligned by fishermen for taking trout, which indeed they do. However, they catch just as many or more of many other predators that prefer trout and devour many more than the otters do, so they help prevent overpopulation of those predators that feed exclusively on trout and their roe.

It is said that otters living in a river serves as a guarantee that its water is clean and unpolluted.

The Spanish otter population has not been present in south eastern Spain for many years, apart from some of Murcia’s rivers where this adorable water baby can still be found.
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Real Casino de Murcia

In central Murcia, not far from the Cathedral, is one of the most emblematic buildings of the city and indeed, of the region, of Murcia.

It is generally known as ‘El Casino’ which is the name it has always carried, even though after its restoration in 2006-2009 it had the title ‘Real’ (Royal) bestowed on it by the then king, Rey Juan Carlos I, and so it is really called El Real Casino de Murcia.

It is the premises of the institution of the same name, a private club constituted on 11th June 1847. It is generally known as ‘El Casino’ which is the name it has always carried, even though after its restoration in 2006-2009 it had the title ‘Real’ (Royal) bestowed on it by the then king, Rey Juan Carlos I, and so it is really called El Real Casino de Murcia.

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Although the Real Casino is a private club, the ground floor of the building is open to the public and it is the most visited monument in Murcia. It is also used for various cultural activities.

The purpose of the club as laid down in its statutes is ‘the promotion of social relations amongst its members and the cultural enhancement and leisure activities through all kinds of cultural, artistic, scientific and sports projects, and any other pursuit not mentioned above.’

After having fallen into disrepair, to a great extent due to the general decline that type of clubs went through at the end of the last century, the building underwent a complete renovation in 2006-2009. The club had various premises until it moved to its present headquarters towards the end of the 19th century.

From the Moorish Patio several passages and glass galleries lead off to other parts of the building.

Another area open to the public is the English Library which was constructed in 1913. The upper gallery is worth special notice. It is made from carved wood and supported by ornate corbels.

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The glass dome that covers the patio is the tallest part of the building. An Arab prayer is inscribed all around the perimeter.

The Moorish patio; it is entered from the main entrance and lies in extension to a small neo-baroque vestibule. The patio’s spectacular neo-Nasrid decoration was completed using more than 20,000 sheets of gold leaf.

The so-called ‘Congresillo’ is situated opposite the library. It was originally the meeting place for the city’s most influential citizens on the financial and social scenes. It is hung with paintings by local 19th century artists Obdulio Miralles and Manuel Picolo.

The Pompeian patio was transformed from its original appearance in 1893. It is neo-classical and has 14 columns of iconic capitals which complement the sculpture of Venus which is set in the centre upon a pedestal which depicts the life of Zeus. Like the paintings in the Congresillo it is the works of a Murcia artist, this time the sculptor José Planes. In the wings there are two beautiful reproductions of the sculptures of Danaide and Amazon, whose originals can be found in the Vatican Museum.

Next door to the patio is the billiards room from 1890. However, the most outstanding room in the Real Casino de Murcia is the dance hall, a high ceilinged neo-baroque space dating back to 1875. The ceilings are decorated with images from poetry, painting, music and architecture as well as portraits of distinguished citizens of Murcia.

The walls are decorated with stucco depicting dancing and the floor is inlaid parquet. Eleven chandeliers are suspended from the ceilings. They are adorned with 1,800 pieces of Baccarat crystal made in Paris in 1886. These stunning premises also offer access to an excellent restaurant which is open from 11 am to 12 am Sunday to Thursday and 11 am to 3 am Friday and Saturday. It can also be booked for special functions.

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It seems strange to be writing about airports at a time when the number of flights has been drastically reduced by the covid-19 virus! Never-the-less, here we go.

Tenerife already had an airport, but as we have already learned its altitude made it a difficult airport to land at and take off from. This problem had been recognised from the late 1960s but it was not until the mid-70s that the decision was made to build a new airport. As we have already seen it was whilst the new airport was under construction that the appalling accident at Tenerife North occurred. The new airport was officially opened by Queen Sofia in November 1978. The airport is named in her honour. By the end of its first year of operation, it had handled one million passengers; that number is now over eleven million per year.

The terminal is a fairly simple affair. The ground floor has all the main passenger handling facilities with 34 boarding gates, of which 8 are equipped with jetbridges. The upper floor is devoted to office space. There is also a basement which contains additional luggage belts for use during very busy periods. There is a single runway (07/25) 3,200metres in length.

During the course of a normal year, the airport is served by over fifty airlines. Of the top ten destinations, seven are in the UK. With the other airlines, I have given the number of scheduled flights expected in the last week of the month in which I am writing. For Tenerife South, that figure is 696 flights to 108 airports in 26 different countries. The largest number, 43, being to Gatwick. However, halfway through writing this sentence I learned that Spain had closed its borders, so that number is now over eleven million per year.

It was in the 1930s that it was felt there was a need for a landing strip for inter-island traffic, links to the mainland and to provide refuelling facilities for longer-distance flights. The first flight was on 24th July 1931. It did not take the Air Force long to realise that they could do with a military airfield for defensive purposes and they developed a site nearby. In 1946 it became a shared military/civil airport. Over the years a number of improvements were made and in 1970 a full program of domestic and international flights began.

Over the next 20 years, further improvements were put in hand and in 1991 a new terminal opened. This is now Terminal 1 and handles international flights. The former, now revamped, terminal is now Terminal 2 and is used for domestic traffic. The centrepiece of Terminal 1 is a mural created by local artist, Carmen Manrique entitled ‘Lanzarote’. In 2019, to coincide with the centenary of the airfield’s birth the airport was officially renamed in his honour. In 2002, Aena responded to the considerable interest in the island’s aviation history by creating the Museo Aeronáutico del Aeropuerto de Lanzarote. It is situated in the original 1940s terminal building which is just off the perimeter road.

In a normal year, 40 odd airlines use the airport each year, flying just over 7 million passengers in the last week of March. 577 flights are scheduled to 68 different airports in 13 countries. With 139 flights the busiest route is to Gran Canaria. As the majority of its flights are internal it is likely to suffer less than other airports from flight cancellations.

The residents of Ibiza noticed the way the islands were becoming popular with tourists. This was particularly true of Majorca and they noted how its airport was driving this development. Thus, work began on refurbishing the old military airfield. It began its new life on 1st April 1958 with flights to Palma, Barcelona, Valencia and Madrid. The facilities have expanded over the years and it now has a 2,300 metre long runway and in 2018 dealt with nearly 77,000 aircraft movements and over 8 million passengers. The largest number, 43, being to Gatwick. However, halfway through the year some 47 airlines visit the airport but only about half a dozen use it all year. This means that off-peak it is not particularly busy but in the summer it is one of the busiest in Europe. During the same time frame it scheduled to have 223 departures to 16 airports in 4 countries. The busiest route is to Palma Majorca with nearly a third (72) of flights.

Number ten of the ten busiest is back on the mainland at Valencia. There was a civilian field at Manises before the Civil War, but this was commandeered by the Republicans during the war. After the war, a civilian airport was developed alongside the military one and it was not until 1999 that it became fully civilian. In 2007 the America’s Cup was staged in the waters off Valencia and the airport received a major makeover in advance of it.

Technically, there are two runways but only one of these can be used. It is 3,215 metres in length. The other runway, although not in use, has a heliport at one end. It is used by 29 airlines, but only four of these are summer only operators. Air Nostrum and Ryanair are major users, although Ryanair no longer uses it as a hub following a dispute over subsidies! The last comparative figures give Valencia and Barcelona as major users, although Ryanair no longer uses it as a hub following a dispute over subsidies! The last comparative figures give Valencia as handling 63,000 movements and 6 million passengers, but in the three years since those figures were published the number of passengers has jumped to 8.5 million. In the coming week, it expects to have 530 planes departing to 79 airports in 22 countries. This is considerably more than Ibiza, indicating the less seasonal nature of its business.

At any one time, there are about fifteen to twenty aircraft in the air over the Spanish mainland (including those just landed or about to take off). This often include aircraft overflying the country, cargo flights, private aircraft, those doing aerial surveys and Ryanair doing training flights! This is not a great number. Now the USA is about 19 times the size of Spain, so on that basis, you might expect between 280 and 380 flights over the USA. Flightradar24 shows how many aircraft are in the air at any one time and how many are visible in your chosen view, but has a maximum of 1,500 for this size figure. At this moment (Sunday 24th May, 18.15 hours) there are 6,776 planes in the air worldwide, 18 over mainland Spain and 1,500+ over the USA. 1,206 of these were over the Eastern Seaboard. With this amount of air traffic, most of it internal, it is hardly surprising that the virus has spread comparatively faster in the US.

By the time I write the next article I hope air travel and life generally will be getting back to normal. Stay safe!
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Alfonso I of Aragon and I of Pamplona, the Battler

Alfonso I, the Battler, was born in 1073, younger brother of the heir to the throne of Aragon and Pamplona, Pedro I.

When Pedro I was king he did father a son and a daughter, but his son died on 1st February 1104, just ten months before Pedro’s own demise in December of the same year, obliging him to leave the throne to his brother Alfonso who became Alfonso I of Aragon and Pamplona.

Immediately upon his ascension to the throne, Alfonso I, who was already a battle hardened soldier, deeply religious and without any apparent interest in women, went on a campaign, his first of many, to help the ‘Reconquista’, the battle to expel the Moors from the Peninsula and spread the Christian word.

He conquered three important Aragonese cities in 1105 and helped the Count of Urgell win back Balaguer in Lérida, which forged to a lifelong friendship between the two.

After five years on the rampage, Alfonso I married Urraca, Queen of Castile, León and Galicia in 1109. Both shared the same great grandfather. It was her second marriage; she had a son, Alfonso VII, by her first husband, Raimundo de Borgoña, who had died in 1107. It was a political union which served to bring both kingdoms under one crown, and it was strongly opposed by various clerics and aristocrats; but the plan, originally a brain child of Alfonso VI the Brave, Urraca’s deceased father, to unite the two powerful kingdoms, went ahead and the monarchs prevailed.

During the first few months, Urraca and Alfonso fought each with their own army on the same side; but soon marital and political difficulties took their toll, and the marriage was an unending succession of separations and reconciliations. Urraca, 29 years old, passionate and jealous, was an unsuitable match for the Battler, who was happy amongst his soldiers, spending his life on a holy crusade.

So in spite of the inherent political advantages of the match, the failure of the couple to produce an heir and their opposing political ambitions eventually led Alfonso I to accept a papal resolution to annul the marriage on the grounds of their family connection.

Continued on page 48 .....
The siege of Zaragoza started in 1114 following the conquest of places such as Gurrea, Tudela, Belchite and Sarriena. It lasted until the city finally surrendered on 18th December 1118.

The Battler battled on and worked his way south from the White City, as Zaragoza was then called, conquering everything in his way. At one point a Muslim army marched on Zaragoza in an attempt to win it back, but they were stopped and defeated by Alfonso’s troops near Teruel.

Alfonso was encouraged to go even further afield by a message from Spanish-Roman citizens, residents of Granada, that they would help from within if the Battler were to try to conquer the city. In 1125 he started his most famous campaign which took him to Valencia, Murcia and Andalucia. Although he only managed a couple of important conquests, the expedition was a great success, because of the psychological impact on the Muslim population as well as the enormous loot and the no less than 14,000 Spanish-Roman citizens that followed him back and allowed him to repopulate the conquered areas south of Zaragoza.

Queen Urraca of Castile died in 1126 and her son, Alfonso VII, took the reins. His ambition was to win back the areas of Castile that Alfonso I had held on to after the dissolution of his marriage to Urraca. For once, the Battler let diplomats take care of the matter rather than warring against the Muslim army that were coming to the rescue from behind. Eventually, he was forced to beat retreat; the withdrawal was a disaster, and Alfonso was seriously wounded. Nonetheless, during the retreat the indefatigable Battler laid siege on Liziana in 1134. However, his wounds were severe and feeling unable to fight in battle, he retired to Almunente where he died on 7th September 1134.

In 1133 he laid siege on Fraga in Huesca, which was a strategic city with very strong defence works. However, the Muslim Almoravid army came to the rescue of the city, and Alfonso was forced to battle on two fronts: Against the city’s defending forces that were fighting from within and against the Muslim army that were coming to the rescue from behind. In 1134.

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A few days before his death, Alfonso I the Battler changed his will and left his kingdom to the Military Order of the Temple and the Knights Hospitaller. However, the will was in conflict with Navarro-Aragonese law and it created an extremely serious judicial and successional problem, so nobody was prepared to honour it. Thus, the kingdom of Aragon and Navarro was split into two and each chose their own king. The Navarrese chose García Ramírez, grandson of Cid Campeador. The Aragonese elected Alfonso I’s brother, Ramiro II the Monk, whom we portrayed shortly last year in our article on the famous painting ‘The Bell of Huesca’.
When your eyes are affected by allergy you should wash them with saline solution and rinse your eyes to flush out the allergens. Artificial tears help relieve dryness and prevent the ocular irritation provoked by the inflammatory reaction caused by the allergy.

The optician can help those that suffer from hay fever by explaining the correct ocular hygiene; opticians also recommend that you do not go outside without a good pair of sunglasses. Contact lens users should limit the use of the lenses and use prescription glasses instead as much as they can; if they do use the lenses they should combine their use with the use of artificial tears.

Contact lens users are the worst affected by this problem and they should exercise maximum caution in spring. Opticians recommend dispensable contact lenses for allergy sufferers; by using new lenses every day they minimize the risk of complications such as conjunctivitis. Also, they should use the lenses as little as possible, always with sunglasses and avoid open areas where pollen is rife.

Here is some advice for looking after your eyes in periods with a high pollen count:

1. If you use contact lenses try to limit their use if you have conjunctivitis, to keep it from getting worse. It also helps to use them only in the evening, which is when the pollen level is at its lowest.
2. Try to stay away from the countryside and parks, where you find the highest concentration of pollen.
3. When you travel by car, keep the windows closed.
4. Use sunglasses to protect your eyes from pollen and other particles that float in the air.
5. Avoid exposing yourself to dusty environments, domestic animals or irritants that can make the symptoms worse (such as smoky areas, swimming pools etc).
6. At home, keep the pollen level down indoors by shutting your windows and wiping the surfaces with a damp cloth.
7. If you use humidifiers and/or air conditioning, make sure they have special pollen filters fitted.
8. Maximize your personal hygiene. When you get home, shower and change your clothes; pollen sticks to your hair and clothes.
9. Wash your hands frequently.
10. Avoid rubbing your eyes.

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Vitamins and Minerals – A to Z

B is for B Vitamin Group

Of the 13 vitamins that your body needs to stay healthy and well, the B vitamins make up more than half of them.

They’re a group of eight vitamins that occur naturally in a range of different foods, but some of us may not be getting an adequate intake of every single B vitamin from our diets.

Find out how to avoid falling into that category, and why your health will benefit when you do.

What are the types of vitamin B?

While the eight B vitamins are often grouped together, they all have individual, unique roles in the body. But as a group they’re most well-known for helping the body unlock the energy it needs to function well, from nutrients like carbohydrates, fat and protein. The B-group vitamins have also been linked to helping reduce vitamin loss, take care to refrigerate fresh produce, keep out during food storage, processing and preparation methods.

Vitamin B1 helps support normal blood production and vitamin B3 to improve stress levels.

B vitamin foods

The good news is that there are plenty of vitamin B sources, as they are found in a variety of foods.

Even though finding one food that delivers a hit of all eight at once can be tricky, it’s relatively simple to create a meal that fulfills that brief. Plus, many foods contain more than one, and even multiple B vitamins.

Generally speaking, good sources of the B-group vitamins include wholegrain cereals, meat, poultry, eggs, nuts, fish, milk, legumes and fresh vegetables. As well, mushrooms, fruit and seeds are often rich in specific types of B vitamins.

But, while making a conscious effort to eat a wide variety of wholefoods will help to ensure you are meeting your B-vitamin requirements, it pays to remember that all eight B vitamins are water soluble and delicate, which means they’re easily destroyed or washed out during food storage, processing and preparation methods.

To reduce vitamin loss, take care to refrigerate fresh produce, keep milk and grains away from harsh, strong light and keep any cooking water from vegetables to use in soups and stocks.

How much vitamin B do you need?

Because there are eight different B vitamins, there’s no single daily ‘dose’ of vitamin B that you should strive for.

Instead, every single one of the eight B vitamins has its own recommended dietary intake, the amount of which will vary by age, gender and life stage – such as pregnancy.

The main thing to remember is that, with the exception of folate and B12, the body has a limited capacity to store the six remaining B vitamins.

It’s a fact that means, in order to maintain optimal levels of B vitamins, you need to regularly ‘top up’ your body’s supply, by making a habit of eating vitamin B rich foods every day.

Who’s at risk of vitamin B deficiency?

Eating a poor, unbalanced diet over an extended period may result in an inadequate intake of B vitamins, but there are other things that can increase your risk of experiencing lower than optimal levels, even if your diet isn’t lacking in vitamin B rich foods.

Drinking too much alcohol, taking the contraceptive pill, and getting older can increase the risk of becoming deficient in certain B vitamins, including vitamin B6, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin.

Plus, because the main sources of vitamin B12 are animal-based foods, people following vegan and vegetarian diets may find it a challenge to get enough of that particular B vitamin from diet alone.

Should I take a vitamin B supplement?

Requirements for B vitamins are generally met by eating a healthy, balanced diet day to day, however there may be times where you need to regularly ‘top up’ your body’s supply, by making a habit of eating vitamin B rich foods every day.

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By Jacey Canovas

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In House

Of a certainty we live in interesting times.
In March we wrote cheerfully about the joys of walking, and our article for April was planned as a follow-up. We were ready to share the benefits of Nordic trekking, and how it can fit into the sun-filled outdoors lifestyle of Almeria.

Who could have imagined that before the next edition deadline arrived, the roads, streets, hills, and ramblas would be forbidden to us, and we would all be confined to our home spaces?

No Go Zones
Amanda was in training for an upcoming triathlon, which means a strict daily program of runs, swims and outdoor cycling. They all shifted status to “out of the question”.

Gyms and pools were closed, the weight-management, keep-fit, and aquarobics classes she teaches could not meet. I could not walk up to her house for my regular sessions, nor could we share our weekly cross-country excursions.

What could we do?
And as we slowly emerge from the times of isolation, is there something we all can take from those long days of lockdown?

For us both it has been the heightened awareness that keeping fit and healthy is above all a decision, and it is a decision that supersedes circumstances.

Amanda began working out a strict in-house program, and I determined that even though I was unsupervised, even though it meant an hour of physical work with none of the mental liveliness we find in our chats, I would still choose to exercise.

Continued on page 56.....
..... Continued from page 55

So this month we offer the results of our time-out, and encourage you to look at them as pointers for the future, regardless of whether we are back in full social flow or not.

Mind over Matter

The first thing we did was to determine not to let external circumstances dictate our actions or attitude.

I can’t go out? That doesn’t mean I can curl up on the couch and binge-watch Brideshead Revisited, then blame my rapidly relaxing abs on the corona virus!

Amanda’s discipline and my creativity-under-pressure worked well here as we combined:

- A structured at-home exercise program.
- Awareness of exercises that can be included in everyday actions around the house.

For example:

The Julia Child Calf Raises

Calf raises are geared toward improving the muscles at the back of the legs. Try them anytime you’re standing still for a brief task such as waiting for the microwave to ‘ping’, rinsing out the teacups, or preparing a meal.

- Stand upright and relaxed with feet shoulder-width apart.
- Be aware of not locking the knees.
- Engage the core.
- Transfer your weight equally onto the toes of both feet and steadily lift the heels off the floor.

- Pause for a few seconds at the top of the lift.
- Slowly lower the body back down to the starting position.

Improved muscle strength leads to improved tone, definition and appearance, and also helps boost the range of motion and strength in the ankles.

* * Why the name? For those who have seen the movie Julia and Julia, I did this exercise while chopping an onion, and when it comes to speed-dicing I’m definitely no threat to Meryl Streep! (It took 20 calf raise repetitions to chop one onion.)

Bread Cardio

10 minutes of vigorous kneading registered on my fit watch as a resistance exercise that produced a good heart-rate peak level. Working the dough worked the arms and abs, and it also used up 67 calories - which I’m pretty sure I neutralised as soon as the bread came out of the oven.

Double Steps

Use the stairs - not just to go and fetch the book you’ve now got time to read, but as a definitive piece of exercise equipment.

It’s a bonus if when you get upstairs you forget what you came for, go down again and then have to repeat the exercise. (Who me??)

Stay moving, stay fit and stay well.

Comments and queries welcome: jonovas@gmail.com Jacey Cánovas is a journalist on a discovery journey about diet and fitness. Amanda Cantle is a qualified trainer, nutritionist and competing athlete. This article is © to them. Information and opinions contained in this article should not be used as a substitute for the advice of a licensed health care professional.
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Oh my God, I don’t know where to start.
During Cora’s many years as a popular scribe for Almería Living I often thought that probably the day would come when I’d have to write a eulogy for this most amazing and wonderful friend of mine.
Sometimes I’d try to word it in my head, only to have to stop after less than a minute as tears welled just at the thought of life without Cora.
And here they come again.
This is the hardest piece of writing I’ve ever had to do, and hopefully will ever have to do again.
Cora was born sometime in September 2009, and her official birthday was September 19th.
We first saw her in a feed store in Huércal Overa where we had gone for chicken feed with no intention of acquiring a dog; we already had our little, much beloved Chrissy.
But in the feed store, on the floor, there was a small cage holding two German Shepherd puppies. It was so little that they could only just sit up, and they couldn’t have been more than 5 weeks old.
One of them sat quietly looking wistfully about her, the other was howling her head off in protest at this outrage.
I’d always wanted a German shepherd (grew up with them) and suddenly we decided there and then to adopt one of them.
Unfortunately, there was no way we could have both – finances would not allow us to look properly after two more dogs, so we had to choose.
It’s got to be the noisy one, I said, she’s got spunk and will make a good dog.
As soon as we lifted her out of the cage, she shut up and snuggled into my arms. This was the start of what would be a lifelong friendship and soul love affair.
Cora settled into life at Cortijo Moreno as if she’d been made especially for us. She was a delightful puppy who loved to play, retrieve and practice training.
Because we live all alone up a track, and because work commitments didn’t allow me to take her out in the car very often, she became a bit of a hermit, only used to Chrissy, the cats and us.
So, when she was fully grown and one day met another dog at the vets, she went mad and barked and growled and generally made such a scene that I suddenly realised how I’d failed to socialise her.
She behaved beautifully at home but turned into a wild animal when confronted with other dogs.
So, through one of our clients, Barry Staerck, I got into contact with Chris who runs Back to Basics dog training club.
And since then we never looked back. With Chris’s help and guidance and a lot of patient, kind dogs in her class; Cora learned that other dogs were FUN and INTERESTING and FRIENDLY. And both she and I adored our regular Sunday morning class, which became the highlight of our week.

CORA’S DIARY
Continued on page 60 ....
I would just close my eyes and think of her and say, ‘Come on my girl, what are we gonna write this month?’ and inspiration started flowing.

Somebody once asked me how I managed to ‘think up’ all the stories. The answer was – I didn’t, I just wrote what I observed. And always deeply inspired by Cora.

And when it was suggested upon her demise that I might write Brutus’s diary – well, forget it. Cora’s diary was hers, and only existed because she did. She was so special.

If you have been reading her diary over the years you will know what her life was like, and I needn’t repeat any of that here. She had a happy, charmed life and appreciated every minute of it. Except possibly when you were away on holiday, shame on me! I wish I could have taken her with me.

However, last summer I noticed that she started walking funny and sometimes dragged her right back paw, scratching her claws on the ground.

I wasn’t unduly worried at the beginning; I knew from her various x-rays and blood tests over the years that she was in excellent health and had no sign of hip dysplasia or any other scary German Shepherd diseases.

I took her to her beloved Uncle Javier at Albanta vets in Huércal Overa several times and she had tests and treatment, but she just seemed to be getting steadily worse even though nothing unduly showed up on her tests.

We tried physiotherapy, a weekly drive of 130 km each way to Pet Wellness near San Javier. She loved going there, we’d play in a grass field belonging to the centre until Alejandro was ready for her, and he really seemed to make headway with her at the beginning.

He always commented on what a happy girl she was, and she patiently let him massage, twist, press and probe, gently letting us know when it hurt a little too much.

He ordered us exercises to do at home and also recommended tens, all of which Cora endured with her usual patience and good humour.

But sadly, as Christmas approached, I could tell that the brutal truth is that she had a degenerative condition of the nerves in her back that could not be cured or treated.

So, we kept her with us as long as we could – for as long as she stayed happy and positive and wasn’t suffering.

She and I were always happy when we were together, we bounced happiness off one another, and right up to the end we felt good just as long as we were together. But inevitably the day came when I could see in her eyes that the struggle to walk was taking its toll and she was losing some of her wonderful spirit, and we had to make the final, dreadful decision.

On Saturday 14th March we put her and Brutus in the car for what we told them was a magical mystery tour, and drove towards Huércal Overa. We stopped along the way at Cora’s favourite track and walked a little way while Brutus was running ahead.

When we got to the clinic we sat outside in the sun for half an hour, all the time just talking to her and making her smile and feel happy.

When we went in, Brutus and Wolfgang said a quick goodbye that did not let on that anything out of the usual was going on, and I sat there with my best friend while Javier fitted the IV. We were on the floor in the waiting room where she was always treated, it made her feel safe.

I couldn’t tell whether I felt I was helping her or letting her down when her movements started slowing, her breath getting shallow until she was finally, irrevocably gone and the beautiful shape of my bestest girl was lying there lifeless and empty, and I could finally let out my pain and rage at the unfairness of it all and cried like a baby.

Never in the days of her illness or on the way to the vets did I cry in front of her; she had no idea that her condition upset me and made me want to scream, nor what was going to happen at the vets. That was at least I could do for someone who had given me so much. I don’t know how I got through the first days, all I can say is thank God for lock-down so I didn’t have to face anybody or tell anybody or in any way shape or form have to be in public.

I apologize with all my heart to those that have kindly asked about ‘the dogs’ and whom I’ve told, ‘Oh, they’re fine’, lied in their faces; but the alternative is that you’d have had a blubbering incoherent mess in front of you if I had to tell you the truth, and I wanted to spare both you and me that.

Life is shaping into a ‘new normality’ on my home front as well as in the rest of the world, but God, there’s such a big empty gap in my house, in my life and in my heart. I wonder when I’ll stop crying.

Thank you for everything, Cora light of my life, you gave me ten unforgettable years and true, unquestioning love and loyalty. You were my best friend, my soulmate. I’m struggling on without you, and I know we’ll be together again one day.

Until then, woof woof!
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Driving Licence & ITV Information - lockdown Update

Driving licences
Spanish issued driving licences that expire during the State of Alarm have been given 60 days to renew once the status officially ends. The private medical centres have now re-opened so it is possible to go, by appointment, for the test to renew your expired driving licence.

If your licence expired before the state of alarm started then you should get yourself along to your local centre as soon as possible as you are not covered by the extension.

Those of you wishing to exchange your licence for a Spanish one can also make an appointment to get the process started. Trafico have also returned to work, although not open to the general public (at the time of writing), so new applications can be submitted through a business who offers the assistance, such as C.A.T. Services in La Alfoquia.

ITV Information
As the ITV stations were closed during the main part of the State of Alarm there has also been an extension to the expiry dates. These are more complex than the driving licence fixed extension period – see the dates below.

These extensions are more generous to allow enough time for all the vehicles to be processed alongside those that will need doing in the following months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expiry</th>
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<td>14 - 20 March</td>
<td>08 July</td>
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<td>21 September</td>
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Vehicles whose ITVs expired prior to the State of Alarm are illegal to drive and should be booked for the ITV as a matter of urgency. It may not be possible to go to your ITV station of choice because they are across borders or fully booked beyond your exemption date.
Hyundai has released the first details of a significant update for its Santa Fe flagship SUV, which brings a bold styling overhaul, fresh hybrid powertrains and an all-new platform in a bid to model the brand's new premium appeal. The seven-seater is the first model in Hyundai's European line-up to move across to the 'third-generation' architecture, which already underpins the US-market Sonata saloon. The brand claims the new model's premium appeal.

Hyundai says it has combined "rugged presence and sophistication". The front grille, which has been significantly enlarged to span the entire width of the car, features a new 3D mesh pattern and is flanked by a pair of distinctive T-shaped daytime running lights. The lower air intake sits within a new skid plate, while vertically orientated side vents aim to strengthen the car's "upright and robust impression".

The dashboard and centre console have been redesigned, and the new Luxury trim has been introduced at the top of the Santa Fe range, bringing bespoke 20in alloy wheels and colour-matching bumper and wheel arch trim, rather than the black items found on lower-spec cars.

With the introduction of the new Santa Fe, the whole SUV line-up will go on sale in Europe from September, with wider wheel arches and new alloy wheel designs. Inside, the new platform is said to allow for enhanced comfort and convenience over the outgoing car, with a focus on premium, soft-touch materials throughout. The Santa Fe will go on sale in Europe from September, with more official details to be revealed in the coming months.

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The New Santa Fe

The New Santa Fe
Puzzle Time

Reverse Word Search

Each of these circled letters is the first letter of one or more of the words on the given word list. Your task is to fill in the grid completely using only the given words. No word will repeat itself. Words can be positioned the same as in a regular word search – horizontally, vertically or diagonally, reading frontwards or backwards. Remember, any starting letter may be used by more than one word at the same time!

- Antagonisms
- Folks
- Plant
- Antic
- Handy
- Pointless
- Asset
- Haughtily
- Realm
- Bells
- Heath
- Romps
- Canyon
- Jaded
- Shining
- Childes
- Jams
- Spots
- Clash
- Lacer
- Starfish
- Claws
- Liven
- Steams
- Consolidate
- Lodge
- Untie
- Cranky
- Marathons
- Valentine
- Crusted
- Ninth
- Views
- Curios
- Nymphs
- Whimsical
- Dispassionately
- Parse
- Wicks
- Evens
- Pediatricians
- Yapping

Antagonisms

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New F1 2020 Schedule

Silverstone to host a pair of races on 2 August and 9 August as part of revamped European schedule

Formula 1 bosses have revealed the opening eight rounds of the revised 2020 calendar, which will feature a pair of races at Silverstone on 2 August and 9 August.

The European races are headed by a pair of races at the Red Bull Ring in Austria on 5 July and 12 July. They are the first part of a planned 15-18 race schedule that will also feature events in Asia, the Americas and the Middle East.

The two races at Silverstone will be held a few weeks later than the originally planned July dates.

As well as the double-header races in Austria and the UK, the revised calendar also includes races in Hungary, Spain, Belgium and Italy.

The opening races will be closed to spectators, but F1 chairman Chase Carey said: “While we currently expect the season to commence without fans at our races, we hope that over the coming months the situation will allow us to welcome them back once it is safe to do, but we know the return of Formula 1 will be a welcome boost to sports fans around the world.”

F1 chiefs added that “the health and safety of all involved will continue to be priority number one,” adding that “a robust and detailed plan” would help to maintain the “highest level of safety with strict procedures in place”.

The publication of the revised calendar comes after F1 bosses finalised agreements with the six circuits that will host events.

Revised 2020 F1 calendar opening events

3-5 July, Austrian Grand Prix (Red Bull Ring)
10-12 July, Steiermark Grand Prix (Red Bull Ring)
17-19 July, Hungarian Grand Prix (Hungaroring)
31 July-2 August, British Grand Prix (Silverstone)
7-9 August, F1 70th Anniversary Grand Prix (Silverstone)
14-16 August, Spanish Grand Prix (Circuit de Catalunya-Barcelona)
28-30 August, Belgian Grand Prix (Spa-Francorchamps)
4-6 September, Italian Grand Prix (Monza)

There had been doubts over the two races at Silverstone, due to the UK government’s incoming 14-day quarantine for all arrivals from overseas, but international sports teams are set to be given exemptions if they follow key guidelines.

Notably, the calendar also confirms the names of the extra grands prix that will be held at the Red Bull Ring and Silverstone.

Following the British Grand Prix, the second race at the Northamptonshire track will be called the Formula 1 70th Anniversary Grand Prix. Silverstone hosted the first-ever F1 championship event in May 1950.

The second race at the Red Bull Ring will be the inaugural Steiermark Grand Prix, taking the German name for the Styria region of Austria in which the circuit is located.

All eight events will also host rounds of the Formula 2 and Formula 3 championships.
By Emma Randle

The Charm of La Chanca - July 2019

It’s a beautiful summer’s afternoon, I’m awaiting the arrival of my third set of guests in almost as many days, and I’m feeling the love. La Chanca has its moments (usually just when I’m trying to get to sleep at night and loud music is thumping out in the street) but the days are actually very peaceful here. Sitting on my balcony it is as if I have the whole world before me, from the sea to the mountains, with the castle standing guard in between. In the distance the ancient city walls stretch out until they merge with skyline office blocks.

Occasionally a neighbour will pass by on the street below and if they look up they’ll call a cheriy good day.

In the distance I can hear the lilt of the gypsy mums calling to the kids or chatting to a friend and the birds are singing in the trees opposite.

It’s taken a few months but I’m certainly feeling a lot more settled here, able to enjoy the diversity and appreciate the unique beauty around me, and also the city life within easy reach.

There are of course still downsides, as there are in every neighbourhood.

The rubbish is really annoying so I’ve applied to the council for new bins.

There are a set of really small ones at the top of the street where the rubbish overflows and is eaten by goats (I dread to think what they are ingesting) or blows in the hot wind down the street to land on my door.

But most of my visitors have agreed that La Chanca has a special magic, once they’ve got over the shock of coming here.

My Spanish friend Juan Jo did point out there was a strong smell of weed. That combined with daughter Ellie (who is spending a few weeks of the summer holiday here) constantly asking me if I thought I would die from getting shot in the street brought a few doubts to my mind, but I roundly dismissed them.

Another day I cycled to work only to find that the electric motor wasn’t working! I was horrified as there was no way I was pushing it up the hill in 35 degrees, so I took a taxi home – only for Ellie to tell me later that she had switched the battery off as apparently that’s it up the hill in 35 degrees, so I overbalanced when I reached the kerb and landed sideways on the pavement (card still held aloft!).

So, the usual round of gasps and “Estás bien?” from onlookers, but I managed to get up unscathed with only my pride hurt and assure them I was fine.

It’s all a question of balance and I blame the combination of rucksack and cycle helmet. My brain can’t cope with the extra appendages.

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Personally I think I am safer here than walking down a dark street in Birmingham.

Not that that was a very bright thing to say to her as she’s off to university there in September (all being well with the A levels).

Anyway, I survived, nay, enjoyed three great years at Birmingham Uni, plus half my career in the city. Perhaps that’s why I’m ok living in La Chanca!

Meanwhile La Cycling Life continues apace, affording me much enjoyment as well as a few challenges.

I stopped to buy a stamp on the way home from work the other day. I haven’t bought a stamp for years but I fancied sending a postcard to an elderly friend of mine in the UK.

Well firstly who knew that you don’t have to lick stamps any more? I was there for ages balancing on my bike trying to get the wretched thing to stick on the card, until finally I realised I had to peel off the back.

Then as I was cycling along somewhat precariously holding the post card ready to post in one hand, I overbalanced when I reached the kerb and landed sideways on the pavement (card still held aloft!).

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Ah well, one can’t be clever at everything!
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