Welcome to our October 2020 issue of Almeria Living. The strange year that is 2020 continues and unfortunately more and more businesses are suffering as a consequence of the lack of visitors and shoppers so please, where you can, support your local businesses to help them stay open. I know all of our advertisers will appreciate your custom.

After a great sale week, our Harmony Charity Shop is now stocking a variety of autumn clothes and accessories - just in time for the chilly mornings and evenings.

Calendars, diaries and Christmas cards will be available from the C.A.T. Services gift shop this month. Our stock of christmas crackers, wrapping paper, table decorations etc will follow soon too.

Calling all potential scribes - I would love to hear from you if you have a story or two to tell or enjoy a special hobby. Perhaps you would like to tell us about your experiences here or your favourite places to visit in Spain.

Don’t forget to put your clocks back on Sunday 25th October and enjoy the extra hour in bed!

We hope you enjoy your read this month and please don’t forget to continue telling our advertisers that you saw them in the Almeria Living.

Take care and stay safe. Talk again in November - the magazine advertisers that you saw them in the Almeria Living. Thank you.

Karen (Ed)

What’s Inside........

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Travel - Day Trips & Mini Breaks
¡Bien Provecho!
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What’s Inside........

Error on New UK National TIE ID Cards

It has been brought to our attention that a few batches of TIE cards issued by the Foreign Office throughout Spain this summer have an error.

When printing the card they have categorised many who applied up to 11th September as Family Member of an EU Citizen by mistake.

If you have already received your TIE card, it should say on the bottom RESIDENCE PERMIT / TITRE DE SEJOUR.

However, if your TIE card says ‘TARJETA DE RESIDENCIA FAMILIAR DE UN CIUDADANO DE LA UNIón / RESIDENCE CARD OF A FAMILY MEMBER OF A UNIón CITIZEN and you are a UK Citizen, you have been affected by this error.

The Oficina de Extranjero in Almeria have been in touch with us and issued a letter confirming that you are not required to take any action so long as all other information is correct.

If however, you do decide to have this corrected, you will need to, once again, present yourself with your passport and TIE card by appointment in Almeria.

You will be fingerprinted again because they do not keep your fingerprints on file (unless you are a criminal!). As before, you will be given another appointment in about 5 weeks to collect the reprinted card.

A further request from the Foreigner’s Office have asked people not to take action at this time because they are already under a great deal of pressure dealing with all the new applications that need to be processed before the end of the year.

If you would like a copy of the letter that we have also translated into English then please contact us at C.A.T. Services.

Non-Resident Certificate

From the New Year, those UK Citizens who do not have residency that will be making the most of the 90 days allowed in Spain (in rolling 100 days) are recommended to obtain a Non-Resident Certificate from your local Foreign Office to prove your status in Spain.

Primarily, this certificate will help explain your situation when dealing with Spanish Police when questioned regarding driving a UK plated vehicle or a Spanish vehicle without having residency or a Spanish Driving Licence.

This certificate can also be presented to the Spanish authorities for tax exemptions purposes in order to prove you are not a resident and therefore only liable to non-resident tax returns in Spain (if a property owner).

If you would like assistance to obtain this certificate then contact C.A.T. Services for further information.
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in Las Palmas

Las Palmas is the easternmost of the two provinces that constitute the autonomous region of Canarias. It borders on the province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife to the west, and the Atlantic Ocean on all other sides.

Las Palmas consists of the islands of Gran Canaria, Fuerteventura, Lanzarote and La Graciosa as well as six small uninhabited islets.

This early touristic interest led to the construction of the first hotel in Gran Canaria, the Hotel Santa Catalina which opened in 1890. It is still open today, and after extensive restoration in 2019 it was awarded the title of Europe’s Best Historic Luxury Hotel.

This province covers an area of 4,066km² and has 1,120,406 inhabitants. Its highest point is Pico de las Nieves which reaches 1,956 m into the sky.

Like so many of the Spanish provinces, the province of Las Palmas was originally named after its capital. Since then, however, the capital has changed its name to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria was founded in 1478 by Juan Rejón, a captain in the army of the Crown of Castile, when he started the campaign to include the archipelago in Spain under the Catholic Kings. It is Spain’s ninth most populated city with 379,925 inhabitants and situated in the north eastern corner of Gran Canaria.

For the first many years the city’s only defence against pirates and other seafaring enemies was a small fortification situated in the mountains of the La Isleta peninsula, five kilometres away; however, towards the end of the 16th century, the increasing amount of attacks by buccaneers and foreign navies on the city led to the construction of several small fortifications in the city as well as a series of defence towers along the coastline.

Only one of these towers has survived to the present day, the Torreón de San Pedro Mártir, constructed in 1577. In the same era city walls were constructed which enclosed the sides of the city from north to south, and parts of which still exist to the present day.

In the 19th century an event of vital importance for the city’s economy took place: the granting of a free port. This led to a great number of boats docking there and sowing the seed for the city’s economy.

From being the most important tourist area on the island of Gran Canaria at the beginning of the tourist boom, the city today functions more like a metropolis and financial capital with shopping and services as its main raison d’être, and the touristic areas have moved away from the south of the island.

However, one of its beaches, Las Canteras, at the north of the city, is considered one of the most outstanding urban beaches in Europe.

Its 3.1 km of golden sands and a chalk reef that runs parallel along it at a distance of 200 metres offshore creating perpetually calm, warm waters, combine to make this a unique beach, and it receives hundreds of visitors all year round, keeping beach tourism kicking and alive in the city.

Antoni Plàcid Guigum Gaudi i Cornet was born in the province of Tarragona on the 25th June 1852. His parents, Francesc Gaudi Serra and Antònia Cornet Bertran, both came from families of coppersmiths.

He was a student at the Escola Tècnica Superior d’Arquitectura in Barcelona from 1873 to 1877, where he was awarded the title of architect.

In 1878 Gaudi won his first commission, via a competition, to design lampposts for Barcelona’s Plaza Real. He also undertook a number of commissions for furniture and altarpieces and a showcase for gloves for the Comella firm for the Paris Exhibition of 1878, and it was these works that got him a big break.

Fellow Catalan, Eusebi Guell, was so enchanted by the work which he saw at the Paris fair that he tracked down the artist in Barcelona and became Gaudi's close friend and an important patron of his works - notably commissioning the architect to design the Palau Guell and Park Guell, amongst other projects.

Some of his first works were designed in the style of gothic architecture and traditional Catalan modes but he soon developed his own distinct sculptural style. He went on to contrive highly original, irregular and fantastically intricate designs.

Gaudi was a devout Catholic, to the point that in his later years he abandoned secular work and devoted his life to Catholicism and La Sagrada Familia. He designed it to have 18 towers, 12 for the 12 apostles, 4 for the 4 evangelists, one for Mary and one for Jesus. Soon after, his closest family and friends began to die.

Gaudi’s later years were hard on the architect. His father died in 1905, followed by his niece in 1912, two close friends in 1914 and 1916, and finally his patron Eusebi Guell in 1918.

Always an ardent Catholic, Antoni became more fervently religious and gave up all secular commissions (after completing the Casa Milà in 1910) to concentrate on his monumental life work, La Sagrada Familia - a project that occupied him for the final 16 years of his time on earth and which he never finished (and still isn't finished now - there is hope that the church will be completed by 2026).

Continued on page 6 .....
Gaudi became reluctant to talk with reporters or have his picture taken and solely concentrated on his masterpiece, La Sagrada Familia. The one-time dandy allowed his appearance and clothes to deteriorate and he became yet more isolated from society. He died on 10th June 1926, just three days after being hit by a tram. At the time of the accident, no-one recognised him and because of his ragged look and empty pockets, passers by were reluctant to help but he was eventually taken to a pauper's hospital in Barcelona. He is buried in the midst of La Sagrada Familia.

Gaudi's originality was at first ridiculed by his peers. Indeed, he was first only supported by the rich industrialist Eusebi Güell. His fellow citizens referred to the Casa Milà as La Pedrera ("the quarry"). George Orwell, who stayed in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War, admittedly loathed his work. As time passed, though, his work became more famous and he stands as one of history's most original architects.

Throughout his life, Gaudi studied nature's angles and curves and incorporated them into his designs and mosaics. Instead of relying on geometric shapes, he mimicked the way men stand upright. The hyperboloids and paraboloids he borrowed from nature were easily reinforced by steel rods and allowed his designs to resemble elements from the environment.

Because of his rheumatism, the artist observed a strict vegetarian diet, used homeopathic drug therapy, underwent water therapy, and hiked regularly. Long walks, besides suppressing his rheumatism, further allowed him to experience nature.

Gaudi loved for his work to be created by nature as he used concrete leaves and vine windows to create his ideas for him. His work is not just because of him but because of nature as well.

HARMONY
Charity SHOP
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Avda Andalucia 26, La Alfoquia (opposite Chippy)

The library & book sale will be open during October
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THE LIBRARY & BOOK SALE WILL BE OPEN DURING OCTOBER
Come and enjoy a cuppa and a slice of homemade cake!

HARMONY COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Gaudi's Significant Works

La Sagrada Familia
Gaudi's association with the architect Martorell landed him what was to become his most important commission which was designing La Sagrada Familia Cathedral. He began work on it soon after graduating in 1883 and dedicated the last 16 years of his life entirely to the project. The famously unfinished church is now the city's most visited attraction.

Gaudi was constantly changing his mind and recreating the blueprints for La Sagrada. Unfortunately, the only existing copy of his last recorded blue prints was destroyed by the anarchists in 1938 during the Spanish Civil War. This has made it very difficult for workers to complete the cathedral in the fashion Gaudi most likely would have wished.

La Sagrada Familia is now being completed, but differences between his work and the new additions can be seen. As of 2007, completion of the Sagrada Familia is planned for 2026.

Casa Vicens
Commissioned in 1978 and built between 1883 and 1888, Casa Vicens was Gaudi's first major work to be finished. A private house designed for the industrialist Vicens, this Moorish-influenced marvel can be found in the Gracia district.

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Gaudi......Continued from page 7

Casa Batlló
The local name for the building is Casa dels Ossos (House of Bones), and indeed it does have a visceral, skeletal organic quality. Built in 1877, it was originally designed for a middle-class family and situated in a prosperous district of Barcelona.

The building looks very remarkable — like everything Gaudí designed, only identifiable as Modernism or Art Nouveau in the broadest sense. The ground floor, in particular, is rather astonishing with tracery, irregular oval windows and flowing sculpted stone work.

It seems that the goal of the designer was to avoid straight lines completely. Much of the façade is decorated with a mosaic made of broken ceramic tiles (trencadís) that starts in shades of golden orange moving into greenish blues. The roof is arched and was likened to the back of a dragon or dinosaur.

A common theory about the building is that the rounded feature to the left of centre, terminating at the top in a turret, is the entrance to the dragon’s mouth. (Built 1906-1910).

Casa Mila - aka 'La Pedrera'
Casa Mila, also known by its nickname La Pedrera (The Quarry), was the last great work Gaudí finished before his death. Built in 1877, it was originally designed for a middle-class family and situated in a prosperous district of Barcelona.

The local name for the building is Casa dels Ossos (House of Bones), which has been plunged into the back of the dragon. (Restored 1905-1907).

Mushrooms
We all know that almost all mushrooms are farmed nowadays, and they are readily available all year round. However, even the modest mushroom has its season, and logically, seeing as it likes a damp environment, its season is autumn, when those that know about such matters go and find them in the countryside along with some of its more exotic cousins.

Like all vegetables, mushrooms contain many substances that are beneficial for our health, and as always, the best time to gain the maximum benefit from them is when the mushroom is in season.

The health benefits of mushrooms are comprehensive:
They contain selenium which is a powerful antioxidant which helps keeping our skin looking young. It also helps in the prevention of certain cancers and protects our heart.
They are also a rich source of phosphorous and potassium. Potassium is important for the growth, maintenance and repair of cells and tissue.
Mushrooms are bursting with dietary fibre which swells in our tissue.
They are also a rich source of vitamins and minerals.

Mushrooms are a versatile as they come; you can use them raw in salads, baked, sautéed, fried or in sauces, as filling for pastry, topping for pizza, or indeed, stuffed with a mixture of breadcrumbs, garlic, cheese and parsley. As so often, the only limit is your imagination!

¡Buen provecho!

Kim Clark
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Wine and Food
a marriage made in heaven!

By Bill Riley

The shortest and most succinct grace I ever heard at a formal dinner was “good food, good wine, good god!”

But what goes with what? Which wine is most suited to a certain food? Here are a few suggestions – I say suggestions because we all have different tastes and preferences so the following are only possibilities and none should be set in stone.

**STONE**

It has to be (in my opinion) a dry white wine, ideally with a touch of acidity to counteract the oils in the dish. From France – either a Loire Muscadet (not to be confused with a Muscatel) or a Sauvignon Blanc from either Sancerre or Pouilly Fume. From Portugal – a Verdelho from Rueda. I personally like the J.Fernando Verdelho 2019 which is delicious and only costs around three Euros.

**FISH**

Possibilities and none should be set in stone.

- a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, though I suggest you check the back label and look for a wine bottled at source – some are shipped in tank which is cheaper but the wine arguably loses a touch of freshness when bottled in Europe. From Spain I would choose a Verdejo from Rueda. I personally like the J.Fernando Verdejo 2019 which is delicious and only costs around three Euros.

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**RED MEAT**

Big, hearty meat dishes (like my Mum’s Kate and Sydney Pie) call for big, hearty wines. Most people in this country would automatically go for a Rioja but I have recently been disappointed with several examples of Spain’s most famous wine and therefore suggest either a Toro or Ribero del Duero. Both are rich, full wines and good value though it usually pays to spend a few extra pennies.

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**WHITE MEAT**

Chicken cries out for Chardonnay. If you are feeling rich go to France for a Pouilly Fuisse. If you have just won the Lottery, select an eye-wateringly expensive white Burgundy such as Batard Montrachet. The rest of us paupers will have to make do with a Chilean or Australian Chardonnay – and very good they are too. From Spain try an unoaked white Rioja made from the Viura grape (also known as Macabeo in many areas). Viura makes a very pleasant, easy-drinking wine but is best drunk young. From Italy, Soave is pretty reliable but make sure that the classification “Classico” or “Superiore” appears on the label.

**RED WINE**

From France there is no need to break the bank if you avoid the obviously better known regions and look for a single estate wine from, for example, Provence or Cahors. Cahors wines are usually made from the Malbec grape (known locally as Tannat) and are BIG, dark and fruity. From the “new world” I can recommend Australian Cabernet Sauvignon (the Yellowtail brand is great value) or try a Malbec from Argentina.

**PUDDING**

Obviously it has to be sweet. For Mister Moneybags the choice will probably be a luscious single estate Sauternes but there are plenty of inexpensive “sweeties” out there. Monbazillac is a cheaper neighbour of Sauternes - if you can find it. I also quite like, from Italy, a sparkling Asti Spumante - provided the dish is not too heavy. Many German wines make good companions to sweet dishes. Look for Spatlese or Auslese on the label. Or, if you are feeling really wealthy, try Beerenauslese or Trockenbeerenauslese which will do serious damage to the housekeeping budget. And, when those numbers on a Saturday night come up – look for a wonderful, luscious Eiswein (excuse me while I dry my chin). Be careful –

© Bill Riley
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What’s On - October 2020
Sat 10th Oct - SHARON ELIZABETH REGAN - 7pm onwards
Sun 11th Oct - REES - 4pm onwards
Sat 17th Oct - An Evening of CABARET
with DEBBIE DAVIS - 8pm
3 Course Menu inc. Steak, Salmon & vegetarian option
CAVA on arrival - 20€ per person
Booking essential
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Choose from 10 items
NEW MENU DEL DIA served daily from 1pm

The Chestnut

The chestnut group is a genus of eight or nine species of deciduous trees and shrubs in the beech family Fagaceae, native to temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere. The chestnut tree is native to Spain and has been cultivated in Andalucia since the 14th century when lands previously owned by the Moors were given to chestnut growers from northern Spain after the Christian re-conquest.

Today, the main chestnut producing areas of Andalucia are Malaga, where an early fruiting variety is available already in September, and Huelva, home to large forests of tall, ancient chestnut trees. Chestnuts are also widely cultivated in other parts of Spain.

On a global basis, about 500,000 tons of chestnuts are produced every year, 120,000 of them in Europe. Spain produces some 18,000 tons, mainly in the regions of Asturias, Galicia, Catalonia and Castilla y León.

The fruits are harvested from September to December, and the chestnut is considered a winter fruit.

The chestnut is a round, shiny brown fruit with white-yellow pulp. It is usually enjoyed roasted, but it has many other uses and presentations, and is, in fact, very versatile.

It can be eaten fresh, roasted or boiled; it can be bought peeled and frozen for cooking, or transformed into flour, confectionery, liqueur, purées and marmalades; one of its most famous guises is marron glacé, a chestnut candied in sugar syrup and glazed.

The chestnut is also appreciated for its health benefits. It is rich in vitamin B and phosphorus and thus helps keep the nervous system healthy. It is highly recommended for people suffering from physical and mental stress. It contains tryptophan amino acid which is relaxing and can help you sleep.

Be careful, though, you can have too much of a good thing, and eating too many chestnuts can give you indigestion. It is not recommended to have more than fifteen a day.

Unfortunately, the chestnut is also greatly loved by worms, and to avoid chemical residue, the cultivators try to limit the use of insecticides. The most favoured way of dealing with these ‘unwanted consumers’ is leaving the chestnuts in 50ºC warm water for 45 minutes, which helps control fungus and at the same time enables the producers to eliminate chestnuts with worms, as these will float on the surface.

Over recent years, the Spanish chestnut production has suffered from the influx on the market of chestnuts from China, which are sold at a price that is hard to compete with. True chestnut lovers will appreciate the difference in flavour, though, as the European chestnut, Castanea sativa is far superior to the Chinese genus, Castanea mollissima.
Moussaka

I know I did this just last year, but it’s aubergine time, and Karen and Clive came up for the nice meal we were supposed to have had together with Karen’s parents... who sadly were prevented from coming this year because of the pandemic.

Here’s to you, Celia and Colin!

Ingredients for six:
- 150ml good olive oil
- 450g onions, peeled and chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
- 900g minced lamb
- 4 tomatoes peeled (if you can be bothered) and quartered
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- Salt and pepper
- 150ml stock
- 900g aubergines, sliced thinly lengthwise
- 25g flour
- 2 egg yolks, beaten
- 400ml béchamel sauce
- 125g strong cheddar, grated

Heat 1 tbsp of oil in a saucepan and fry onions, garlic, parsley and meat over a steady heat until browned. Add tomatoes, purée, stock and seasoning. Cover and cook gently for 45 minutes.

While the sauce is bubbling, preheat the oven to 180˚C.

Place the aubergine slices in a large plastic bag with the flour. Shake well to cover all over.

Heat the remaining oil in a frying pan and fry onions, garlic, parsley and meat over a steady heat until browned. Add tomatoes, purée, stock and seasoning. Cover and cook gently for 45 minutes.

For the stuffing:
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 150ml good olive oil
- 2-3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 115g fresh mozzarella cheese
- 1 tsp smoked paprika

Put the casserole in a roasting tin with a little water and cook in the oven and cover with the stuffing.

Here’s an idea...

For the stuffing:
- 400g minced meat
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp fresh, chopped parsley
- 125g fresh mozzarella cheese
- (or grated cheese)

Halve the aubergines longways. Score the pulp with a sharp knife in diagonal stripes in two directions. Rub the pulp with the halved clove of garlic, thyme, salt and pepper. Sprinkle with olive oil.

Cook in the oven for about 45 minutes until they are done and tender.

Scrape out the pulp without breaking the shells. I normally use a melon baller for that. Put the shells on a baking sheet.

For the tomato sauce, fry the onion in the olive oil until they are transparent. Add the garlic and turn a couple of times. Add the red wine, turn up the heat and reduce it by half. Add tomatoes, tomato purée, 200 ml water and smoked paprika. Let the sauce bubble for at least 15 minutes.

Serve the aubergines with the tomato sauce and chunks of nice, chewy bread. I had done a particularly nice potato loaf which I toasted and it complemented the meal perfectly.

I had both some stuffing and some tomato sauce left over afterwards, and I mixed them and added a jar of haricot beans – and that did my lunch at work for two days. And it was just sooo yummy!!

Next month I’ll share the recipe for the bread – just want to perfect it before doing so!
Schnitzel with Potatoes in Cream

I found this recipe in a Danish food magazine, and everything about it appealed to me: using mustard instead of egg to get the breadcrumbs to stick, the unusual potato recipe, and fried corn on the cob.

So, no two ways about it: I had to try it, and I loved it! And I hope that you’ll try it and love it too!

Ingredients for two:
- 2 pork chops (you choose the size!)
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 50g breadcrumbs
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 25g butter

For the potatoes:
- 500g potatoes, peeled and cut into pieces
- 250 ml vegetable stock
- 200 ml double cream
- Salt and pepper
- Bunch of parsley, washed and chopped

1 cob of corn

Cut the corn into four pieces and throw them into a pan of salted, boiling water and let them cook for 4-5 minutes. Reserve.

Put the potatoes into the vegetable stock and boil them until they are tender, about 15 minutes. In the meantime, heat up the cream in a small saucepan and let it bubble until it thickens, about 8 minutes. Drain the potatoes and reserve some of the stock. Put the potatoes into the cream, season with salt and pepper and add loads of parsley. Add a bit of stock if the sauce is too thick.

Season the chops with salt and pepper and brush them with the mustard. Turn them in the breadcrumbs, pressing to make them stick.

Heat the oil and butter in a frying pan, add the chops and corn and fry the chops for about 5 minutes on each side and the corn until it’s hot and golden.

Serve the chops and corn with the potatoes. This really is a winner!

It’s All Greek to Me!

I’ve noticed on my travels on the internet and in cook books and magazines that ‘street food’ has become quite a popular concept. Gyros comes from the Greek γύρος, which means ‘to turn’. And it is traditionally made on a vertical, turning rotisserie, and nowadays you see gyros turning in most self-respecting kebab joints.

But I’m a cheat. I shamelessly fried mine in a frying pan, and took short cuts on the spices – and it came out wonderful and very authentic.

I did Greek potato wedges in the oven to go with it.

Not the last time I’ve done that! (And even if I wanted it to be, my man wouldn’t allow it!)

Ingredients for two:
- 300g cabeza de lomo, cut into small pieces (1x1cm)
- Salt and pepper
- 1½ tbsp olive oil
- 3 tsp garam masala (or to taste)
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 150ml lamb or chicken stock

Greek Potatoes:
- 6-700g potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp oregano (or to taste)

Mix the potatoes with the other ingredients and put them on a baking sheet with baking paper. Cook them in the oven at 225ºC for about 45 minutes, until they have taken a bit of colour and are done.

Season the meat with salt and pepper. Heat up the olive oil in a frying pan and throw in the meat. Brown it over a good heat, stirring.

Throw in the garam masala and the garlic and let it cook along for a couple of minutes before adding the stock.

Cover and let it bubble over a low heat for 30+ minutes, until the meat is very tender.

Serve the meat and the potatoes with tzatziki and, if you want it more healthy and less ‘streety’, a nice salad.
**Cute and Unusual Pets**

When we decided to do a small feature on unusual pets, our research brought up subjects such as tarantulas and boa constrictors.

So we narrowed the scope and added ‘cute’ – and it became a much more attractive article to write. And hopefully to read, too!

**Miniature Donkey**

Mini donkeys are soft and adorable, and like all hooved creatures they are flock animals; so if you decide that this is the pet for you, prepare to get two as all donkeys, miniature or otherwise, get sad and depressed if they don’t have a pal.

They are great with kids, and due to their size, a couple would easily fit into your back garden.

Do not be fooled by the adjective ‘miniature’ though – they may be small compared to ordinary donkeys, but they do grow up to a meter in height and can weigh up to 135 kilos.

**Hedgehog**

In spite of being infamous for their spikes, hedgehogs are actually very friendly little beings. They make great domestic animals being low maintenance and very calm. But they do require a lot of attention.

Make sure you spend lots of time with your hedgehog right from the start; they are quick to roll into prickly little balls if they feel threatened, so it is important to make them feel safe and confident in your company – otherwise you will be spending a long time looking at an unfriendly back!

The hedgehogs we observe in nature are very quiet – understandably, since they are prey animals in the wild and are easily startled. Like the hedgehog, they are nocturnal, so be prepared for some high level activity just when you want to sleep the most.

When he lets you.

They are true escape artists, and you must make sure to have a safe place to keep them; if not, they’ll soon be off out looking for new adventures!

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In spite of the name they are prey animals in the wild and are easily startled. Like the hedgehog, they are nocturnal, so be prepared for some high level activity just when you want to sleep the most.

The fennec foxes are also called fennec foxes because of their small size, a couple would easily fit into your back garden.

Do not be fooled by the adjective ‘miniature’ though – they may be small compared to ordinary donkeys, but they do grow up to a meter in height and can weigh up to 135 kilos.

**Fennec Fox**

Normally foxes do not make good pets, but the fennec fox will make a great domestic animal for people who do not have an excessive need to be forever cuddling their pet. But this little lively chihuahua like fellow with his oversize ears is a joy to watch and play with when he lets you.

The fennec foxes are from the Sahara Desert where they live in small groups. However, in captivity these little animals are quite happy to play and mess about on their own, although they will occasionally enjoy a good game of fetching with you.

In spite of the name they are prey animals in the wild and are easily startled. Like the hedgehog, they are nocturnal, so be prepared for some high level activity just when you want to sleep the most.

**Miniature Goat**

Miniature goats are great fun, but high maintenance. They may be small, but they make large noises and are very vocal.

Pygmy goats, as they are also called, make great pets for people of all ages, from children to the elderly. They don’t scratch, kick or bite and are very safe to be around.

They are friendly, easy to handle, and they love to play - and you should always have more than one. Goats do not like being on their own!

However, they are true escape artists, and you must make sure to have a safe place to keep them; if not, they’ll soon be off out looking for new adventures!
Curious and unusual plants are sometimes offered for sale in Spanish garden centres, not often enough in my opinion, and Pitcher Plants certainly fit both descriptions!

The species most commonly seen here is a variety of Nepenthes with fairly large, hanging cups. Many are vine-like and appreciate some sort of support or they can also be left to hang down or trail. Pitchers are basically tropical plants, coming from damp, humid areas of South America, Asia and Australia. They prefer a damp atmosphere, good light but not direct, hot sun and should never be allowed to dry out completely.

If they need repotting, a good soil mix is sphagnum moss, perlite, pine bark, grit with a good handful of regular potting compost, preferably in a plastic pot, not clay. The mix needs to be free draining so that the roots don’t get a chance to stagnate. If the pitchers are empty, top them up to no more than ¾ full of pure rainwater, distilled water or purified water. Often tap water contains too much salt which can be lethal to the plant.

If they don’t get the required humidity, they stop producing pitchers. The pitchers are actually modified leaves. Insects are attracted to their doom by nectar produced by the pitcher as well as the colour of the pitcher itself. The edge or lip of the pitcher is slippery, as is the inside, so any insect that does land there, pretty much seals its own fate.

Another type of Pitcher plant is the Sarracenia. These too are scarce here but can be bought online or sown from seed. They are native to North America so grow well here but won’t, of course, be happy with drought conditions. Like most members of this group of plants, they need moist conditions.

Continued on page 22.....
a paralysing toxin called coniin which helps them overcome unwary
pieces of meat!! They eat insects! One species of Sarracenia produces
their way into the pitcher. Avoid the temptation to feed them
They eat insects of all kinds that are fortunate or unfortunate enough
where you live.

This poison is also found in the Hemlock plant, from which
Socrates is supposed to have died. As the pitchers have water in
them, they are always an attraction and temptation to wasps. Wasps
have powerful jaws for shredding wood to build their nests so the
green flesh of a pitcher presents no problems whatsoever. I have
often found holes chewed in my Sarracenia pitchers when a wasp or
two has become marooned and ate their way to freedom!

Another no no for Pitcher plants is the use of fertiliser. They get all
they need from their food. Their may be times when the pitcher
entices more victims than it can eat and the bodies pile up and rot,
causing the death of that particular pitcher. Just snap it off to remove
it. The Sarracenia flowers are just as amazing as the actual pitchers.
They usually form in late spring and look a bit like upside down
umbrellas on a long stem. Depending on variety, the flowers may or
may not be scented. Remember, if you do get any seed, it must have
a cold period in the fridge before sowing in Spring. Sarracenia are
perennial but go dormant in the autumn. Their leaves will die back
and the plant will sleep till spring.

Although not technically a Pitcher Plant, everyone I’m sure, knows
the Venus Flytrap. Most garden centres seem to sell them at some
point. They grow well and provide interest as well as catching a
few flies and mosquitoes before going to sleep for the winter. If
grown indoors, they will need a sunny windowsill. As with all in
this family, they need rainwater. Distilled or deionised water is OK
but never tap or bottled water.

If you see a flower on your Venus Flytrap, it’s best to remove it
as flowering and seed making will deplete the growth somewhat
and your plant will be weakened somewhat. When autumn/winter
arrives, the plant will need somewhere cooler in order to go dormant.
The leaves will shrivel and turn black and the whole plant will die
back to the rhizome. It can be re-potted at this stage. Perlite and
compost will be fine. These plants stay small so a large pot isn’t
necessary.

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Sarracenia come in wonderful colours, both naturally in the wild and
also from the skilful breeding of the growers as they hybridise easily.
When container growing in a pot or tub, peat moss provides a good
growing medium. The pot can be placed in a dish of water to ensure
humidity although that can be a problem here, depending on
where you live.

They eat insects of all kinds that are fortunate or unfortunate enough
to slip their way into the pitcher. Avoid the temptation to feed them
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**A Nerd Gets Grumpy**

By Mike Woolnough

Most of you will know that the Mrs. Grumpy articles which appeared in this magazine were written by my late wife, Marion. It will probably come as no surprise to learn that sometimes she got grumpy with me. (“Surely not!” I hear you cry.)

One of the things that made her grumpy with me was my responding to annoying Facebook posts. “Just ignore them, don’t waste your time commenting on them!” she’d moan. I am sure she was right, which was more than the posts were, so I thought I’d share a couple of them with you. Now you can moan at me and also hopefully not fall into the trap of sending them on because you thought they were clever, amazing or whatever.

The first one seems interesting at first sight.

“If you add your age to the year of your birth it comes to 2020. Even the experts can’t explain it! Try it!” Now first off I thought, “that’s interesting, there must be a mathematical solution to this.”

Then, while sitting on the loo (sorry, too much information! – but I do all my best thinking there) – I realised this is stupidly simple. Basically, the difference between this year and the year of your birth is your age, so 1942 + 78 = 2020 or 1945 + 75 = 2020 and so on, but it had me stumped for a while! Next year 1942 + 79 will equal 2021!

A more interesting one was doing the rounds in December 2018 (although variants popped up at other times). December this year has 3 Fridays, 3 Saturdays and 3 Sundays and this won’t happen again for 864 years! There are two things wrong with this. First off this was not true of Dec 2018, it was true of Dec. 2017 so it had been going on to social media.

The confusion often comes down to how to deal with the 2(4 + 2) bit. This has to be dealt with as a single expression. In words, it reads as “twice the sum of the bit inside the brackets”. Although the BODMAS bit suggests that adding and subtracting are done last, the B tells us that we have to deal with the brackets first. So we have 2 + 4 = 6 and twice that is 12. And 36 ÷ 12 = 3.

This simple problem has the internet stumped 36 ÷ 2(4 + 2) There are theoretically a number of answers to this, but only one is correct. The solution is down to something called “the order of operations” often encapsulated in BODMAS (BIDMAS or PIDMAS) Brackets, operations, divide, multiply, add and subtract. The O is sometimes replaced by I for indices. P is for Parentheses, which is a posh word for brackets! (Some people read “operations” for the O.)

The more glaring error is the 864 years bit. There are 7 days in a week, so there are 7 different days for the year to start on, and if it were not for leap years the calendar would repeat itself every 7 years. Likewise, there are only 7 leap year calendars and these are dropped into the schedule every four years.

The leap year ones come round every 28 years but the ordinary ones have a less regular pattern, they may come around after 6 or 11 years. Around 1900 the sequence was disrupted because 1900 was not a leap year. In fact, the 2017 calendar will repeat again in 2023, 2034, 2045, 2051 and so on. Where the 864 years came from, heaven knows!

Something else that Mrs. Grumpy moaned about was me responding to mathematical posts along the line of-
Rural Life in Medieval Spain

The Middle Ages actually spanned over ten centuries, from the 5th to the 15th, so in the nature of things, when we talk about what everyday life was like, it will be in very general terms. Nonetheless, as life was lived at a much slower pace than in the present century, change also came slowly and the day to day lives of the lower classes changed little.

Extreme weather phenomena such as flooding, droughts and hailstorms had a much harder impact than they do today and could often lead to periods of famine, although the impact of these has often been exaggerated in the telling.

The weather was much more relevant in people’s lives then, and the winter cold was much feared. Every house had a fireplace, but it was not usually enough to keep the cold at bay in winter; the construction materials did not include any kind of insulation. Those that had animals brought them into the houses in winter in order for people to take advantage of the heat they radiated.

The seasons dictated the agricultural chores and everyday life in Medieval Spain. The staple diet consisted of bread and wine. Wine was then considered nourishment rather than something to enjoy and use for celebrations; the number of calories from the unfermented sugars in the alcohol made wine a very nourishing substance.

The peasant’s life consisted in preparing the land for the sowing or planting of cereal and vine, and once they were in the ground, looking after them, clearing weeds and generally nourishing his crop until it was ready to harvest.

Once autumn had arrived and the agricultural tasks had finished for the year, time had come for the peasant to turn his attention to his home… Gathering firewood for the upcoming winter, repairing his dwelling, repairing and making new tools and preserving the food. We can thank medieval man and centuries of trial and error for most of today’s food preservation methods. Curdling, drying, curing, smoking and pickling are all methods that were developed in the Middle Ages.

Religious and popular festivals were enjoyed by everybody as a break from the daily treadmill and a chance to concentrate on something other than keeping a roof over their heads and their stomachs full.

Over time, however, the houses were divided into different rooms, each with its own purpose.

One thing that they all had in common was that every house had a bit of yard at the back which could comprise an orchard, stable, well, oven and/or the famous latrine.

There was not much furniture in the houses, just the bare necessities such as a table and benches and a chest for storing food or bedding. Mattresses were stuffed with straw, and the bed was a wooden board or several chairs standing in line – shared by the whole family.

As sleeping areas started being separated off from the rest of the house, these became the most private areas and where any objects of value were kept.

The kitchen area was always the most important part of any home, mainly thanks to the fireplace which, apart from giving off heat, was also a source of light. The wealthier homes had all sorts of luxuries for their kitchens such as clay, copper or iron receptacles as well as tablecloths and serviettes.

Apart from bread and wine, beer was an important part of everyday nourishment. Other foods that were ingested in the homes were what people grew (vegetables) and kept (animals) and could acquire in fairs and local markets: meat, fish, fruit and pulses. Those that lived in areas owned by the king also had access to game such as wild boar, deer, hares etc.

It was at the table that the privileged classes really could show off their wealth; they celebrated great banquets in which, according to a recent study, each guest would ingest up to 3,000 calories!

The evening meal was the most important meal in Medieval Spain, and Sunday was the most important day. That was when the whole family would go together to Mass in their finest garb, and in the evening, they enjoyed the best meal of the week.

After Mass, people often went to the tavern where they were served food and wine while enjoying themselves.

There were several popular games such as card, dice or board games for the adults, and the children played ball or amused themselves with other simple objects. But when it came to entertainment, the centre of attention was on the travelling minstrels, and poetry was the population’s greatest favourite.

Religious and popular festivals were enjoyed by everybody as a break from the daily treadmill and a chance to concentrate on something other than keeping a roof over their heads and their stomachs full.
The Majada del Arce mountain is situated on the border between the provinces of Granada and Málaga. The vegetation consists of some clutches of grassland and small bushes which are used to the cold. At 1,800 meters above the sea it has scenic views to the plains of Alhama de Granada to the north and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.

A group of horses has made this remote and desolate area into their home; they and the hikers who cross their territory on their way to the La Maroma peak, the highest mountain top in the province of Málaga, look at each other, each wondering how the other got there…

This little herd of horses is the only flock of wild horses in Andalucía. It was spring 2016 when reports came in from mountaineers of the existence of 8 horses living near the Maroma peak at 2,006 MASL. They were skinny and in a bad way, but seemed domesticated as they approached the mountaineers in their search for food. It looked as if the horses had been abandoned there by their owner. More reports and complaints followed from passers-by, proving that it was he who had abandoned them. The Guardia Civil did investigate into who could be the owner who had abandoned the horses, but without the microchips it was practically impossible to find him, let alone proving that it was he who had abandoned them.

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The specialists from the ‘Refugio del Burrito’ decided that the horses would be better off left on the mountain in freedom. It is an area with lots of food, grass and water, and they would have a better life in that environment than cooped up in a stable.

They were not considered a risk factor on any other counts. They are not dangerous animals, and any main roads in the area were much further down where the horses never went, and the chances of an accident were practically zero. And none has happened.

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Mrs Worsley sat down without taking her eyes off my face.

‘Neila,’ she began. ‘How do you know what Gruff wants to say?’

What a funny question!

‘Because he told me.’

‘You can hear what he’s thinking?’

‘Yes, of course. Can’t you?’

‘You stupid mutant cabbage! What did you tell her that for? There’s my excuse gone; if she thinks I can understand then I’ll have to do what I’m told.’ He made a sort of snuffling sound. ‘And that’s not always convenient.’

‘Sorry.’ I was looking at Gruff when I said this. He got up and walked out of the kitchen.

‘No, that’s all right. Can you hear all animals, or only Gruff?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘What about cats?’

‘What are cats?’

‘Cats! Useless waste of space. But fun to chase.’ Gruff was standing in the doorway.

‘Gruff says cats are a useless waste of space, but fun to chase.’

‘Oh he does, does he?’ She looked straight at Gruff, who began barking manically. ‘You said the word ‘cats,’ that always sets him off. Gruff, be quiet, there are no cats in here.’

‘You watch it! You drop me in it any more and I’ll…’ He walked off.

Oh dear! I’ve done it wrong again. I felt myself going dark. ‘I’m sorry.’

She smiled. ‘Never mind, dear. You’re bound to find it hard at first.’ She picked up my sandwich plate and my cup. ‘Now what are we going to do about your bit of paper?’

‘I think we’ve got to give it to somebody.’

‘Who?’

‘I don’t know.’ A thought struck me. ‘But Kevin would.’

‘Why Kevin?’

‘Because I took a deep breath. ‘Because he comes from Tixif.’’

Mrs Worsley turned towards me. ‘I wondered. He’s a strange lad, but a genius with engines.’

‘Tixif is the best planet for getting anything fixed. They are all born as natural mechanics.’

‘Come on then. Let’s go and ask him.’

She bustled towards the door and stopped. ‘We’d better find you some clothes.’

‘I don’t need clothes. My internal thermostat regulates my body temperature, so I’m never hot or cold.’

She made a wry face. ‘I wish I had one of those. Save a fortune on heating bills. Come on.’

I followed her upstairs. You have to walk up stairs one at a time. They don’t automatically raise you up like the stairs on Notreally.

Then it all got a bit confusing. I stood still, and Mrs Worsley dressed me. By that I mean she put pieces of material on me, some just went over the top of my head, but others needed to go over my arms or legs. She tried blouses, but they were all so much too big that they slid off over my shoulders. Likewise skirts were hopeless, even if she put the waistband around my neck – she couldn’t do the waistband up tight enough, and they simply slid off me. It’s a problem being so small!

At last she seemed to be satisfied. She said it was a Parka – I don’t know. I had a hood, and sleeves which Mrs Worsley rolled up to make them short enough, and it reached nearly down to the ground.

She stood back and looked at me. ‘As long as you keep it zipped up, your hood over your head, and your hands and feet out of sight I think we’ll be alright.’

‘You look really stupid. Ask her if I can come too. Sounds fun to me.’

Should I ask if Gruff can come? Will Kevin know what my paper is? Why do I have to wear a Parka?
The Inquisition, in historical ecclesiastical parlance also referred to as the "Holy Inquisition", was a group of institutions within the Catholic Church whose aim was to combat heresy. Wikipedia.

The Spanish Inquisition or, Tribunal de la Santa Oficio de la Inquisición, was not initiated until the 15th century.

The Iberian Peninsula had been dominated by the Moors for centuries, in fact they ruled Granada until 1492, and there was large Muslim population in Spain. In some of the large cities there were also big Jewish populations, and many Jews held important positions, even at court.

The three religions had co-existed relatively peacefully for centuries, but towards the end of the 14th century a strong anti-Jewish feeling started penetrating the society, and there were several anti-Jewish demonstrations where many, sometimes hundreds of, Jews were killed.

This led to a large conversion of Jews to Christianity; before these events there had been a minimal number of converted Jews, or ‘New Christians’ as they were called; but in the wake of the violence the number of converts grew massively, and they got to play an important role in society, to the extent that they were looked upon with mistrust by Christians and Jews alike.

There are various theories about why the Catholic Kings decided to initiate the Spanish Inquisition; here are some of them:

- Establishing ‘religious unity’. One of the objectives of the Catholic Kings was to create an efficient state machinery, and one of their priorities was to achieve religious unity.
- Debilitating local political opposition to the Catholic Kings; it is a known fact that those localities that resisted the implementation of the Inquisition did so to further their own interests.
- Getting rid of the powerful converted Jewish minority. In the Kingdom of Aragon, for example, it was mainly members of influential formerly Jewish families that were processed and sentenced.
- Financial gain. As one of the measures that was taken against those that were processed was confiscation of their possessions, this possibility cannot be ruled out.

The Spanish Inquisition was authorised by Pope Sixto IV on 1st November 1478. The two first inquisitors, Miguel de Morillo and Juan de San Martín were appointed in 1480. At the beginning the Inquisition was limited to Seville and Córdoba.

Tomás de Torquemada, was one of the many members of the converted families who decided to join the church. He was Cardinal, theologian and prior of the Dominicans in Valladolid, which is probably where Tomás was born.

Little is known about Tomás’s early life, but he was prior of the convent in Santa Cruz de Segovia when he met Queen Isabel ‘the Catholic’. She appointed him one of her three personal confessors because of his ‘prudence, righteousness and saintliness’.

It was normal that such an appointment lead to higher positions and gave the appointee the opportunity to make powerful friends and alliances. And thus, in spite of his austere lifestyle and his discreet presence, in 1483 he was elected to reform the institution that was the Spanish Inquisition.

Continued on page 34 ....

Tomás de Torquemada
The Backbone of the Spanish Inquisition

Torquemada came from an influential Jewish family which had been established in Castilla for centuries and had decided to convert to Christianity two generations earlier. The rising social pressure upon the Jewish community in the 15th century led to the conversion to Christianity of almost half the 400,000 Jews that lived in Spain.

Tomás de Torquemada’s uncle, Juan de Torquemada, was one of the many members of the converted families who decided to join the church. He was Cardinal, theologian and prior of the Dominicans in Valladolid, which is probably where Tomás was born.

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Continued on page 34 ....
The Inquisition had been in existence for five years by then, but it had not achieved the goals the Catholic Kings had set, and there were still many undetected false converts.

The indefatigable activities of Torquemada ‘the hammer against the heretics, the light of Spain, the saviour of his country, the honour of his brethren’, according to chronicler Sebastián de Olmedo, caused thousands of people to be burnt on the stake, and the tribunals were extended to all over Spain.

The persecution of the Jews and false converts grew more intense, and in 1492 it was finally decided that all Jews should be expelled from Spain. The reason was said to be the bad influence the Jews who were not prosecuted by the Inquisition had on the converts. After drafting the conditions – basically choose between baptism or expulsion – Torquemada presented the project to the Catholic Kings on 20th March 1492 and they signed it on 31st March.

The fact that the Catholic Kings signed the order proves Torquemada’s strong influence, as it was an extremely radical measure that neither of them was especially eager to enforce.

On another occasion the strength of his position was demonstrated when he heard that a Jewish merchant had offered Fernando 30,000 silver coins to lessen his sentence. When he got word of it Torquemada appeared before the king, put a cross at his feet and said, ‘Judas sold Our Lord for thirty silver coins; Your Majesty is about to sell him again for thirty thousand’.

In 1494 Torquemada’s health started to decline and two years after he retired to the Santo Tomás de Ávila convent, which he had founded many years earlier. From there he kept dictating the orders of the Inquisition. He died on 16th September 1498.

His name has always been associated with a fanatic who enjoyed tormenting and burning people. Nevertheless, he was considered by his contemporaries as an efficient administrator, straight as an arrow and impossible to bribe. In his day he was considered virtuous personified, although with the eyes of today we see him as an extremely cruel torturer.
Located within the town of Albox just next door to Longos Ferretería, Amigos indoor market is home to over 35 independent retailers that sell a wide mixture of products, from gifts and handmade goodies to all the Asian spices you may need. We even have a brilliant barbers, bespoke artists and a masseuse.

With so many unique stalls in the indoor market why not come down and make a day of it? There is hot dogs and milkshakes with a place to sit and enjoy, and don’t miss the chance to try the cakes and pastries freshly baked from around the world!

There really is something for everyone, including ladies and gents clothing, all your pet supplies, your household necessities and bed linen and decorations and even a local florist. We also have a local Avon lady, and we will soon have a dog groomers open too!

We’re driven by the belief that you can only keep discovering if you keep looking... so we are always adding interesting new products and stalls. No two weeks are the same here so keep checking in to see what’s new!

The Amigos indoor market is a great place to shop, eat and drink or just take in the atmosphere! We are open Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm!
What is Happening in the Local Property Market - Oct 2020
By Voss Homes Estate Agents - Huércal Overa

September was another fantastic month in Property sales & rentals which meant that July, August & September were all record months for us and hopefully other agents.

I can hear some of you say…...“How can this be when I am getting much less viewings then before the lock down?”.

The answer is simple….The Covid 19 and the still on going Brexit situation has split buyers in to 2 teams. Team A are the “No matter what, I am going to Spain to buy a property NOW” people. Team B are the “I will buy a property in Spain but I´m still worried so will wait a bit longer but in the next few months I will get off my backside and go and buy that property” people.

Therefore, over the last 3 months and foreseeable future each property will be getting less viewings than you would expect. However, the people coming through your door are serious buyers so be ready.

Sales to Spanish nationals is also on the increase. We are enjoying selling more villas and country houses to the Spanish who now realise being stuck in lock down in a small apartment with little outside space is not much fun. The same is for our trusted collaborators on the coast selling many seaside properties.

Our prediction for the rest of the year and during 2021 is that demand will remain very high from both British and other nationality buyers. However, lets get your property sold this year so please make sure it is priced realistically to enable us to get these serious buyers through the door and beautifully presented.

Each month I like to say THANK YOU to certain people. This month it is to the estate agents who are giving property owners truthful, realistic and achievable valuations. I am sick to death of valuing properties correctly to be told that another agent has valued it much higher. Therefore, they’ve given them the listing or they still want us to market their property at the other agents higher, unrealistic price….Aaargh!

All this is doing is giving sellers unrealistic expectations and their property is going to be on the market for much longer than it should. Very often the seller ends up getting less money, but more stress than if they had marketed the property at the right price in the first place 6 to 12 months ago.

Property sellers:- Everyone thinks they have the best and most valuable property on the street but before you rush to sign up for the higher price do a reality check and ask yourself “is my property really worth so much more than everyone else around me” and then go with the agent who gave you the truthful valuation.
By Emma Randle

Former Costa Almeria News reporter Emma Randle embarks on a new adventure in the historic gypsy quarter of Almeria. Faced with the mid-life challenge of job loss and children leaving home, at the start of the year she upped sticks from her comfortable country residence to experience a different way of life. Over the coming months you can follow her journey, as well as learning about what Almeria city has to offer - its bars, attractions and colourful history. Her story continues......

Home for the Holidays

December 2019

I’ve said goodbye to La Chanca for a couple of weeks, swapping the view of the castle for the view of the Cariatiz hills. It’s Sunday morning and finally after a hectic few days I can feel peace and goodwill to all (wo)men.

I’m back home with an average of three teens at any given moment - ie Ellie and Alex and whichever friend happens to be accompanying them.

It’s a completely different life from my singledom in La Chanca and I’m happy to say I enjoy them both!

And for the first time in a long time I am experiencing the joy of being on holiday.

Often at the newspaper we were battling with Christmas deadlines or covering for colleagues who got in first with their Christmas holiday requests. Then I had my year ‘off’ so basically a permanent holiday from work if not from life!

But now, especially with the teaching job, I can really say, yay, I’m on holiday! Such a relief and I intend to enjoy every moment of child free/lesson planning free time.

So last month in La Chanca has been relatively drama free.

Ellie picking oranges at home in Cariatiz

I did fall down a drain as I was rushing down the hill that leads to the gypsy market. It was raining, and I stepped on a perfectly normal looking manhole cover only for it to flip up and plunge my leg down into its sewage filled depths. Disgusting.

A gypsy guy popped out of his front door opposite to see if I was ok, so once again I experienced kindness from the community. We all agreed it was a disgrace and a danger (I wasn’t badly hurt but someone could have broken their leg) so I emailed the council and I believe I saw them fixing it the other day.

But apart from that, the neighbours have been quiet, the street has been relatively clear and everybody has just been going about their own business.

No one even complained when I was practising for ‘Messiah’. I must have repeated the piano accompaniment for ‘Thus saith the Lord’ 50 times over two days – I was so afraid of messing it up for Barry Jobling and of course had left it to the last minute to learn it! (I need the pressure – 7 years of deadlines take their toll!)

Just to enlighten readers that don’t know the background, we performed Messiah Part 1 with VeraVoces choir (you can look it up online) and Barry Jobling is the marvellous director/pianist/singer who made it possible.

Although I have been too tied up with other things to be on the street much, Jeanne came for a visit and did some community outreach in going to tea with a Moroccan woman a few doors down. She gleaned a bit more background information on the community – apparently virtually all the Moroccans come from the same village in their country!

So now Christmas is almost upon us and my year in La Chanca is almost up!

Let’s see what my New Year review will hold!

Post script – as you know these blog posts are from last year....a month ago – eight months after the disgusting manhole incident – I received a letter from Almeria council confirming that the problem had been rectified and apologising for the inconvenience!

Ellie picking oranges at home in Cariatiz
LET US INTRODUCE THE SUNBRELLA RANGE!
This month we want to showcase our range of furniture made from the famous SUNBRELLA fabric. If you are looking for something up-market and stylish, read on! This furniture is mould resistant, water resistant, UVA protected, stain resistant and so easy to keep maintained! It also comes with a 3 year guarantee on the frame and against fabric tears.

On top of all that we believe the designs are amongst the most sophisticated you will find in outdoor furniture anywhere. So good, that you could even use it indoors!

As you can see from one of the photographs, SUNBRELLA is also available, as a special order, in a variety of colours in both the fabric and aluminium. We also have the ultimate in cantilevers, sunbeds and armchairs and other design examples to show you.

So, what’s keeping you? Come along and see this range for yourself. You won’t find this furniture anywhere else in Almeria as INSPIRED is the only retailer who stocks Sunbrella in this area.

IT’S NOT JUST A HOME ... ... IT’S AN INSPIRED HOME
Our aim is to always offer you the best service in quality garden and terrace furniture at the best price possible. Look out for our special promotions on our FB page!

"BETTER STILL, POP IN AND SEE US!"
As a movie fan I am always interested in the Golden Globe awards held in Los Angeles and in 2018 was intrigued about the winner of Best Director for the film called “The Shape of Water”. I hadn’t seen it at the time.

It was directed by Guillermo del Toro, who was born in Mexico but moved with his family to the US in the late 90’s after his father, who was something of an entrepreneur, was kidnapped. Fortunately, he was returned after payment of a hefty ransom, but Guillermo remarked that ‘every day, every week, something happens that reminds me that I am an involuntary exile from my own country’.

The Academy Awards are usually held in March so I was curious as to how he would get on.

Apparently, his interest in film making started as a child when he played around with his father’s old Super 8 movie camera. He used to make ‘shorts’ one of which was about a serial killer potato which murdered del Toro’s family, only to escape outside and get squashed by a car! This kind of set the tone for much of his later career.

As an adult, he went on to make a number of ‘horror/fantasy’ movies, with some success. Two in particular, ‘The Devil’s Backbone’ and ‘Pan’s Labyrinth’, set around the end of the Spanish Civil War and the beginning of Franco’s regime, received great critical acclaim. In all, he has received two nominations for Academy Awards, obtained three Golden Globes and a BAFTA for ‘Pan’s Labyrinth’. In addition to directing he is also a prolific producer. In his own words, “I am a lapsed altar boy. For eight years I did special effects for other movies until I got my own made.”

Another director who found inspiration from the Spanish Civil War is Pedro Almodóvar. He was born in Spain in a small town in Castile-La Mancha and nearly became a priest. His family sent him to Caceres to study at a religious boarding school and sometime later, they also moved to the town. However, Caceres had a cinema. As Pedro remarked, “Cinema became my real education, much more than the one I received from the priests.” In defiance of his parents, he moved to Madrid in 1967 to become a film maker and when Franco closed the National Cinema School, he became self-taught, doing odd jobs to support himself and ended up working for 12 years as an Admin Assistant at Telefonica.

Very much like Del Toro, he experimented with a hand held super 8 camera which he bought with his first pay-check from Telefonica.

His international recognition came in 1988 with his black comedy drama ‘Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown’ which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Further success came in 1999 and 2002 with Oscars for ‘All About my Mother’ and ‘Talk to Her’.

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I will take a closer look at some of these movies, (as well as Del Toro's 'The Shape of Water'), if I can find them and maybe I can squeeze another article from them. As I mentioned some time ago, it is a pity we don't get to see or are reluctant to watch more foreign language films. Perhaps it is because of the subtitles, but believe me, there is nothing worse than a poorly dubbed movie. Can you imagine John Wayne or Jack Nicholson delivering their lines in a high-pitched voice? Jack Nicholson in the voice of Joe Pasquale saying, “You can't handle the truth!”? I remember watching an old black and white film on a TV in a Hotel room while on a business trip somewhere. The original dialog was in English and could be heard in the background but it had been dubbed into the local language. Unfortunately, it appeared the TV company showing it must have been strapped for cash as the guy delivering the lines was speaking all the parts, including the women! After I had stopped laughing, I switched off.

Happy viewing!!

All together he has won two Oscars, four BAFTA's, two Golden Globes and a number of other prizes for his movies. If that is not enough he also has the French Legion of Honour and the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts from the Spanish Ministry of Culture. Phew! If that doesn't make you want to watch some of his work, nothing will! A far cry then from his first feature film 'Pepi, Lucí, Bom' in 1980 which he made for the princely sum of 400,000 pesetas. Certainly not a polished article and full of flaws.

Looking back very fondly to those days, Almodovar said, “When a film has only one or two defects, it is considered an imperfect film, while when there is a profusion of technical flaws, it is called style. Looking back very fondly to those days, Almodovar said, “When a film has only one or two defects, it is considered an imperfect film, while when there is a profusion of technical flaws, it is called style.

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Air Temperature Control in the Home

Winter is coming to Spain and it is important to know how to control the air temperature in your house, so you can enjoy a warm home when the temperatures drop and not pay too much. Here are some practical tips on how to keep your property warm during the winter:

Check the windows and insulation
Find out where the heat escapes from your home. You should plug any cracks or holes where hot air can escape and cold air from outside can enter. To fill the gaps, you can use silicone, for example.

Use weatherstripping for the doors
To avoid small draughts of air coming in through the doorjamb and to obtain a more effective insulation, maintaining a more suitable temperature in each room of the property, weatherstrip underneath and around the doors with rubber, silicone or foam tape. It is a very simple and effective trick.

Maintain a moderate temperature
Avoid raising and lowering the temperature too much in the house. Instead, try to maintain a constant, moderate temperature; this is the best solution for both your home and your pocket.

Put curtains in the windows
The thicker, the better. Although it is not common to find them in Spanish properties, you can hang curtains to reduce heat loss through the windows.

Cover floors with carpets and rugs
Fitted carpets or temporary mats will also help keep the temperature in your home pleasant. Bare floors are one of the main sources of heat loss in homes and there is no better way to avoid this and keep floors warm than by putting down a nice rug.

Light a fire
If you are lucky enough to have a fireplace at home, light it! Not only is it the cosiest and way to heat a house, it is also the cheapest. Remember to clean the hearth and chimney and check them each season before the first use.

Do not forget to ventilate the house
Even if it is cold, it is very important that you ventilate the house every day to clean the air. It is enough just to leave the windows open for 5 minutes.
It seems incredible that a year ago Olive Tree Farm was totally flooded out following thegota fria, where has the year gone to? We were ready for rain as usual, and we did get one evening of very heavy rain, but thankfully this time we stayed dry in the house. The olive trees really needed water despite regular irrigation, the fruits had started to look a bit wrinkled, but the amount of rain that fell has definitely spurred them on, they are greening and swollen. Just a few more weeks and we will know how much oil we get from this year’s crop.

Olives are a strange thing. When we lived in the UK it wasn’t something we ever bought. When we first came here, we thought they were pretty revolting to be honest, but as time has passed and we have tried different varieties, including our own, we have come to enjoy them. The oil however is what we enjoy the most. It is used daily in the farmhouse kitchen for many things and not just cooking. The oil is a little bit of medicinal magic! Plucked from the olive tree, the oil, taken daily, has been proven to have some interesting health benefits including helping with arthritis.

Up at the farm everything has been a bit quiet, nothing exciting to report apart from a few things that the birds have been doing which have kept us amused! The turkeys are one of the unexpected funnies. We hatched the turkeys out a few years ago with the intention of getting turkey eggs. Mrs Turkey however had other plans, laid 5 eggs and went into retirement. She struts his eggs and went into retirement. She struts his eggs and went into retirement. She went off Mr Turkey some time getting turkey eggs. Mrs Turkey however had other plans, laid 5 eggs and went into retirement. She struts his eggs and went into retirement. She goes to feed them, a flock of chickens all descend from the trees. It is quite a sight and a little eerie, but I suppose a nice place to spend the evening? Anyway, we will continue to make sure they are OK and not spending the night sat on a chain link fence?

The other strange thing is the chickens. Again, it is about roosting. A couple are totally free range and running around the olive field, the rest are all in their own pens, nice and safe and all have their own houses. Suddenly though, it seems the olive trees are in demand. Most of the birds are now roosting in the trees overnight. We aren’t sure why the sudden change in sleeping arrangements and what the appeal of a tree is compared to a nice house, but every morning as we go to feed them, a flock of chickens all descend from the trees. It is quite a sight and a little eerie, but I suppose a nice place to spend the evening! Anyway, we will continue to make sure they are in their pens and see if as the weather cools, they decide that their houses are not that bad after all?

That is it for this month, thank you for reading!

You can follow the progress of the family and farm on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/OliveTreeFarmSpain/ and Olive Tree Farm Pool Services on Face Book https://www.facebook.com/OliveTreeFarmSpain/.

That is it for this month, thank you for reading!

You can follow the progress of the family and farm on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/OliveTreeFarmSpain/ and Olive Tree Farm Pool Services on Face Book https://www.facebook.com/OliveTreeFarmPoolServices-297410807111334/ or contact us by email ... olivetreefarmlucia@outlook.com
How to upcycle a chest of drawers

Painting furniture is a great way to upgrade an old piece and give it a new lease of life.-

This is a great DIY project that can be easily tackled over a weekend. This basic wooden chest of drawers offers good storage space but needed a little facelift to freshen it up.

What you’ll need:

- Small Bristle Brush
- Two pots of 100ml Chalk Paint (colours optional)
- One 120ml tin of Clear Wax
- One tin of 120ml White, Dark or Black Wax (colours optional).

For this project we chose: Antoinette, Old White, Clear Wax and White Wax.

On this Chest of Drawers you can use the two colours selected to create a simple geometric pattern on the front of this chest of drawers. Painted triangles and colour-blocking have been on trend for quite some time now, and this is a look that is so easy to achieve.

Begin by painting the whole piece in Antoinette – focusing on the area that will be outside the triangle on the drawer fronts. The Bristle Brush is brilliant for creating the texture needed to make White Wax stand out.

Apply the paint thickly, moving your brush in every direction to create beautiful brush marks and to create a surface that Coloured Chalk Paint Waxes thrive on.

Once the paint is completely dry use masking tape to outline the triangle shape on the front of the chest of drawers. Using Old White paint inside the masking tape line, again using the Bristle Brush to create lots of texture.

Once the paint is dry, use a Wax Brush to apply Clear Wax to the surface painted in Old White. Wax Brushes are a great investment and make waxing so simple. A lint-free cloth is a brilliant alternative.

Work the Clear Wax into the surface and wipe away any excess.

Next, apply White Wax directly onto the area painted in Antoinette – pushing it into the crevices in the paint and surface, and then wiping away any excess. The longer the White Wax is left after being applied, the stronger the colour.

Experiment to find out what works best for you and if you feel like you’ve applied too much White Wax, don’t worry, the Clear Wax acts like an eraser and can be wiped off.

Once the paint is dry, use a Wax Brush to apply Clear Wax to the surface painted in Old White. Wax Brushes are a great investment and make waxing so simple. A lint-free cloth is a brilliant alternative.

Work the Clear Wax into the surface and wipe away any excess.

Now that Summer is waning (relatively), many of you will have one eye on Christmas lists and gadgets are a firm favourite among many.

One of the more popular items on the list will be Amazon’s ever-expanding Alexa-based Echo range of products.

Voice-controlled technology has been in development since as far back as 1952, when Bell Labs in the US created ‘Audrey’, who was able to recognise a limited amount of spoken numbers with 90 percent accuracy.

The desire for voice-recognition has been around for decades and we have seen glimpses of it throughout popular culture as anyone that has watched Star Trek can attest.

Voice control made it’s earliest commercial appearance, courtesy of Honda in 2005.

These well-meaning early systems were plagued by inconsistencies. Anyone that used one will most-likely remember shouting at it to call “Home” repeatedly. The stress it caused was more likely to cause an accident than using your digits to tap a button. The major problem that these systems had was the lack of resources and computing power to do the job properly.

The system was built into the car and that was the end of it. Today’s interconnected world means that a small, portable device such as an Alexa Dot has access to the processing power of a Supercomputer via the Internet or Mobile Networks. So how does it work?

First of all you will need an Amazon account and to download the Alexa App for your Smartphone.

You do not need a ‘Prime’ account to use most of Alexa’s functions but having one will grant you access to Amazon Music and Prime Video (Echo Show and Firestick only).

There are currently three principle variants: the Echo Dot (smallest and cheapest at roughly €30), Echo Auto (approximately €50 but uses your phone’s data at a rapid rate of knots) and the Echo Show (starts at €60 and has an LCD screen).

All three need a decent WiFi and/or internet connection to work properly. Once you have woken her up, your “command” is recorded and sent to the Amazon servers for processing and the result is spoken back to you by Alexa.

There is no current option to completely personalise the “Alexa” wake-up command; it is limited to one of few choice – Alexa, Amazon or Echo. This may be due to keeping brand-awareness.

It is, however possible for Alexa to recognise your voice and assign a different profile to each person (like having different PC user accounts).

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There have been a few hiccups along the way, mostly regarding privacy. True, this gizmo is constantly listening to you and there have been instances where a faux-pas has been made due to accidental activation in general conversation. This was a while ago and safeguards have been put in place to prevent further transgressions. Setting Alexa up can be a bit of a minefield as there are a few geographical limitations but as the Echo range has been available in Spain since 2018, the support is steadily growing. Most of the setup is performed on your Smartphone via the Alexa App (available in the Play Store).

For those of you that don’t want a Prime account, there are other options for music. It is possible to set ‘her’ up to stream Spotify or Apple Music, for example if you already have it. Many of you will own a Firestick and this can be controlled by your Echo device.

For most of us, that is where the fun ends, unless you have discovered that Alexa is not only tolerant but also diplomatic. Gents, you can be rude to her and she won’t walk for a week or lace your dinner with laxatives. Just saying...

Beyond telling you the weather forecast and playing music there are some quite interesting features. Alexa can control suitably-equipped lighting and home entertainment systems for example. Amazon in their infinite wisdom has decided to call these functions “Skills”. In reality, these are Apps/Programs/Applications that have been specifically written to work with Alexa. These “Skills” are not limited to dimming lights. There are Skills for recipes, banking, even to monitor the whereabouts of your car and how much fuel is in the tank! One of the more interesting Skills is the Shopping list. It needs setting up (again) on your Smartphone but it is possible (“Alexa, add mayonnaise to my shopping list”) to have your week’s shopping list on your phone (albeit one-by-one) without lifting a finger.

Most of these Skills are developed by third-parties. There are gaps (Netflix and YouTube are not directly available on an Echo device but can be called up on a suitably-equipped FireStick) but they will be plugged in time.

There is, however, one significant omission. In the UK, US & Mexico it is possible to make phone and video calls to any device – be it another Echo or mobile/landline. Amazon informs me that this service is not currently available in Spain. This is somewhat baffling as the technology is clearly capable. It is not much different in implementation to a Bluetooth earpiece, connected to your phone and that is perfectly acceptable.

Incidentally, Skype is available to use on Echo devices in Spain. I can only surmise that Microsoft have done an exclusivity deal with Amazon. There is a Workaround for this but as the numbers you would be calling are likely to be Spanish then it wouldn’t really work anyway.

Thank you for reading. I hope that the coming months are kind to you all.

Be happy and be safe! Adrian

A few months ago, I wrote about how we could all be subject to electronic eavesdropping and internet monitoring. That was relating, more or less to the public end user. When it comes to Government, Military and Corporate matters, that is frighteningly different.

A huge percentage of data communications used by banks, Military and infrastructure-control to name but a few, is carried out over the internet and therefore open to being hijacked, “sniffed” copied, modified etc... As technology moves on, the sophistication of these threats increases at a commensurate rate.

The attacks of 9/11, started a massive review of the ‘States and global Internet Security. The US Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnel, sat with George Bush for 15 minutes, post attacks, and bluntly told him this was just the beginning. He coldly explained that whilst flying planes into buildings was bad enough, what would happen as a result of the following: Mike explained that, hacking into the systems of one or two international banks, monies could be transferred, lost, redirected. Accounts could be deleted and it would be almost impossible to repair the damage. Confidence in the money market would vanish and a financial crash would occur. He went on.

The National Power Transmission is controlled via the internet. Say you were to hack into that, taking power stations off the grid and plaguing numerous states into darkness? This would make 9/11 pale into insignificance. To his credit Bush was outraged and set about a massive review and amplification of USA’s cyber protection. Countries and Continents hacking into and protecting each other’s secure networks is a multi billion dollar business. The US spends some 3-4% of GDP on it. China is at the forefront of military and commercial attacking. The US claim that the majority of attacks on its commercial and military networks come from the Far East.

In 2012 the US had some 1500 personnel with a budget of $350 million $ defending itself. However, it is said China has more than 10 times that resource. Let’s take a simple fact; Big companies such as Cisco as an example, who provide data routers which allow us to connect to the internet, and that resource resides.

The virus attached the web enabled motor controllers, commonly available, off the shelf units. The virus, called Stuxnet, was somehow allowed to get into the Iranian power plants network. Probably done by an innocent engineer downloading a so called “Update” (made to look like a normal expected Microsoft update let’s say) for his laptop. This jumped to a pen drive which at some point was connected to a PC inside the secure network. It worked and the desired damage done. A minor problem however, that has come to light, is that the virus has infected machines elsewhere outside of Iran and has to be hacked itself to be stopped doing further damage.

The whole thing is actually quite worrying. We live on a fragile edge with the hackers and counter hackers doing their best behind us. Just be careful what you write in your next email is what I say. And, if I disappear soon after this is printed, I have said too much.

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As this is my first article for this magazine it may be appropriate that I describe who I am and what I do; Blacktower Financial Management International Ltd is a 34 year old British Company, regulated out of Gibraltar, which has been aiding British Expats all over Europe to manage and increase their wealth and reduce tax payments all over Europe. We do this by means of using specially built products for these purposes, some of which give fixed rates of returns, others that are variable. We also specialise in pension transfers, if appropriate, to ensure your family gets the benefit rather than the pension company after you die. I have been licenced by Blacktower for 7 years this coming January and you will see me on their website under the Costa Blanca team section.

I am a qualified financial adviser and accountant and have been based on the Costa Blanca South for 14 years, however, I often find myself in Mojacar several times per year because my family and I love it, and have done for many a year, particularly in summertime with all the live music. As it happens, our friend Claire from Jersey has bought a business called Choice Rentals Almeria and is based in Mojacar at Local 88, 2nd Floor, Parque Commercial Mojacar, 04638, and this is opening on 1st October and is where I will meet clients on a regular basis.

We advise upon Spanish Compliant and Non-Compliant Portfolio Bonds and we are very excited about a new product that we have at our disposal that is more flexible and cheaper to run than any portfolio bonds previously. We will advise upon the investments to be placed within the portfolio dependent on your risk attitude, experience and requirements. Typically it will be a multi asset fund or several funds, and one we currently use has 1347 underlying assets i.e. it is extremely well diversified across many sectors and many currencies.

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*(note: 1.2% p.a. more than published rates above for clients invested over 5 years!)*

David Diggle C.A.T., DipFa TEL: 615 607 278 / 865 751 713 EMAIL: dave.diggle@blacktowerfm.com WEBSITE: www.theblacktowergroup.com

The above information was correct at the time of preparation and does not constitute investment advice and you should seek advice from a professional adviser before embarking on any financial planning activity.

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**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.

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

**Rosetta**

A Rosetta is made up of a centre coloured hexagon encircled by 6 white hexagons. To complete the puzzle, fill in all 7 Rosettes 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.

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

**Samurai Sudoku**

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

**Other Ads**

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  - Tel: 688 911 162

- **Centro Veterinario Costa Indalo**
  - Miguel Angel Rodríguez Reyes
  - Vet. COL-435
  - Tel: 950 475 213 or Mob: 605 495 017
  - Parque Comercial, Local 80 - 81
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- **Mojacar Estates**
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The Ever Flowing Fuente

The fountain has twelve spouts in front and one to the side, which feed into three basins. Perpendicular to these, there are three different channels to one side, and another. Each one fulfills a separate function. The site of the fountain is mentioned in old Arab writings, it being of vital importance for the main location of the village.

In olden times, the fountain was the neurological centre of mojaquero social life due to the importance of water for livestock, agriculture and a continuous supply for human use. Throughout history it has served various purposes, and has given rise to the development of trades such as water-carrier, washerwoman or irrigation-watchman. Nearby used to be the water mill, which together with the fountain, made this an area of socio-economic importance, which in turn was the basis of an important commercial structure.

In 1488 the fountain provided the historic background for the ambassador sent by the Catholic King and Queen to pursue a peaceful surrender by Mojácar. One can observe the commemorative plaque which recalls the interview between Garcilaso de la Vega and the Moorish mayor. The fountain was completely renovated in the 19th Century and had another makeover in the 1980s. The most recent works changed the fountain’s traditional appearance for a more modern look.

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Macenas castle

Macenas Tower, locally known as Castillo de Macenas was built in the second half of the 18th century, during the reign of Charles III of Spain. It is an artillery tower of the horseshoe-type for coastal defence.

In 1803 it was armed with two 24-pounder cannons on the roof. Originally, entrance to the tower was gained through a doorway on the first floor, accessed by a rope ladder, where there was a kitchen and living quarters. On the lowest level were rooms for gunpowder and storage.

In 1873 it was used by the Carabineros Corps and there was a house-barracks next to it. In 1941 it was ceded to the Guardia Civil. During their use of the tower the entrance on ground floor level was made. Macenas Tower now stands abandoned.

La Torre del Pirulico

Pirulico Tower, locally known as Torre del Pirulico, lies on a rocky outcrop near to Macenas castle.

It was built during Nasrid rule in the 13th or 14th century. It would continue to be used during the 16th century when it was incorporated in the chain of towers for coastal defense against Barbary pirates.

It is a round tower with a peculiar tunnel through its base. Entrance to the tower was through a doorway 7 metres from the ground leading into a small room with a staircase giving access to a defensive platform.

It was restored in 2009.

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New Tradition
Ruta de Tapas

Mojácar is one of many towns that holds a Ruta de Tapas event each year - typically the first week in June but after 2020 who knows. These events are held in the various towns and villages throughout the year and allow local bars and restaurants to showcase their favourite tapas dishes, including many local ingredients and along the coast seafood is a popular choice.

Visitors are issued with a ‘route map’ so they don’t miss any of the tasty delights on offer.

The word “tapas” is derived from the Spanish verb tapar, “to cover”. It is very common for a bar or a small local restaurant to have eight to 12 different kinds of tapas in warming trays with glass partitions covering the food.

They are often very strongly flavored with garlic, chilies or paprika, cumin, salt, pepper, saffron and sometimes in plentiful amounts of olive oil. Often, one or more of the choices is seafood (mariscos), often including anchovies, sardines or mackerel in olive oil, squid or others in a tomato-based sauce, sometimes with the addition of red or green peppers or other seasonings.

It is rare to see a tapas selection not include one or more types of olives, such as Manzanilla or Arbequina olives. One or more types of bread are usually available to eat with any of the sauce-based tapas.

The original tapas were thin slices of bread or meat which sherry drinkers in Andalusian taverns used to cover their glasses between sips. This was a practical measure meant to prevent fruit flies from hovering over the sweet sherry. The meat used to cover the sherry was normally ham or chorizo, which are both very salty and activate thirst. Because of this, bartenders and restaurant owners created a variety of snacks to serve with sherry, thus increasing their alcohol sales. The tapas eventually became as important as the sherry.

It has also been claimed that tapas originated in the south of Spain during the time of the Spanish Inquisition as a means of publicly identifying conversos, Jews who had converted to Christianity.

Since tapas often consist in part of ham or other non-kosher foodstuffs, the reluctance of the conversos to eat whatever tapas dish was offered to them could be taken as a tacit admission that they had not abandoned their Jewish faith, thus tapas were a tool of the Spanish Inquisition.

Continued on page 62......
Others believe the tapas tradition began when King Alfonso X of Castile recovered from an illness by drinking wine with small dishes between meals. After regaining his health, the king ordered that taverns would not be allowed to serve wine to customers unless it was accompanied by a small snack or “tapa”.

Another popular explanation says that King Alfonso XIII stopped by a famous tavern in Cádiz (Andalusian city) where he ordered a cup of wine. The waiter covered the glass with a slice of cured ham before offering it to the king, to protect the wine from the beach sand, as Cádiz is a windy place. The king, after drinking the wine and eating the tapa, ordered another wine “with the cover”.

A final possibility surrounds Felipe III, who passed a law in an effort to curb rowdy drunken behaviour, particularly among soldiers and sailors. The law stated that when one purchased a drink, the bartender was to place over the mouth of the mug or goblet a cover or lid containing some small quantity of food as part of the purchase and eating the tapa, ordered another wine “with the cover”.

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Amanda & I have been sharing the benefits of exercise in these articles since August of 2018. Now we’re doing what any athlete will do at some point - taking a refresher break!

We thought to bow out (albeit temporarily) with a random look back into the past two years.

A Flat Stomach

A question we asked early on was: If you could change just one thing in your appearance, what would it be?

The overwhelming response, from both men and women, was a wish for a flatter stomach and firmer midriff.

Amanda's advice is still the same as it was then:

"Health science is positive about this. Correct eating and exercise are the keys to fat burning. Research also reminds us, though, that there is no way you can target just one zone for weight loss. The body draws on all the available reserves when energy is needed. This means, for example, that sit-ups won’t focus fat loss on the stomach area.

"The way to restrain an expanding abdomen and trim down a waistline is straightforward. Deal with the body as a whole and invest your efforts in a balanced program of food choices and physical activity."

Exercise for Everyone

Regular physical activity has been shown to improve overall wellbeing and fitness, and to prevent - or even reverse - adverse outcomes.

Continued on page 66 ..........
According to America’s Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, “Exercise is a form of physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive, and performed with the goal of improving health or fitness.” There is no right or wrong form of exercise, but there is one that’s right for you.

Healthy Living

Think of healthy living as a life-long investment in yourself. While age is something that we can’t stop happening - and remembering that all injuries and persistent pain should be evaluated by a licensed medical professional - there are everyday lifestyle adjustments we can make in both diet and exercise.

Equipment and Exercise

From hand weights and yoga mats to Swiss balls and resistance bands, we’ve spoken about the equipment we use - and listed exercises for most of the muscles you can name.

- Core, abs, and glutes,
- triceps and biceps,
- quads and deltoids
- all got attention, with exercises crafted for the spritely and the stately.

Encouragement

And we encouraged you then, just as we do now, to:

1. Determine realistic goals.
2. Change what you can.
3. Don’t fret about the rest.
4. Remember that this is part of an ongoing lifestyle.
5. Be open to new ideas.

All the best to all of you and thank you for taking time with us. Special thanks to Almeria Living for the support, professionalism and kindness they have extended, & we hope to see you again in the not-too-distant future.

Jacey & Amanda

Comments and queries welcome. josnovo@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.
Folate is found in a wide range of foods including vegetables, legumes, eggs, and fruit. It is also known as vitamin B-9.

Apart from beef liver, meat is generally low in folate. Many foods are also fortified with synthetic folate, or folic acid.

Folate is one of the B-vitamins and is needed to make red and white blood cells in the bone marrow, convert carbohydrates into energy, and produce DNA and RNA.

Recommended intake
Folic acid is a vital nutrient. The recommended daily allowance (RDA) of folate is different for people of different ages, so you should always follow the recommended guidelines. Recommended folate intake increases during pregnancy and breastfeeding to fuel rapid growth and help prevent neural tube defects in the fetus.

The most common causes of folate deficiency include an inadequate diet, alcoholism, and difficulties in absorbing foods that contain folate or folate itself.

In addition, the body requires the conversion of folic acid to its active form, methylfolate. Genetics can occasionally get in the way of this conversion, which can lead to a folate deficiency.

Taking a supplement in the active, or reduced, form of L-methylfolate (5-MTHF) may help to make sure that the body is receiving folate in the most useful way. Speak to your doctor about individual needs and if a certain supplement is needed.

Folic acid supplements play an important role in ensuring that vulnerable individuals and those in greater need of folate receive enough. Increasing intake of folate-rich foods is also important as these foods typically also provide plenty of other nutrients that all act together to support good health.

Anyone who may become pregnant is recommended to obtain 400 micrograms (mcg) per day of folic acid from dietary supplements in addition to the folate present in a varied diet.

Benefits
It is essential to consume enough folate acid during pregnancy to help protect against miscarriage and neural tube defects in the fetus. Recent research has also shown that a father’s folate status before conception may be just as important.

Folate can help reduce the risk of depression. Low folate status has been linked to an increased risk of depression and poor response to antidepressant treatment. Folate deficiency has been linked to depression in people with epilepsy, and one study suggested that supplementation of the nutrient could help treat low mood.

Folic acid supplementation has not been suggested as a treatment in addition to the folate present in a varied diet.

Folic acid supplements have been found to lower levels of homocysteine and help maintain a healthy heart. As elevated levels of homocysteine are associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, some researchers have suggested that folic acid and B12 may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Low levels of folate intake are associated with an increased risk of breast cancer in women and several epidemiological studies have suggested an inverse association between folate status and the risk of colorectal cancer.

When taken long before colorectal cancer is diagnosed, high folate intake is associated with a lower risk of colorectal cancer.

Foods high in folate
The ability of the body to absorb, use, and retain folate varies between foods and is difficult to measure. There are 150 different forms of folate, and losses of between 50 and 90 percent can occur during cooking, storing, or processing. The best sources of folate are green vegetables, legumes, and liver.

In 1998, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Canadian government began requiring that manufacturers add folic acid to certain foods, including enriched bread, cereals, flour, cornmeal, pasta, rice, and other grain products.

The typical diet in the U.S. contains a large amount of these foods, making fortified products an important contributor to the overall folic acid intake. Other countries that require fortification of certain foods with folic acid include Costa Rica, Chile, and South Africa.

Risks
High levels of intravenous folic acid intake may cause seizures, and high doses of supplemental folic acid have been associated with an increased risk of the progression of certain cancers.

Dietary levels of folate have not, however, been associated with any adverse effects.

An intake of folate above 1000 mcg for adults or 800 mcg for those aged 18 years or under can hide a deficiency of vitamin B12. Vitamin B12 deficiency can cause permanent nerve damage and paralysis.

Folate is only beneficial as part of a wide-ranging, varied, and nutritious diet.
Glorious Glutes in Life and Yoga

By Jane Barraclough

Great glutes are not only for looking good in your shorts, jeans and swimwear. Your glutes are a group of muscles that play an important role in stabilising your pelvic region, enabling you to have comfortable mobility.

The gluteus muscle, commonly referred to as glutes, are part of a group of muscles that play a very important role in stabilising your pelvis and hips. Yoga, on a mat, on a chair or in the pool, can play a role in maintaining or improving gluteus function.

Gluteal amnesia is a term coined by experts in this field and refers to the effect of under or over using the glutes. An increasingly sedentary lifestyle can lead to an over relaxing of the gluteus muscles leading to gluteal amnesia; the inability to switch on this muscle group when they are needed. Similarly, if the glutes are over used in exercise including gym workout, yoga, hiking or running this can also cause these muscles to not turn on and off in a mobility healthy manner. Under or over active glutes can affect the range of movement in the hips and sacrum and cause a strength imbalance that can lead to instability and pain.

Let us look at each of the gluteus in turn to find out what their role is.

Gluteus maximus is the largest of the glutes group and the most important role in stabilising your pelvic region, enabling you to have comfortable mobility.

Gluteus medius is forward of gluteus maximus and is attached to the sacrum and the femur (thigh bone). This muscle plays a role in over the pelvis and thereby stabilise the hip and pelvic area.

Gluteus minimus plays a role in internally and externally rotating the hip and to move the femur away from the body mid-line and to cross over the mid-line, such as in a circular hip movement. As a group your gluteus muscles cross over the pelvis and thereby stabilise the hip and pelvic area.

Continued on page 72 ....

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Knees bend hip distance apart, heels hip distance
Lay flat on your mat on your back, relaxing your
glutes is stronger, whilst strengthening and
rebalancing.

Bridge pose variation
Bridge pose
This pose is the exact opposite to sitting. It is a
posture that can help you to work out which side
of your glutes is stronger, whilst strengthening and
rebalancing.

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Maserati has debuted its range-topping MC20 supercar. Set to rival offerings from the likes of Ferrari and Aston Martin, the MC20 packs dramatic styling and equally impressive performance. It is powered by a 3.0-litre, twin-turbo V6 engine which has been designed completely in-house. Producing 621bhp and 730Nm of torque, it is capable of powering the MC20 to 60mph in just 2.7 seconds and will do over 200mph flat-out.

The exterior design, meanwhile, was developed by Maserati’s own Innovation Lab which, the firm claims, has ‘one of the world’s most advanced dynamic simulators’. It means that designers were able to use virtual models to tailor the car’s aerodynamics before testing them in the real world.

The MC20 has been shaped with aerodynamics in mind, which is why it incorporates a clean, uninterrupted design - save for a small compartment under the armrest.

Elsewhere, there’s wireless smartphone charging, a drive mode selector, infotainment controls and even a handy storage mode selector, infotainment controls and even a handy storage

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Everything you need to know about the BMW 5 Series

The 5 Series is a pillar in BMW’s range of cars and has been for some time now. A consistent go-to model in the premium car segment, the 5 Series has gone from strength to strength as the years have passed, with the most recent incarnation easily one of the most impressive models to date.

The thing is, there is a lot to look at when it comes to the 5 Series. Fortunately, we have picked out some of the key things you need to know about BMW’s famous model, which is available as an estate or saloon.

There is plenty of choice when it comes to the 5 Series. One of the initial choices to make is between saloon or estate layouts. The latter comes with technology at the forefront. As a result, the cabin is brimmed with all manner of high-end systems and features.

As you would expect from a modern BMW, the 5 Series is a car with a wide range of petrol, diesel and hybrid engines. BMW knows that engine choices dictate the type of car a person goes for, which is why the 5 Series is available with a wide variety of powertrains. The range kicks off with a 520i petrol, while 520d and 530d diesels form up the most popular choices. There’s also the option of xDrive all-wheel-drive too, for those who value added traction in tricky conditions.

You can also pick the 530e, which combines a petrol engine and electric motor to generate efficiency and economy results. It is a plug-in hybrid too, so the batteries can be topped up via a charging cable.

As with most modern BMWs, the 5 Series is a car which comes with technology at the forefront. As a result, the cabin is brimmed with all manner of high-end systems and features.

Central to these offerings is a 12.3-inch infotainment display which houses all of the main media and navigation settings. It is clear and easy to use, with simple graphics and a logical layout.

BMW has a habit of frequently updating its cars and things are no different with the 5 Series. It has recently been revised to bring fresher looks as well as more standard equipment.

Look closely and you will see a redesigned front bumper as well as slimmer headlamps which incorporate LED technology as standard. Three trim levels make up the range.

Though there is plenty of choice throughout the 5 Series, there are just three trim levels to opt for which, in truth, makes things much easier. There’s Sport, M Sport and M Sport Edition, with each gaining plenty of equipment—though M Sport models do benefit from a more dynamic appearance and larger alloy wheels, among other features.

That said, Sport models still get alloy wheels and leather upholstery as standard, while heated seats are included too.

What to do if your Vehicle Breaks Down

If you’re unlucky enough to break down while travelling on the roads in Spain, there are a number of rules to follow to not only keep yourself on the right side of the law, but also to keep you safe.

Knowing these rules before something happens can save you a lot of trouble at a later date, so learn all about what to do when your vehicle breaks down and always make sure you have the correct insurance.

Around 48% of people surveyed by the RAC in the UK revealed that they wouldn’t know what to do in the event of a breakdown abroad, so being prepared is essential.

Breaking Down on a Motorway

If you break down on a motorway, you should try to make use of the hard shoulder if possible. If you’re able to pull onto the hard shoulder then do so and exit your vehicle only when it is safe to do so.

Always exit on the side nearest the kerb, ensure you are wearing your reflective jacket, place your warning triangles at a suitable distance to warn on-coming traffic and remember to switch on your hazard lights.

From here, if you are able to make a call using a mobile phone, call your roadside assistance. If you don’t have a mobile phone, walk along the hard shoulder towards an emergency phone to call for assistance, staying alert and as far away from traffic as possible.

Breaking Down on a Regular Road

When driving, you may find that much of your time is spent off the motorways enjoying the scenery. If this is the case, you need to know how to deal with a breakdown on a non-motorway road.

In the event of a breakdown, you should move your vehicle to a safe area off the road if possible. Immediately switch on your hazard warning lights and use your reflective triangle to warn other traffic that you are stationary. A reflective jacket should also be worn when exiting your vehicle in a breakdown.

If you’re in an area with poor visibility, switch on your car sidelights also so that people can spot you from as far back as possible.

As with motorway breakdowns, get out of your vehicle when safe, always on the kerbside door and lock the car manually.

Important Points to Consider

• Move your car to the hard shoulder or side of the road where possible
• Use your hazard warning lights where applicable
• Wear your reflective vest
• Contact local emergency services or your recovery provider
• Remain outside of your vehicle and ensure all passengers are removed and safe
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Reverse Word Search Puzzle #C663IV

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!

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Beige Froth Pried
Belied Furlongs Rends
Broom Gauze Replete
Crazy Gentler Scoped
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Dukes Hobbies Sixes
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Three Ferrari academy drivers to make F1 race weekend debuts

Mick Schumacher is one of three Ferrari academy drivers who will be given Formula 1 race weekend debuts in forthcoming races. Schumacher, son of seven-time champion Michael, and British driver Callum Ilott will both drive in first practice at the Eifel Grand Prix on 9 October. German Schumacher will drive an Alfa Romeo and Ilott a Haas. Both are Ferrari-affiliated customer teams. Russian Robert Shwartzman will drive at the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

The team Shwartzman will drive for has not yet been revealed. Schumacher and Ilott are first and second in the Formula 2 championship with two races remaining, while Shwartzman is fifth.

It is expected that at least one of the three drivers will be promoted to F1 next year, with Alfa Romeo and Haas the teams most likely to take them.

In preparation for their F1 weekend debuts, all three drivers will test at Ferrari’s Fiorano test track on Wednesday in a 2018 F1 car.

Schumacher described the test as “a real privilege”, adding: “It’s amazing to have this chance at a track that is one of my favourites - it was where I scored the first podium of my career back in 2015.”

Ferrari sporting director Laurent Mekies, who is also the director of the Ferrari driver academy, said: “We wanted to organise this test session so that our three best youngsters would be as well prepared as possible to tackle an event that will always be a special moment for them.

“It will be a chance to get to grips with a Formula 1 car, which is much more complicated than the car they are currently used to driving.”

Schumacher and Ilott have already tested an F1 car, Ilott in an Alfa Romeo in a test at Barcelona after this year’s Spanish Grand Prix, and Schumacher in a Ferrari at Sakhir after last year’s Bahrain Grand Prix.

The run at Abu Dhabi on 11 December will be Shwartzman’s first time in an F1 car.
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