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Issue 132

Almería Living

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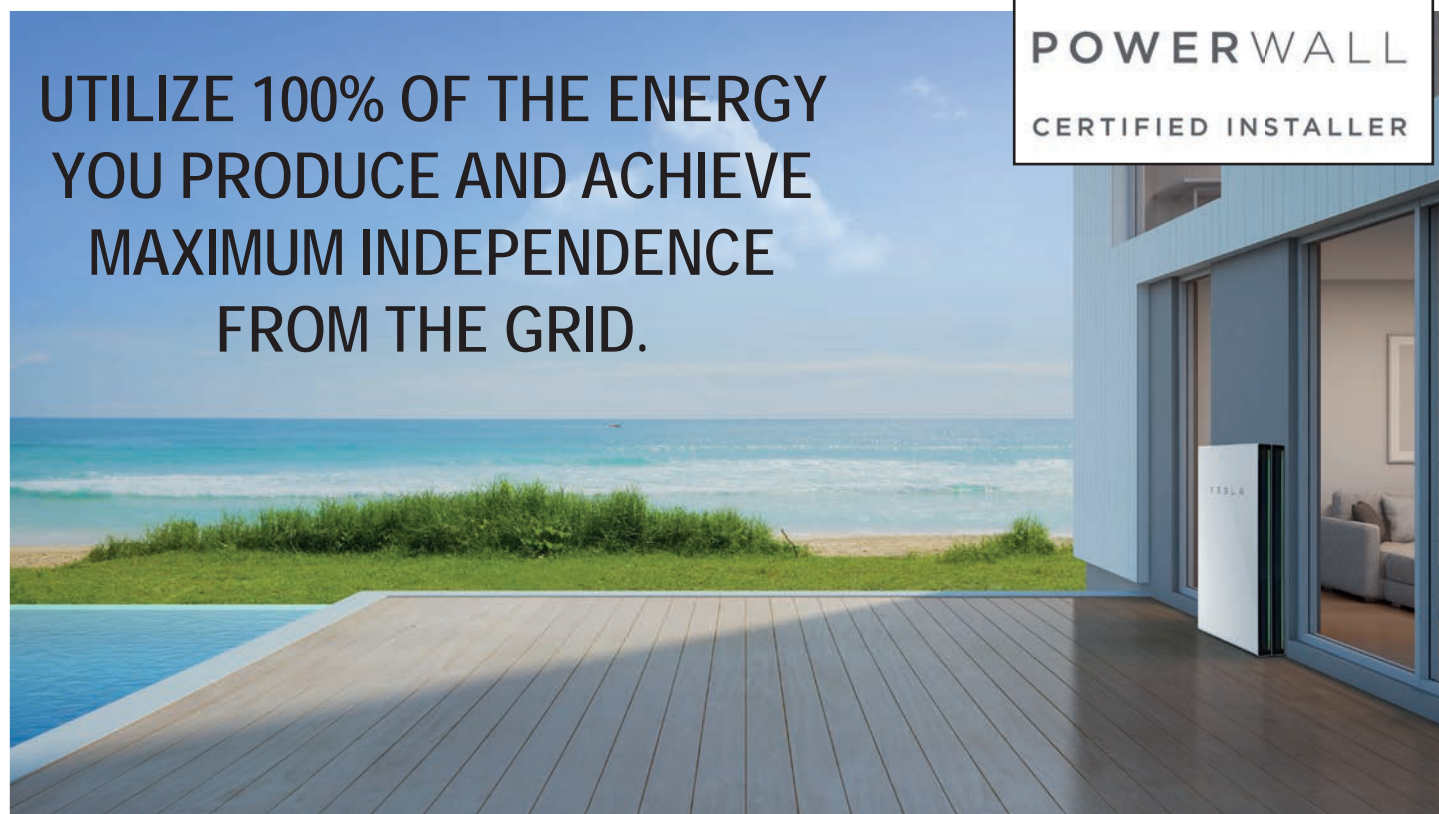
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Los Gallardos, Velez Rubio and many surrounding towns

Welcome to the April 2024 issue of Almeria Living. The fourth one of the year already!!

It is raining!!!!!! As I write now and we enjoyed some yesterday too. Steady, sensible rain that is just perfect for the ground to absorb. Not enough to take us out of drought conditions but greatly appreciated none the less.

In this issue...

I would like to offer my grateful thanks to my scribes, who have brought you a great mix of articles and stories to read.

Very special thanks go to Nina, who not only can cook and bring up Dakota, also writes many of the articles without credit. She very sadly lost her dear brother-in-law, Jan, during the preparation of this issue but still got her mission done. Our sympathy goes to both Nina and her lovely sister, Pia.

Talking of scribes, I would like to introduce you to our newbie Charles, who has sent a short story for the first time. Read more on pages 44 - 45.

We continue our new feature 'Welcome to....' with a visit to the compact, bustling market town of Turre. (p.16-17)

Many thanks, as always, to our advertisers, who continue to support our magazine and reap the benefits of doing so. Local businesses rely on our trade so please try to use them whenever you can.

We hope you enjoy your read this month. Please don't forget to tell our advertisers that you saw them in the Almeria Living.

Take care and stay safe. Talk again in May.

Karen (Ed)

Avda Andalucía 1, La Alfoquia
04661, Almeria

Office Tel: **950 634 388**

Editor: **627 635 514** - Karen

Email: karen@almerialiving.net

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Spanish Wills and Inheritance

Making a Spanish Will is very important if you have any assets in Spain.

Dealing with all aspects of bereavement & inheritance can be very difficult at such a sad time.

How Spanish Inheritance Works

In the sad event of a death, if the person had any Spanish assets it is necessary to carry out several actions in order to complete the inheritance process..

Even if the survivors are sure that they have a copy of the last Spanish Will, it is first necessary to obtain a certificate of Last Wishes from the Ministry of Justice in Madrid. This certificate states if there is a Spanish Will and if so, where the last lodged one is held.

With this certificate the Notary can release the Will and the inheritance process gets well underway.

If there is no Spanish Will, the process becomes complex and a Grant of Probate will be required from the native country. A Will from the native country does make obtaining the Grant of Probate more straight-forward but the process is still more complex. This is why we strongly recommend taking time to make a Spanish Will.

Once the certificate and Will have been obtained, if there is property involved then the next step is to the Notary to sign the Inheritance Deed (Escritura de Herencia). The inheritor(s) or representative (with power of attorney) presents all assets, such as property deeds, bank certificates, vehicle documents etc, and these are all recorded in the document.



After the Notary, it is the Tax Office (Hacienda), where any inheritance tax is calculated and must be paid before the Notary release the Inheritance Deed. This is then presented to Land Registry so the property is put into the inheritor(s) name(s).

If there is no property involved, generally the Notary does not get involved and the process moves straight on to the Tax Office. The certificate issued by the Tax Office is required by the bank, along with all other documentation gathered along the way, including the Will and death certificate.

Please bear in mind that every office dealt with requires payment for the process and their services so it does become quite a costly business.

Spanish Inheritance Tax

If you are the spouse, natural born child or adopted child, then as direct relatives there is usually no inheritance tax to pay, unless the inheritance is more than one million euros.

If you are siblings or parents, then you move into the 2nd band and there is a low inheritance tax to pay.

Neices, nephews, and other such indirect relatives move into band 3, where the tax is higher.

If there is no blood line, including step-children, then the inheritance tax is much higher.

We can discuss this with you further and even obtain an approximate cost based on current assets value.

If you would like to discuss making a Will, or other inheritance issues or would like help with the processes involved, please do get in touch. with us at C.A.T. Services.

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National Parks in Spain

Spain boasts 15 national parks distributed on the peninsula and the two archipelagos. In March, Nina started our journey to visit them all and so our travels continue



Teide National Park is situated centrally on the island of Tenerife. It was the first area in the Canary Islands to be declared a national park, in 1954, and it is the most extensive on the archipelago. It is named after a volcano, the Teide, the highest peak in Spain with a height of 3,718 meters.

The park is located in a gigantic ancient volcanic caldera with a perimeter of 45 km, an enormous hollow known as las Cañadas

del Teide (the Teide valley). The landscape is a natural showcase of the island’s geological development. For this reason, amongst others, it was declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 2007.

The climatic conditions in the park are completely different from those of the rest of the Canary Islands. It is Europe’s only high mountain subtropical area, and a great biological treasure adapted to the extreme climate that exists there, and many of the species are exclusive to the park. Most notable are the flora and invertebrate fauna, and the vertebrates include several bird species as well as the tizon lizard.

For centuries travellers, naturalists, and scientists have travelled to Teide. Today, it is Spain’s most

visited national park, and it boasts a network of 37 trails of varying difficulty, which add up to a total of 155 km.

The relatively low air humidity and the scarce rainfall in Teide combine to create an aridity that is normally only found in mountainous areas – in spite of this being an island. The lava landscape and the ashes under the harsh climatic conditions create a scenery painted in white by snow in winter, bathed in colours in spring, and appearing arid and dry in summer and autumn.

The majority of the flora in the national park is well adapted to resist the sun, the cold, and the wind. In spring, the scarce rains bring forward a fleeting sea of colours in crags, in lava fields, and on the flat plains.

There are numerous endemic plant species such as the Guajara Violet, which only exist in the stony fields above 2,500 MASL. Also, the red tajinaste (*Echium wildpretii*), the blue tajinaste (*Echium callithyrsu*), and the Teide Daisy (*Argyranthemum teneriffae*) are exclusive to the highest peaks in the park. The clusters of the yellow flowers of the flixweeds are dotted around on the lava landscapes, but the most abundant flowers in the valley are those of the Teide broom.

Due to the volcanic characteristics and the climatic conditions in



Teide, the scope of fauna to be found in the park is very limited. Birds constitute the largest group of vertebrates. There are five species and 36 subspecies of birds, some of which are endemic.

The crater of the Teide volcano is a 3,718 metres tall cone with a diameter of 80 metres, making it the highest mountain in Spain and the Atlantic archipelagos. The most recent volcanic eruption on Tenerife was in 1909, and it was outside what is now the national park.

Although the Teide volcano has been active in the past, it seems to be latent at present as the vents that emerge from the crater bear witness to. They release gas emissions that can get up to 100°C. They mainly consist of water vapour and carbon dioxide, as well as some sulphur compounds which, when they crystallise, leave characteristic yellowy-green deposits where they exit from the crater.

The crater of the Teide is covered in vents and sulphur, which can be observed close up by those that climb to the top. From the mid-16th century up until the beginning of the 20th, sulphur and ice were extracted from the top of the Teide when it was snowing.

The Teide is a colossal living stone witness to Tenerife’s history, and there were times when it was thought it was the world’s highest peak. It has not always looked like it does today. Two thousand years ago it was not as tall, its colour was lighter and the top more rounded.

During the Middle Ages there was an eruption that lasted several decades, and the volcano reached its present height. The last

eruptions of importance took place at the end of the 18th century on the west side.

The Teide and Las Cañadas were spiritually significant for the Guanches, the old inhabitants of the island. The area was fundamental for their survival, especially in summer. Livestock and herdsman from all over the island headed for the high mountain pastures. It was also used for collecting obsidian which could only be found in that area and was used for stone tools.

Relics of Guanche huts in Las Cañadas tell the tale of the herdsman and their flocks. This is the best documentation of the first inhabitants in Tenerife thanks to the wealth of archeologic sites.

The Guanches called the Teide ‘Echeyde’ and worshipped it as a sacred mountain. To them, the volcano was the road to the native divinity of Guayota, towards the centre of the world. In 1798 the last great eruption within the boundaries of the park took place on the sides of Pico Viejo. It lasted three months and emanated millions of cubic metres of lava.



Tenerife was conquered by the Castille Kingdom in 1496 after numerous battles with the Guanche chiefs, and it was the last of the Canary Island to be annexed.

Since the 16th century the Teide has been visited by numerous naturalists and scientists who come to study the rich variety of both flora, fauna, and geological features. Today they have been joined by hosts of tourists that enjoy the stark beauty of the national park.



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UPCYCLING - Garden Ideas



Let your garden be an expression of your personality. Make decorations from your old stuff to make sure that your garden design is unique. Garden junk ideas with old household items are countless. Consider the overall shape and design of the object to decide where it would fit in your garden. If you have a garden fence, you can decorate it with birdhouses, mirrors or chairs or use unusual flower planters like old boots, a wheelbarrow, old chest of drawers and even an old computer monitor and a sink.

Garden junk ideas are an artistic way to transform your old household items into treasures. Examples of this upcycled art include the use of old ladders as flower stands and decorating with forest vines over old shutters like a curtain. You can fill an old cast iron tub with potting soil and then grow pink and purple petunias in it. This way of upcycling is environmentally friendly because the junk is used to beautify the garden space rather than be piled up in a landfill.

The garden junk ideas with upcycled household items or treasures from the flea market are limited only by the imagination of the gardener. Endless possibilities are hiding in everything from old shoes to car tyres. Check out our amazing ideas and uncover the hidden potential of your garden!



Look Good - Feel Great Essential Oils For Healthy, Flawless Skin



Oils have amazing healing properties and can restore and maintain healthy, flawless skin. Here is a guide on how to choose the right oil.

Research in skin care has introduced several kinds of products and face oil is one of them. Like serum, face oil is the buzzword today. Oil, by itself, does not moisturise the skin, but it helps the skin to hold moisture better.

Face oils help people with persistently dry, dehydrated skin, by softening it and preventing loss of moisture. The skin feels and looks soft and smooth after application of oil. Olive oil and coconut oil, for instance, moisturise the skin by preventing moisture loss and helping the skin to retain moisture. In fact, oils have many properties, including healing properties that help to restore and maintain healthy, flawless skin.

The Rise Of Argan And Jojoba Oils

Argan oil and jojoba oil are ideal as face oils. While jojoba oil is very close to the skin's natural oil in nature, argan oil is rich in unsaturated fatty acids, antioxidants and Vitamin E. Therefore, it helps to delay the visible signs of ageing and even rejuvenates the skin. It is easily absorbed by the skin and helps to nourish and moisturise it.

A few drops of argan oil can be applied directly and massaged on the face after cleansing. It can also be used as a serum, applying only a few drops. Or, add a few drops of the oil to 100 ml rose water to make a skin tonic.

Benefits Of A Combination Of Oils

Face oils that are a combination of essential oils and carrier, or pressed oils, help to control certain skin conditions and also impart a natural, healthy glow. Jojoba oil, or argan oil are getting more importance as face oils, but that does not mean that oils like sesame seed oil or olive oil are less effective.

Continued on page 10

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The Luvvies Theatre Group is 20 years old this year and to celebrate they are having a "dinner party" like no other! Their next production, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, a comedy/farce, opens on 19th April 2024 at Teatro/ Museo Pedro Gilabert, Arboleas.

The Luvvies have gone from strength to strength over the last 20 years, from a few friends wanting to put on a show, to a society that has benefited from new members and an eagerness to present a polished performance for their audiences. *Don't Dress for Dinner*, is no exception.

This production of *Don't Dress for Dinner*, sees members old and new in many roles on and off stage. For some, it is their first time acting.

Don't Dress for Dinner is filled with the ongoings at a dinner party in a converted farmhouse on the outskirts of Paris where, it appears, everybody is having an affair with somebody and everyone is trying to avoid each other knowing, with hilarious consequences...

Buy your tickets to see this production before they sell out and find out who gets to sleep in the cowshed with whom, who is in the piggery and what sauce Velouté has to do with it. Why are there so many insects, why is the dining table in the hen house and who drank all the Cointreau? Find out in this dinner of all dinners for your delight and entertainment. 19th – 21st April 2024.

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..... Continued from page 9

Sometimes, a combination of oils may be more effective. Face oil can be a combination of pressed and essential oils, or only pressed oil, like sweet almond oil, olive oil, or unscented oils for sensitive skin.

Best Oils For Your Face

Sweet Basil Oil

This oil can be used for oily skin. It helps to build immunity too and also fights acne. It can also be used for normal and dry skin to rejuvenate the skin and brighten it.

Neem oil

This oil is a very potent essential oil and cannot be used directly on the skin. It can be combined in the prescribed proportion with sesame seed oil or sweet almond oil and is good for acne, fungal infections and even warts. Therefore, it can be used for oily skin too.

Frankincense oil

Research has shown that this ancient oil can reduce the appearance of scars and stretch marks, and it seems to have the same effect on wrinkles and fine lines. In one study, researchers instructed study subjects to apply frankincense oil to one side of their face for thirty days. The treated side showed significant improvement in sun damage, skin texture and fine lines as well as an increase in skin elasticity. Mix two to three drops of the oil with equal parts coconut or jojoba oil and apply to your skin.

Ayurvedic face oils

Ayurvedic is an alternative medicine system with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. Among the Ayurvedic face oils is the well known Kumkumadi Tailam or oil for the skin. It contains about



24 herbal extracts. Among the ingredients of the oil are precious extracts like saffron, sandalwood, himalayan cherry, Indian barberry, leaves of the Banyan tree and many more. Sesame seed oil (or til oil) is the base oil.

Bio-organic face oil

A bio-organic face oil, usually contains vitamin E oil, sunflower and soya oils, combined with essential oils of chamomile, rosemary, lavender and calendula, to protect the skin and restore ideal balances.

Final thought

Before adding essential oils to your daily regimen, be sure to read up on essential oil safety so you know which essential oils can go directly on your skin, which essential oils should be diluted with carrier oils such as jojoba, the ones to avoid during pregnancy and the essential oils that are bad for your skin.

The right face oil is the route to a healthy, radiant skin.

Repetitive strain injury (RSI)

Repetitive strain injury (RSI) is a term sometimes used for pain caused by repeated movement of part of the body.

You can get repetitive strain injury (RSI) in many parts of the body, but it most often affects the:

- shoulders and elbows
- forearms and wrists
- hands and fingers

The symptoms usually start gradually and can include:

- pain, which may feel like burning, aching or throbbing
- stiffness and weakness
- tingling, pins-and-needles or numbness
- muscle cramps
- swelling

You can get RSI if:

- you do repetitive activities like hairdressing, decorating, typing
- you play sports that involve lots of repetitive movements e.g. golf, tennis
- you have poor posture

If you're struggling, and would like to know more about why you're experiencing pain, how you can ease the pain, whether it is due to RSI or if it's something else, and how you can get back to doing the things that you want to do, why not get in touch?

Your Osteopath is qualified to assess, diagnose and treat you, and will be able to give you lots of advice about how to manage your symptoms at home, getting you onto the road to recovery as quickly as possible.

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Natural Beauty Tips That Are Absolutely Free

It always helps to have a gentle reminder, even with things we already know. Hearing them again helps reinforce good habits. Read to the end with the intention of bringing these helpful tips into the forefront of your consciousness.

Mindfully Maintain Your Overall Health and Well-Being - Acknowledge yourself and your mental, physical, and spiritual needs. Make extra time to do something special for yourself. Self-care is valuable tool! True beauty comes from within.

Go Outside More Often - Fresh air is a great beautifier. Walk the dog, take a stroll by the sea or in the hills, sit in your garden or terrace. It's easy to take these simple activities for granted but they're truly replenishing to your spirit and bring out a natural radiance in your appearance.

Develop Healthy Eating Habits - With food, fresh is best and quality is better than quantity. Don't eat too much, or too quickly. Moderation is key, but don't deprive yourself either.

It's okay to have a little treat every once in a while. Appreciate your food and the nourishment it brings to your body.

Get Plenty Of Sleep In A Well-Ventilated Room - Your body and your mind need rest to regenerate and recuperate from the work of the day. Your whole system suffers without enough sleep. They don't call it beauty rest for nothing!

Houseplants are also a beautiful way to increase the clean oxygen levels in your home.

Practice Good Posture - Be mindful of how you sit, stand and move. When you walk, hold your head high and shoulders back and engage your stomach muscles. When you sit, do not hold one shoulder higher than the other, or sit crooked? Bring some awareness into your posture and gently remind yourself to lift up and straighten out.

Get Some Exercise - Keep your muscles firm and youthful by moving around, get your blood flowing, and oxygenate your cells. Add some

joyful movement to your day.

If it's fun, it's a lot easier to motivate and keep to a routine.

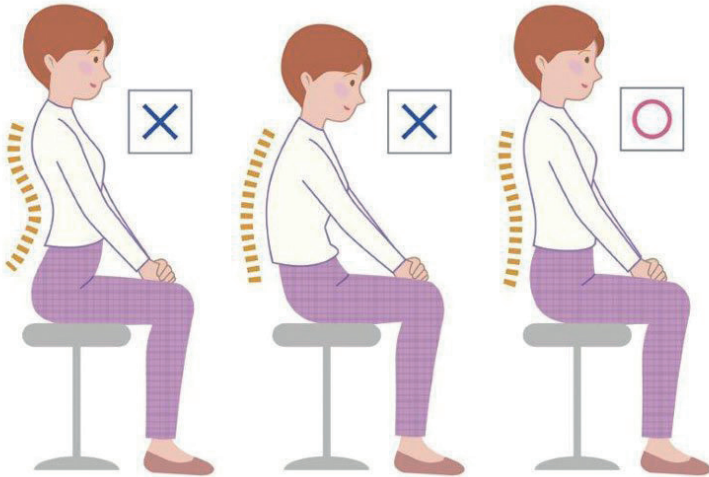
Go to the gym, take a run, play tennis, or do some yoga. It's also fun to dance around the kitchen when you're cooking. Even if it's just a 10 minute walk during a work break, take the stairs, or park at the far end of the carpark so you have to walk just that little bit more.

Don't Let Your Skin Get Too Dry - Dry skin is not radiant and it doesn't look or feel healthy.

Dry skin makes wrinkles more profound and gives a dull, drab appearance. Moisturised skin is glowing and healthy in comparison.

Meditate - All forms of meditation can help reduce stress and improve well-being. Meditate in the morning before beginning your day. This will ensure that your day runs more smoothly and that you are in the proper energetic state to experience miracles!

These tips are super easy to incorporate into your daily routine and will make a difference in the long term. Plus, these simple acts of self-care help you feel beautiful, and this inner beauty will radiate out into the world.



Health Benefits of Music

Isn't it interesting how hearing a particular song can bring back a special memory or make you feel happy or calm or pumped up? People are born with the ability to tell the difference between music and noise. Our brains actually have different pathways for processing different parts of music including pitch, melody, rhythm, and tempo. And, fast music can actually increase your heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure, while slower music tends to have the opposite effect.

While the effects of music on people are not fully understood, studies have shown that when you hear music to your liking, the brain actually releases a chemical called dopamine that has positive effects on mood. Music can make us feel strong emotions, such as joy, sadness, or fear—some will agree that it has the power to move us. According to some researchers, music may even have the power to improve our health and well-being.

Though more studies are needed to confirm the potential health benefits of music, some studies suggest that listening to music can have the following positive effects on health.

Improves mood. Studies show that listening to music can benefit overall well-being, help regulate emotions, and create happiness and relaxation in everyday life.

Reduces stress. Listening to 'relaxing' music (generally considered to have slow tempo, low pitch, and no lyrics) has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety in healthy people and in people undergoing medical procedures (e.g., surgery, dental, colonoscopy).

Lessens anxiety. In studies of people with cancer, listening to music combined with standard care reduced anxiety compared to those who received standard care alone.

Improves exercise. Studies suggest that music can enhance aerobic exercise, boost mental and physical stimulation, and increase overall performance.

Improves memory. Research has shown that the repetitive elements of rhythm and melody help our brains form patterns that enhance memory. In a study of stroke survivors, listening to music helped them experience more verbal memory, less confusion, and better focused attention.

Eases pain. In studies of patients recovering from surgery, those who listened to music before, during, or after surgery had less pain and more overall satisfaction compared with patients who did not listen to music as part of their care.

Provides comfort. Music therapy has also been used to help enhance communication, coping, and expression of feelings such as fear, loneliness, and anger in patients who have a serious illness, and who are in end-of-life care.

Improves cognition. Listening to music can also help people with Alzheimer's recall seemingly lost memories and even help maintain some mental abilities.

Helps children with autism spectrum disorder. Studies of children with autism spectrum disorder who received music therapy showed improvement in social responses, communication skills, and attention skills.

Soothes premature babies. Live music and lullabies may impact vital signs, improve feeding behaviors and sucking patterns in premature infants, and may increase prolonged periods of quiet-alert states.

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Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 74

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

Easy

Regular Sudoku

Every Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically.

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

Medium

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

Across

- 1 Irons
- 5 Axes
- 8 All over the world
- 9 Expanse of water
- 10 Discount
- 12 Idiom
- 13 African furniture timber
- 15 Water sprinkles
- 16 Fitting
- 18 City in W. Colorado (5,8)
- 20 Ancient Nile river city in Egypt
- 21 State capital of Georgia

Down

- 1 Nuisances
- 2 Remarkable
- 3 Shocked
- 4 Tolerates
- 5 Hit the slopes
- 6 Deliberation
- 7 Quiet
- 11 Music genre
- 12 City in Umbria, Italy
- 14 City in S central Mexico
- 17 Neighbour of Fiji
- 19 Morse E



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Turre is a small town located just a short drive from the village and coastal areas of Mojacar, Almería. The town lies just 142kms from Murcia and 73kms from Almeria airports and is easily accessed from the A7/E15.

Turre a hidden town nestled at the foot of the Cabrera mountain range and located about 50 meters above sea level, 85 kilometres from Almería capital and just 4 kilometres from the Mediterranean coast full of interesting history and charm, a little hidden jewel.

Turre has human presence dating back to prehistoric times, the Romans also settled and left archaeological remains in the vicinity of the town.

After the fall of the Roman Empire the Muslim occupation came to Turre as well as to the rest of the Iberian Peninsula. Al-Andalus, as the Moors called the occupied territory here, dominated the peninsula for eight centuries.

The Arabs built fortifications and towers to warn of the arrival of the Christians in advance, one of the towers was built in Turre, giving name to the place.

Christians conquered this land in the late fifteenth century and most of the Muslims fled to North Africa, while some who stayed became Moriscos (Muslims converted to Christianity), but eventually all fled because of the religious persecution they suffered.

From the nineteenth century Turre experienced a boom due to mining activity in the area, providing jobs and generating a huge industry, although the main activity in Turre was still agriculture.

However, with the declaration of the 2nd Republic in 1931 the whole area was largely forgotten both by republicans and phalangists, and when the Civil War broke out the mines were closed causing extensive immigration and initiating a long period of hardship and poverty in the area which was to carry on until the onset of the

eighties when Turre's luck changed after the death of Franco and the tourist and property market boom started.

Turre has not looked back since then, it's gone from strength to strength with an increasing flow of people wanting to live near the coast without the hassle and hustle of mass tourism.

These people, Spanish, British and many other nationalities together have created a welcoming and bubbling little town with a large range of bars, restaurants and shops on offer for those who wish to visit and do the Turre Experience!

Turre boasts a typical town square which is just a short walk from the high street and is surrounded by various Banks, Shops, Hair and Beauty facilities, and Bars serving good wine and local dishes.

If you take a wander down the high street, you will also find English Bars and Restaurants ready to tempt you with their traditional delights, along with Spanish and Indian cuisine.

On a Friday Turre is transformed into a bustling and busy town, as Friday is Market Day.

The market has anything and everything that you need and is full of many different types of stalls. A real treat to those who like to seek out a bargain, try local foods and spices, and generally seek out a bargain, you may even be able to practice your bartering skills!

You cannot pass by Turre without visiting the Ruins of the Cabrera and Teresa villages. These archaeological remains are of settlements dating from the late Middle Ages; among these remains there are also a mill and an aqueduct.

So, don't just pass Turre by next time, stop for a coffee and a relax in the square, or even visit the market on Friday. You won't be disappointed!

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Pets Corner

Dakota – She Is - A Jailbird!



My beautiful girl is coming up to her first birthday, and I can no longer call her my teeny-weeny tiny little German shepherd puppy! I decided that I'd do it for as long as I could – just for the luxury of being able to say, 'my German shepherd puppy'. But I reckon that when she's one, she'll have to become 'my German shepherd'. Mind you, that's not bad either!

You cannot imagine what joy it is for me to be a German shepherd owner again, and I enjoy every moment I have with my Dakota.

However, her birthday will not be celebrated in the manner that it should.

Sadly, we lost my brother-in-law and my champion, Jan, to the cursed cancer on 28th February, and I went head over heels to Copenhagen to be with my sister. Before then, we'd already arranged a visit at the end of March, so I shall be off again on Dakota's birthday.

I only had a few days to arrange temporary lodgings for Dakota when I went the first time, and the people at the training centre, bless them, very kindly agreed to look after her then, and again for my second visit.

It was the best possible place for her as she knows the people there, and they her. Also, if she were to start some silly behaviour or other due to the fact that we've never been apart before in her whole life, they would be the best qualified to deal with it.

I took her down to the centre the day before I flew to Denmark, and poor Paqui, the owner, was shocked at the amount of blankets and toys she arrived with, quite apart from the bags of biscuits, tinned food and sardines, all with their detailed instructions! But she took it in her stride.

Funnily enough, when I left Dakota there, instead of feeling sad, I felt pleased that she would have a chance to be a real dog, and not just my little companion.

And she managed brilliantly! She was no trouble, behaved well, and made close friends with all the girls down there.

They had hoped to put her in with some calm dogs from time to time, so she could have the opportunity to learn how to behave around other dogs without her lead on, but she was not quite ready, they said.

Maybe next time, we all agreed, seeing as she is coming on leaps and bounds around other animals.

In fact, she is doing so well now that we were invited along for the



club's weekly nature walk! Something that had had to wait until she was calmer around other dogs, so I was very proud when we were invited!

There is, of course, no lack of walks in nature in her life, seeing as we live slap bang in the middle of the stuff, but how exciting to go to new places, find new walks, and with lots of other dogs around!

We all met up at a pre-arranged spot on Friday afternoon, and Dakota was all pricked ears and large eyes, her nose quivering with excitement. She saw straight away that the other dogs were all acquaintances from training, and although she gawked somewhat and felt tense like a coil, she didn't let out a single bark.

Only two of the dogs were allowed off their leads on the walk, the rest of us were fairly new and stayed hitched to our dogs.

Dakota really enjoyed the walk, was interested in her surroundings and the other dogs without being obsessed with them. Kira, one of

the ones that were allowed off the lead, did unwittingly encroach on Dakota's space a few times, simply because that was where her nose took her, and Dakota took exception to this, but fairly calmly, and she just warned her off with a few choice barks and raised hackles.

I was extremely pleased with her, and although she was not allowed off the lead, she did do some calm, but important, interaction with the others, and it was a great experience for us both.

Once I come back from Copenhagen, we shall become a fixed feature on the weekly walk, that's for sure!

In the meantime, she's gonna have to put up with another prison term, but that won't be a problem.



Although she was sooooo pleased to see me when I collected her last time, she was well-balanced and calm – did not show any signs of having been stressed out or having suffered mentally or physically, so we'll both take her next visit in our stride.

And then it will soon be time for us to go on holiday together – we'll have deserved it! I'm hoping to take her for another long weekend to Alicante in mid-May.

Next month I'll let you know whether than one pans out!



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Equatorial Guinea

Most people know that Spain had a number of colonies in Central and South America; in fact the majority of the countries on the American continent belonged to Spain back when. Except of course Brazil, which belonged to Portugal, Guyana (British), French Guyana (French) and Surinam (Dutch).

The Philippines are also well known for having been a Spanish colony, as well as a few islands in the Caribbean Sea. And of course we all know of the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Northern Africa. But how about Equatorial Guinea? Did you know that it was a Spanish colony – and that the official language of Equatorial Guinea is still Spanish? Shared with French, which is spoken by a minority. There is also a handful of local tribe languages in evidence, but an estimated 70% of the population speak Spanish.

La República de Guinea Ecuatorial, as is its real name, is a small central African republic on the west coast of Africa. It borders on the countries of Cameroon and Gabon as well as the Atlantic Ocean, and it consists of an area on the main land as well as five volcanic islands which are all inhabited. The total area that it covers is 28,050km2 and it is inhabited by 1.3 million people.

Just like Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea was originally inhabited by pygmies, but unlike its neighbour there are none left of the original population.

The first occupying power in Equatorial Guinea was Portugal, who discovered it in 1472 and colonised it 1474. The colony was an important collection point for slaves who were being shipped out to the Americas. In 1778 the country became a Spanish colony, and the colonists established coffee and cocoa plantations, especially on the island of Bioko.

In the 1950s several nationalist parties popped up, and the increasing demand for independence finally paid off in 1968, when the country was recognised as an independent republic.

Sadly, the first president, Francisco Macias Nguema, turned into a tyrannical dictator, and during his ten year rule the population was reduced by a third; people had either been killed or they had fled the country.

Eventually he was toppled by his nephew Obiang Nguema in 1979, but the change did not lead to an improvement of the conditions.



Obiang was no better than his uncle; today he is the world's longest ruling president, and the population still lives in abject poverty.

The capital of Equatorial Guinea is called Malabo (formerly known as Santa Isabel), and it is situated on the largest and northernmost of the islands, Bioko. However, a new planned capital, Ciudad de la Paz, is under construction on the mainland. The central government has already been moved there, and according to the plan the new capital will be fully functional in the near future.

The new situation is more central, access is better and the climate is much more pleasant.

In spite of its name, Equatorial Guinea does not lie on the equator, but close, and it has a warm, tropical climate. The country is home to one of Africa's most important rain forests, but sadly, lack of long term planning and the desire for a quick profit mean that the forest is being cut down for timber for export instead of being preserved for eco tourism, for which it would be ideally suited with a bit of

planning and improvement of the country's infrastructures.

Equatorial Guinea's fauna does not include the typical African savannah species such as lions, zebra, wildebeest etc., but the rain forest is home to a number of interesting and exciting animals, not least the so-called forest elephant, a smaller sub species of the large savannah roamer.

Large oil reserves were discovered offshore in 1996 and today Equatorial Guinea is one of the largest oil exporters south of the Sahara. You would have thought that this would be the country's ticket out of poverty, and it does have the potential of becoming one of Africa's wealthiest countries; but corruption is rife and the majority of the riches generated by the oil end in the coffers of the president and his family.

Thus, almost all visitors to Equatorial Guinea go there for work related matters in connection with the large oil industry, not for pleasure or leisure. Oil revenue constitutes 85% of the country's GNP, but none the less 70% of the working population are employed in forestry and agriculture, although these two sectors contribute with only 5% of the GNP.

The country has the physical attributes to become a great tourist destination, and one can only hope that soon its leaders will wake up to realise that if the oil money is invested in sustainable eco-tourism, the income from this will, in the long run, supersede the oil revenue, and benefit the whole country and its inhabitants.



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Malaga

Christmas Lights

Date option 1






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Benidorm Christmas



4 Nights
***440€**
per person
+ **Gala Meal**
25th

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23rd - 27th
December '24

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includes wine and water

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Benidorm Christmas & New Year



10 Nights
***1187€**
per person
+ **Gala Meal** 25th
+ **Gala Evening** 31st

Staying at:
4* Hotel Presidente

23rd - 2nd
Dec Jan

Price Includes:
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Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



Benidorm New Year



4 Nights
***560€**
per person
+ **Gala Evening**
31st

Staying at:
4* Hotel Presidente

29th - 2nd
Dec Jan

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Four nights in 4* hotel
Full Board
includes wine and water

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Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



HOMES & GARDENS

Diego Velázquez

Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez was baptized in Seville on 6th June 1599; his birth date is not known, but it is thought to have been just the day before his baptism, on 5th June 1599.

He was a Baroque painter and is considered one of the most important exponents of Spanish painting and a master of universal painting. Most people will recognize his style of individual or family portraits that seem gloomy but nonetheless shine with a sort of inner light.


Velázquez was the eldest of eight siblings; his father was of Portuguese origin, his mother a native of Seville. His parents belonged to the minor nobility and the family lived in modest conditions.

In those days Seville was Spain's richest and most populated city; it had monopoly on the trade with the Americas, and it was also an important trading place for merchants from Italy and Flanders. The young Diego grew up in the empire's most cosmopolitan and open city.

He showed early signs of having talent as a painter, and at the age of twelve, he was apprenticed to the painter Francisco Pacheco. Pacheco is more famous for his writings and his sketches than for his painting, which was not brilliant, but nonetheless he was able to guide and teach the young artist without curbing his talent.





Continued on page 26



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..... Continued from page 25

Velázquez finished his apprenticeship when he passed his exam on 14th March 1617; this allowed him to enrol in the painters' guild, which permitted him to carry out his metier all over the kingdom, open shops and contract apprentices.

Before he was 19, he married Juana Pacheco, daughter of Francisco, on 23rd April 1618. They had two daughters, Francisca and Ignacia.

Already at this time, his great talent manifested itself in his paintings, in which he employed techniques which were completely different from anything done in Seville before, and which were the absolute opposite of those he had learnt in his apprenticeship.

When King Philip III died in Madrid in 1621, the new monarch, Philip IV, upon his accession to the throne, employed a nobleman from Seville, Gaspar de Guzmán, as one of his closest advisors. The latter considered that the majority of the Court should be made up of Andalusians, and Francisco Pacheco immediately saw an opportunity for his son-in-law.

Velázquez travelled to Madrid in the spring off 1622 under the pretext of studying the collections of paintings in the El Escorial palace.

Studying the paintings of Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto and Bassano, Velázquez realised that the traditional painting of Seville had serious artistic limitations, and this had a decisive effect on his stylistic development.

In 1623, through Francisco Pacheco's connections at Court, Velázquez was asked to paint a portrait of Philip IV; the young monarch, six years Velázquez's junior, and who had studied drawing and painting himself, immediately recognized the painter's talent. He ordered the artist to move his residence to Madrid and appointed him royal painter with a salary of 20 ducats a month.

After five busy years during which he painted portraits of countless royals and aristocrats, as well as large paintings to be hung in the royal palaces, Velázquez was appointed Court Painter, the most important position for an artist within the Court.

His main work consisted in painting portraits of the royal family, and royal portraits form a large part of his legacy.

In 1629 Velázquez asked the king for permission to travel to Italy to complete his studies. The king granted him permission to go with two years' salary paid and 400 ducats for acquiring various paintings.

He returned two years later, now in possession of an extraordinary technique, and this is considered the beginning of his 'mature period'.



He went back to painting royal portraits as his main occupation.

He also participated in two big projects: the decoration of the new Palacio del Buen Retiro, and the Torre de la Parada, the king's hunting pavilion on the outskirts of Madrid.

1630 initiated what was to be Velázquez's most productive decade. His work output diminished drastically in the 1640s and he never regained the

same productivity as before. He was promoted to a position which gave him more social prestige, but which also robbed him of time to do his own painting: He was the overseer of all court painting and also in charge of the conservation and reform works taking place in the Real Alcázar palace.

While the 1640s constituted a very successful period in Velázquez's professional life, a succession of personal tragedies led him to leave the Court temporarily in order to undertake a second trip to Italy. There, he had a quite productive period, and he returned to the Spanish Court in 1651 with a large number of paintings he had acquired on his journey.

The decade of the 1650s saw Velázquez's position in Court getting established with ever higher positions and salaries, although he still painted royal portraits. It is considered that some of his finest works were executed in this decade.

However, his position also involved him in other aspects of life in the Royal Court, and in 1660 the king and his court accompanied Princess María Teresa to Fuenterrabia near the French border, for her to marry Luis XIV of France. Velázquez, in his quality of Lodging Master, was in charge of the entourage's lodgings and of decorating the pavilion where the royal encounter was to take place.

The work was exhausting, and when Velázquez returned to Madrid at the end of July, he took to his bed with variola.

He was never to recover from this, and he died in Madrid on 6th August 1660; he was buried the day after.

Eight days later, on August 14th 1660, his wife of 42 years, Juana, passed away.



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Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 74

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.

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

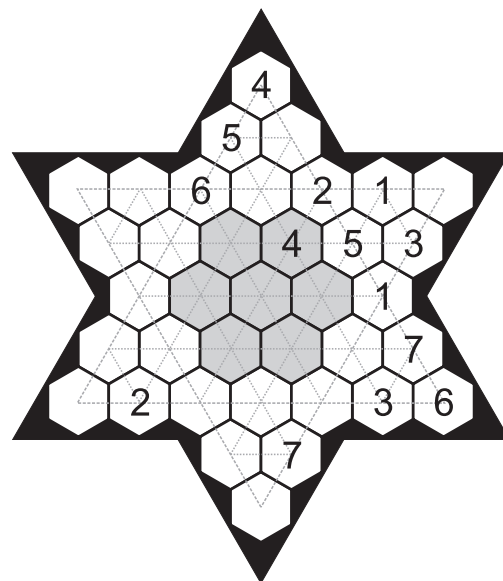
Samurai Sudoku

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

Star Puzzle

To complete the puzzle fill in each of the empty hexagon cells with numbers between 1 & 7 following the 3 rules below;

1. No numbers in a horizontal line can be repeated.
2. No numbers in a diagonal line can be repeated.
3. No numbers in the 7 gray hexagons can be repeated.



* Note that each white hexagon belongs to a line of 7 that must contain each of the numbers between 1 and 7

Well I Never - It's not over until ...!!

By Jos Biggs

On the 13th August in Bayreuth it had been raining all day, and looked like it intended to rain all night as well. Father and son, Carl and Wilhelm were standing outside the Festival Theatre, their hats pulled down, their collars pulled up.

They were in the queue for the inaugural performance of Götterdämmerung, the fourth episode of Richard Wagner's Ring cycle. They had been to the first, second and third, and now they were here for the fourth and final episode.

In all, they had sat through 14 hours of flamboyant orchestration, startling singing and incomprehensible plots, and both were secretly relieved that this was the last time they would ever have to go to the opera again.

Wilhelm shivered. 'Never mind son, only another three hours to go.' His father encouraged.

'But why did we have to come in the first place?' Wilhelm whined.

'Because posh people go to the Opera. If we go to the Opera then that means we are posh.' He paused. 'Or poshish.'

He warmed to his subject. 'And me and Mum, we wants you to be posher'n us. Working in the slaughter house is no job for our best son.'

'I'm your only son.'

'Yeah, well. Come on, door's open.'

Carl and Wilhelm took their seats - cheap ones, you don't want to be posh all at once, and settled themselves in for a long three hours.

The music crashed and soared, ducked and dived. The singers followed the swooping notes with force, gusto and not a little sweat.



Carl and Wilhelm thought about supper.

At two hours thirty five minutes Brünnhilde, a lady of ample proportions, breaks into impassioned decibels and decides to throw herself into the funeral pyre of her lover Sigurd, because she killed him and now wishes she hadn't.

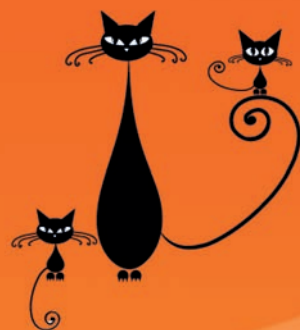
Wilhelm had had enough. 'Come on Dad - let's go. It's nearly over.'

'No Wilhelm, we must stay. It's not over until the fat lady sings.'

And this is the first documented use of the phrase It's not over until the fat lady sings!

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The Badger

We may not think of the badger when we talk about Spain's fauna, but it can, in fact, be found all over the Peninsula.

With its wide body, it is one of the largest of the mustelid family. It grows to a length of 65 – 100 cm and weighs between 10 and 16 kilos, the size of a medium size dog.

It is a strong creature with a triangular face and relatively short neck and tail. The snout, which it uses for digging, is long. The eyes and ears are small.

The badger's feet are very strong and robust with five toes each and pads underneath. Badgers are semi plantigrade and they have strong, long claws whose imprints are visible in their characteristic footprints.

The dense fur is greyish, and the colouring of the head is similar to that of the back although with wide longwise white bands. The belly and legs are black.

Badgers live in colonies ruled by a dominant male and female. These two are generally the only ones to reproduce. Before mating, the male purrs and caresses the female, who is rather unimpressed by this. The male mounts her anyway, and the mating can last anything between 2 minutes and an hour and a half.

Mating can happen anytime of the year although the season is



between March and August. A pair only produces one litter a year.

The incubation time is 65 days, after which two to three cubs are born. They are blind and furless at birth, and they reach independence at 6 months.

Badgers are omnivores and eat small mammals, insects, worms, roots, nuts, cereals and greenery.

They have an acute sense of smell and hearing, and emit different sounds depending on their situation or state of excitement. They climb and swim well without being especially adapted for it.

Although badgers are solitary hunters, they are highly social animals, and there is profound communication amongst the members of the colony (between 2 and 12 individuals). However, they are very aggressive towards badgers that do not belong to their colony, and they mark and defend their territory with a vengeance.

Badgers live in a system of interconnected tunnels and chambers called a sett. Every badger clan has one main sett, which is used for breeding and is usually relatively large. Well-established setts have been excavated by several generations of badgers, with some setts known to be occupied for centuries.

Sadly, modern human life is encroaching on the badger, and it is included in annex III of the Bern Convention which comprises of species whose survival may be under threat if certain precautions are not taken. Although the badger's exact preservation status in Spain is unknown, it is a known fact that traffic and fencing have impacted heavily on the population.

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St. George's Day – Día de San Jorge – Diada de Sant Jordi



Valentine's Day where men gave their sweethearts a rose on Diada de Sant Jordi.

23rd April is also the (official) day that Miguel de Cervantes and Shakespeare died, which led to it becoming the day of 'Fiesta del Libro Español' in 1929. Read more about these 2 gentlemen on page 41.

This was when girls and women started giving their sweethearts a book when they received a rose.

Both the rose tradition and the book tradition have carried on up to the present day, although it is not only an exchange between lovers; friends and relatives also regale each other, and it is no longer gender determined – it is just as common now for a woman to give a rose or a man to give a book.

Now it has also become World Book Day (instigated by UNESCO) in 1995, Diada de Sant Jordi has turned into a huge event in Barcelona where Las Ramblas and many other of the main tourist and shopping streets become alive with a happy mixture of rose and book stalls.

Punters are thronging the streets, browsing through books (many of which are sold, on this occasion, in signed editions), buying roses, and generally taking in the ambiance and enjoying the atmosphere, and the city fills with a heady mixture of love and culture.



23rd April is an important day for at least two reasons: It is World Book Day and St. George's Day. The latter probably the more important in most of our readers' minds!

But if you thought that St. George's Day is strictly an English celebration, you were wrong.

St. George is celebrated in many places in the Christian world; 23rd April is the day he was decapitated by the Romans for refusing to renounce his Christian faith. This is supposed to have happened in the year 287 AD.

In most of Spain he is known as San Jorge, in Catalonia Sant Jordi.

The Spanish legend of St. George follows along the same lines as the English:

The Kingdom of Aragon was besieged by a dragon. In an attempt to appease it and satisfy its hunger, the people decided to give it two lambs every day; however, when the livestock was getting scarce, the decision was made to send a lamb and a person; this person was chosen by drawing lots, and his family was rewarded with huge riches.

However, when a princess was chosen and she had to face death by dragon, St. George appeared before her, slayed the dragon, and saved her.

On the spot where the dragon's blood seeped into the ground, a beautiful rosebush sprouted, and St. George picked one and gave it to the princess.

San Jorge is the patron saint of Aragon, and 23rd April is, apart from Día de San Jorge, also Día de Aragón and a holiday.

According to another legend, during a particularly hard battle between the Christian soldiers of Sancho I of Aragon and the Moors in 1096, San Jorge descended from Heaven on his charger, holding a garnet red cross. This sight so cheered the Christian soldiers that they fought with renewed strength and vigour. The Moors, astonished by what was happening, lost heart and soon fled.

In Catalonia St. George is also the patron saint – here known as Sant Jordi. However, although it is a very big day in Catalonia, it is not a holiday.

Here, in the 15th century, women who went to Mass in the chapel of Sant Jordi on 23rd April were given a rose. This tradition developed into a Catalan version of St.





GOING GREEN

Fast Fashion

By Jason Lowther

The new season's clothes are upon us: new styles, buy more, buy cheap, move on, throw away. Rinse, repeat...or something. I wish I could tell you what is hot or not, what is in or out. I can't though. I have what I think amounts to a certain enduring 'style', although those closest to me might call that a vast overstatement! As an antidote, this month I thought I would turn the spotlight to some of the complexities of what has come to be termed 'fast fashion', and with specific focus on its environmental and social impacts.

It has become synonymous with the rapid turnover of clothing collections, catering to consumer demands for trendy gear at affordable prices, and a staggering waste mountain. We all want to look good, right? While fast fashion has undoubted benefits for clothes enthusiasts and the style gurus amongst us, the environmental and social costs bear some scrutiny.

The stellar rise of fast fashion is traceable to the turn of the millennium, with brands like Zara (Spanish parent company Inditex posted €36 billion in global sales in 2023), H&M (£18 million net sales in 2023), and Forever 21 (\$ 100 million sales in 2023) pioneering the model that many more follow.

These companies have made their money by capitalising on quick production cycles, outsourcing manufacturing to countries with cheap labour and adopting aggressive marketing strategies to fuel consumer demand. Fast fashion thrives on the principle of rapid



turnover, with new styles flooding stores every few weeks, enticing us consumers to constantly update our wardrobes. We buy more clothes, and wear them less before getting rid of them, than we did a decade ago. That sort of scaling up is not sustainable.

The environmental footprint of fast fashion is staggering. In 2019 the UN Environment Programme UNEP reported that the fashion industry is the second-largest consumer of water globally and responsible for around 6% of climate changing emissions.

From the use of pesticides and poor land management practices for the cultivation of raw materials like cotton, to manufacturing



processes involving chemical dyes, forever chemicals, and synthetic fibres, the industry generates massive amounts of pollution and waste. Textile dyeing is a major polluter of clean water globally, with toxic chemicals contaminating rivers and ecosystems in garment-producing regions.

In India a few years ago the Supreme Court had to step in to regulate the leather tanning industry as it was laying waste to local river health. Such interventions, where the court essentially took over the management of pollution from the regulatory agency that was simply overwhelmed, are rare, granted. But the example offers a sense of the scale of the issues at stake.

Additionally, the disposal of unsold and unwanted clothing adds to

the burden of overflowing landfills, where synthetic fibres can take hundreds of years to decompose, releasing harmful microplastics into the environment, added to that textiles are also estimated to account for approximately 9% of annual microplastic losses to the ocean. Again, according to UNEP, every second, the equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned, there's a great YouTube clip which gives some interesting additional facts and context, which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/0v7f0KeNpv8>.

UNEP calculates that if we don't change our patterns of consumption, by 2050 the fashion industry will use up a quarter of the world's carbon budget. The carbon budget is the amount of carbon equivalent that can be safely emitted into the environment to minimise the negative effects of climate change. That's a big piece of the pie to just come from our clothes.

Where does it all end up? The model in most of Europe and America is to export what isn't sold. In Europe

the majority of unwanted clothes are bundled up, sold as lots, by weight, and sent to Africa via brokers who aim to make some profit on hoping to find saleable clothes within the bundles, then disposing of the rest.

Ghana has become the home of Europe's fashion surplus to the extent that a landfill in the capital, paid for through a loan from the International Monetary Fund in order to help manage municipal waste safely for 20 years, was full to bursting in within three years. The Ghanaian authorities are paying back a loan for a facility that doesn't help them at all.

Continued on page 36

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..... Continued from page 35

You may also have seen images of west African beaches littered with dumped bundles of unloved material, or, seen the images of the Atacama desert in Chile littered with tonnes of dumped clothing. It seems totally incongruous that one of the most delicate, desolate and remote environments on Earth should be transformed into a garbage patch by unwanted clothing that was made in Bangladesh or China, half a world away, worn in California and then sent off to a broker in Chile. Globalisation sometimes gives us a lot to reflect upon.

Aside from environmental impacts, perhaps one of the most glaring consequences of fast fashion is its exploitation of workers in developing countries, such as Bangladesh. Workers in garment factories often endure long hours, low wages, and unsafe working conditions to meet tight production deadlines. In order to overcome criticism, much is made of the provenance of garments by some sellers/brands. They may sometimes be deceptive, however.

In January 2024 the bulk online clothes brand Boohoo was found to have relabelled clothes made in South Asia as having been made in the UK, although it claimed that it was a one-off error based on human error. Moreover, the disposable nature of fast fashion perpetuates a culture of overconsumption, encouraging consumers to prioritise quantity over quality and discard clothing after just a few wears. This cycle not only contributes to the depletion of natural resources but also perpetuates a throwaway culture that undermines the value of craftsmanship and durability. Gone are the days where a stitch in time saved nine, instead, to quote Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, 'more stitches equals less riches'. The 'sell' seems to be - why would you want to be seen wearing something mended when it can just as easily and cheaply be bought again?

Of course, the worst excesses of the environmental and social consequences are not so much of a lived-experience in most parts of Europe. Relatively active environmental and social movements backed with relatively effective laws and policies ensure certain minimum standards for workers and certain quality standards for the environment. As with a number of areas where cheap labour and lax regulation can lead to high profit margins, a lot is outsourced abroad, both for the production and for the ultimate disposal as above.

Amid growing awareness of the detrimental impacts of fast fashion, consumers, activists, and policymakers are calling for systemic change. Sustainable fashion initiatives aim to promote ethical labour practices, reduce environmental harm, and foster transparency and accountability throughout the supply chain. Patagonia has been one such brand. From eco-friendly materials and fair-trade certifications to clothing rental and resale platforms, like Vinted (which, yes, does have a Spanish presence) there is a growing movement towards a more responsible and conscious approach to fashion consumption. In the EU, the new ecodesign directive agreed last year, although not



yet in force, building on the existing one, will be expanded to cover most categories of product, including textiles and fashion garments so as to improve their energy and resource efficiency. One of the most important changes for clothes is that unsold consumer goods will also be banned from being destroyed.

Currently, this is a significant problem across the garment industry, especially with clothes from the more expensive designers. Any production overruns are usually destroyed, not discounted or exported, so as to maintain the exclusivity of the products. You wouldn't want to be paying less for a perfectly good item that was last year's look, after all, would you? Well perhaps you might like the choice?

So, what to do? So-called fast fashion has revolutionised the way we, in the affluent countries of the world shop and dress, but its convenience comes at a significant cost to the planet. As consumers, we have the power to demand transparency, support ethical brands, and embrace sustainable alternatives. Sometimes that isn't always the cheapest option, but then, the cheapest option isn't actually 'cheap' when the true costs are factored in, we're taking from ourselves, ultimately.

We all share the planet, and out of sight out of mind attitude can't really work anymore, if it ever did. By reimagining the fashion industry as a force for good, we can create a future where style meets sustainability, and where garments tell a story of craftsmanship, dignity, and respect for the world we inhabit. Recycling through donating to and buying from charity shops, vintage retailers, online or Apps can certainly help too. A really informative read on this is Oliver Franklin-Wallis' Wasteland (it was a Radio 4 book of the week a while back and available on iPlayer if you can access it). It covers more than just fast fashion but has plenty to say on the matter.



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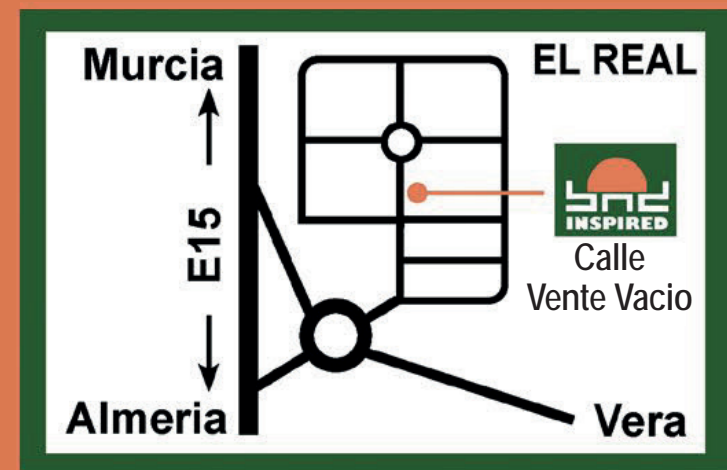
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The Bard and the One-Armed from Lepanto

As previously mentioned on page 33 in our celebration of San Jorge, every year on 23rd April we celebrate World Book Day. This day is a celebration of books and literature all over the world, and in Spain there are numerous Book Fairs in the cities with stalls in parks and streets where you can browse, read and buy books.

And why April 23rd? Because on this day, in 1616, two of literatures greatest creators passed away: Spain's Miguel de Cervantes and Britain's William Shakespeare.

Paradoxically, though, they didn't actually draw their last breath on the same day, there were ten days between their final moments.

What had happened was that Pope Gregorio XII had put the calendar forward in 1582 so that 5th October became 15th October. Spain, Italy and France conformed immediately, but England didn't adopt the Gregorian calendar until 1752. So William Shakespeare's death on 23rd April was according to the Julian calendar which Britain still adhered to. According to the Gregorian calendar, Shakespeare died on May 3rd.

But never mind, there are lots of other similarities between literature's two greats – and also lots of differences, of course.

Cervantes was a novelist, Shakespeare a playwright. Cervantes was a soldier, Shakespeare an actor. Cervantes is mainly known for one very famous work, Shakespeare produced dozens.

Although both achieved a certain amount of fame in their lifetimes, nobody actually knows what either of them looked like, as they never had their likeness taken while they were alive. We always see Cervantes with his long, pointed nose, high forehead and distinctive moustache. And Shakespeare with his dark, curly hair and ear ring. But all portraits painted of either were based on hearsay and descriptions, so there is no accurate record of their appearance.

Cervantes and Shakespeare are both still points of reference for their respective languages. Cervantes's most well-known work, Don Quixote, is considered the first modern novel and one of the most important works in literature. Only the Bible has been translated into more languages than Don Quixote. And of course Shakespeare was the father of more than 1,700 phrases and hundreds of expressions that revolutionised the English language.

There is a portion of both their lives that we know nothing about.

We do know that Cervantes was a soldier and that he was shot in the hand during the battle of Lepanto. His hand was badly damaged, and that was how he earned the name 'The One-Armed from Lepanto'. However, he didn't lose his hand or arm.

At one point, during a voyage back from the Americas, the ship he travelled on was attacked by pirates, and he was taken prisoner. He was taken to Algiers where he lived in slavery for more than five years before his family was able to pay the ransom of 500 ducados. We know nothing about the years he spent in Algeria.

Shakespeare's 'unknown period' was his life before he arrived in London. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, son of a wealthy merchant. That much we do know. But we do not know why he went



to London in the first place. One theory has him fleeing the local law because he had been caught poaching deer. Another simply claims that he went to London for work purposes, maybe with a travelling theatre company that had passed through his home town.

Today, more than four hundred years after their deaths, they are still amongst the most important literary personages of all times. No one novel has been made into a film as many times as Don Quixote. The first Don Quixote film ever to hit the big screen was the French company Gaumont's version in 1898. Over the years, more than 150 film versions have been rolled in many languages, such as the Russian-Bulgarian 'Don Kikhot vozvrashchayetsya' from 1996 or the Chinese Tang Ji Je De in which Don Quixote has super powers and confronts Evil.

And of course the works of Shakespeare are the most interpreted plays ever! If we were to do a Top Ten most produced plays in the world, there's no doubt that Shakespeare's masterpieces, such as Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet or A Midsummer Night's Dream, would be right at the top. It is thought that some of them are actually reproduced six times a day, every day, all over the world!

When Cervantes died he was buried, as he had requested, in the Madrid Convent of Barefoot Trinitarians. His coffin was lost during the restoration of the convent late in the 17th century, placed and forgotten in an old crypt. It was re-discovered in 2015 and Cervantes's remains now rest in the same church, as was his wish, and his grave has become a popular pilgrim destination.

Shakespeare also rests with the Trinitarians: in the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon.

He must have known that his grave would also be much visited, and to keep away grave souvenir robbers he had the following inscribed on his coffin:

*Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear,
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blessed be the man that spares these stones,
And cursed be he that moves my bones*



Hold your hand out!

By Evelyn McCrorie

I started school in Ayr, Scotland in 1941, aged 4 and three quarters.

All I can remember of that first day was of a boy called Paul shouting "Good morning, Mr. Baird!" as the headmaster took his place at the rostrum. I thought Paul was amazing. I guess his mother was pretty proud too.

As the school year rolled on, the weather became bitter. Monday mornings were the worst as the ancient boiler reluctantly stirred into action. And I remember my father having to carry me over snow drifts to get me there at all.

However absences were frowned upon. You just needed to be missing and Mr. McConnell, the janitor, was pounding at your door. Not just enquiring after your health but barging in to check the culprit was actually tucked up in bed!

I think there were 40 children in my class. The "bright" ones were seated at the back, the "rest" nearest to the teacher.

We sat at wooden desks (with ink wells and scratchy pens) - and never left them unless invited. No roaming around.

And, worst of all, no talking!

If you talked during the lesson, or even in the corridors, you were immediately given "the tawse". The tawse was a leather thong with a slit end (banned in Scotland in the 1980s).

Being a talker I received my fair share, and it was painful.

Many years later, my late husband Bill, while working at his old school as a relief teacher, was instructed to send off to Lochgelly for his own tawse. When he received this instrument of torture he sent it back immediately.

Perhaps because of the 'no talking' rule, a lot was achieved. The



teacher would write a piece of poetry on the board and we were expected to have learned it by heart by the time he or she had finished. My favourites were poems by Robert Burns, who was born a few miles away in the village of Alloway.

Reciting Burns in our broad Ayrshire accents was rewarding. But one day, out of the blue, Jennifer appeared in our class. She was from England and naturally had a very different accent. The teacher, somewhat misguided I think, asked us all to try and speak like Jennifer!

Was there any bullying?

Perhaps a little. Jean - a rather frail girl - was the butt of some boys' jokes. Nothing physical but just endless teasing. Our very wise teacher asked me and my best friend Mary to take Jean under our wing. We did this very willingly and thereafter Jean never left our side. No more nonsense.

Were my early school days happy?

Yes, on the whole. Discipline was strict but I think we were well prepared for the next stage of our education.

In 1947 Mary and I danced away merrily into the next chapter - dressed in our ankle length "New Look" outfits!

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Lost Love

This was the fourth or fifth time Marianne had seen him walking down the High Street. He looked vaguely familiar, something about the way he walked reminded her of a long time ago in her youth, but of course, it couldn't be him, he had joined the Army or something and had gone away, left town. However, there was something about this stranger that reminded her of Tom.

When she got home that night, she went straight to her wardrobe where she kept her memories in an old shoebox. Photographs of her parents, the places they went on holiday to when she was a child, letters from her uncle in Australia and notes from Tom that had been passed surreptitiously in the science lab, the only time they had the same lesson.

They'd made plans together, plans of what they would do once they left school, where they would live. Yes, they had been childhood sweethearts, but her father hated Tom because his father was only a garage mechanic, a grease monkey slogging his guts out working for someone else. Whereas Marianne's father was a self-made man who owned his own contracting firm. Oh yes he'd had nothing when he left school at the age of fourteen, but he'd started working for a chap who could see the future, could see where the housing industry was going and he worked hard. When his boss announced that he was retiring he offered to buy the business, in instalments, he was only twenty-three and now owned his own up and coming business.

That business was now Marianne's and she ran it just as efficiently as her father had before her, but she had branched out to run an estate agents shop in the High Street, so that she could not only build the houses, but also sell them as well. But about six weeks ago she saw him walking down the High Street and something clicked,

By Charles Roberts



she couldn't put her finger on it, but she knew, subconsciously that she knew him, but couldn't remember where she'd seen him before. Since then she had seen him four or five times.

It niggled her that she knew that she knew him, but couldn't remember from where or when. As she was looking through the old pictures, she would smile at a sudden memory of playing with her mother on some beach, or walking along a street in some faraway place with her father, that's if you could call Paris or Rome faraway. Then she remembered that each and every holiday, from the age of eleven, was tinged with sadness because she wasn't with Tom.

It had been love at first sight for both of them, as they stood in their respective lines that first day in the big school, as they called it. Girls in one-line, boys in another. The head teacher stood on an

orange box and as he called out the names, the two lines looked at each other, when her name was called she glanced across and looked straight into his eyes. Then when his name was called she looked again and his eyes held hers, she knew from that moment that she had found her soul mate, the man she wanted to spend the rest of her life with.

He wasn't tall, in fact he was rather short for his age and skinny not fat, his thin arms poked out of his short sleeved shirt and skinny legs from his shorts. All the boys wore shorts until they reached fifteen in those days. He didn't have a blazer on like most of the other boys, but neither did she. Only about half the boys and girls lined up that morning had the school uniform on, it wasn't compulsory so they didn't wear it. 'They're there to learn not to look fancy', her father had said when her mother said that they should buy Marianne a uniform.

Marianne's father drove the wedge between them, he stopped her seeing Tom and when she left school she was sent to a finishing school in Switzerland for three years. By the time she returned Tom was in the Army and, she heard, had been killed by a roadside bomb in a faraway war torn country where he was trying to keep the peace. Then her father forced her into a loveless marriage, which was good for business. A marriage which produced two children, but their father wasn't to be seen. He'd started an affair when Marianne was pregnant with their first child, Richard, and from then on it had been a constant non-stop stream of different women. Marianne sometimes wondered how she had become pregnant again, how he had found the time to sleep with her, but she didn't know about all his women until much later, at her daughter's wedding in fact when a strange woman approached her and told her everything.

She didn't divorce him, instead she just pushed him, very gently, out of the business and made sure that word got around that he wasn't to be trusted. He'd had a heart attack while playing golf one day and was dead by the time they reached the hospital. Marianne didn't shed a tear, and neither did the children because they too knew what he was like, Marianne had seen to that.

It was on late afternoon on a Friday. Marianne was just tidying her desk and readying herself to go home when he walked into the shop, she stopped what she was doing and watched him as he walked towards her desk.

"I'm surprised to find you still open," he said approaching her, "I thought everyone would be closed for the weekend".

"I was just about to close, but can I help you?"

"I want to sell my father's business", there was something about his eyes which sent a shiver of recognition down Marianne's back.

"You've come to the right place", she said smiling, those eyes are



his eyes she thought, but that's impossible, he died forty years ago. "What sort of business is it you wish to sell?"

"A garage. My father ran it until his death ten years ago. I had to put a manager in until I came out of the army."

My god, she thought, it is him.

"I heard about your husband Marianne", he dropped the bombshell and she was speechless. "How have you been?"

"I was told that you had been killed."

"Would you like a drink and we can catch up on everything". Marianne looked into his eyes and knew that at the age of sixty two her life was just beginning.

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Pasaje Begoña

In the centre of Torremolinos there is a small L-shaped street with an unusual and interesting history. In the late 50's and throughout the 60s it was a lively zone with at least 50 establishments – family restaurants, flamenco taverns, night and jazz clubs which catered for everybody regardless of their sexual orientation.

During the Franco dictatorship, this small alley, which heaved with life at night and slept during the day, became an oasis of freedom for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transvestites from all over the world.

It is not as strange as it may seem. The foreign currencies brought in by tourists, the presence of the international jet set and the desire to project a modern image, all united to convert Torremolinos into an island of freedom, and the authorities turned a blind eye.

Witnesses from the era remember seeing John Lennon and Brian Epstein, The Beatles's manager, sitting on one of the terraces in the alley watching the young boys walking by, betting on whom Epstein would choose as his companion for the night.

The fame of the alley attracted famous people from all over: Coccinelle, a famous French transsexual, Amanda Lear, Salvador Dalí's muse, Luciana Paluzzi, one of the first Bond girls and Grace Jones, the Jamaican singer and super model amongst many others.

One of the front figures in Pasaje Begoña was Pia Beck, a Dutch jazz singer and pianist who was a regular feature in the Blue Note bar. She had no qualms about being seen holding hands with her wife, and the bar was a meeting place for all gays, lesbians and transvestites who liked listening to good music and



having a great time.

Over the years there was the odd bust in Pasaje Begoña, but they only amounted to minor incidents that provided the revellers with subjects for gossip and conversation. Everybody knew what was going on there and nobody felt threatened. It was taken rather as a joke.

However, all this changed on 24th June 1971 when the Civil Governor, Víctor Arroyo, ordered a major raid in which 300 people were arrested and 114 of them charged with 'impinging morality and proper practices'. The humiliation and treatment of the 'delinquents' was par for the course during the Franco years.

The so-called Law about Danger and Social Rehabilitation considered homosexuality illegal and it was punishable under the law, sometimes even by prison. Thus, that night several of those present were incarcerated and those with foreign passports were deported. Everybody who was involved got a criminal record and was threatened with being 'under observation of the authorities'.

Many of the establishments were fined and closed down, some of them forever. The alley sank into oblivion and disrepair, and it became a hang-out for prostitutes and others on the margins of society. Its name was changed to Calle Gil Vicente.

However, Pasaje Begoña's destiny has taken a U turn and it has become a focal point in the fight against prejudice and for the equal rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transvestites (LGBT).

Congress has recently declared it a Historic Memory Site due to its role as the cradle of LGBT rights. It has regained its original name and been remodelled to turn it into a tourist and cultural attraction.

It has been cleaned up, the street paving has been polished, the carpentry replaced and street lights and ornaments have been put up. The walls have been painted with large graffiti which depicts many of the past patrons, there are informative posters, and the aptly named Phoenix association has plans for activities to revitalise and reanimate the street.

Many businesses have taken over premises in Pasaje Begoña and the lively atmosphere of the alley is returning.

As one of the councillors involved in the project said, the area is a 'symbol of freedom, tolerance, co existence and diversity, a universe in which everybody fits in'.

Almost half a century after political bigots sent the area into decline, Pasaje Begoña has been born again.

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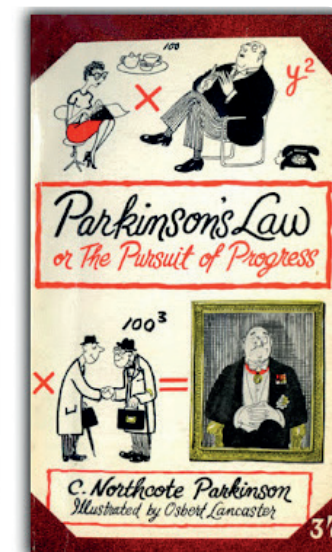
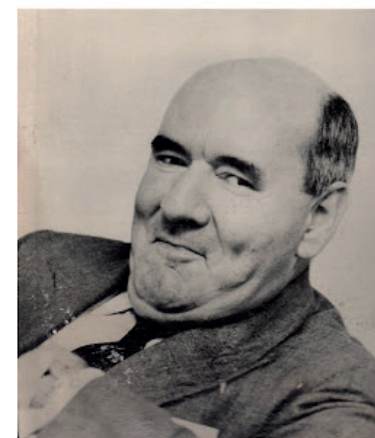
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Parkinson's Law!!

By Jos Biggs



Have you ever heard the expression 'Work expands to fill the time available for its completion.'

If you have then you are quoting Parkinson's First Law.

Parkinson's Law is sort of a real law; It's the title of a book written by C Northcote Parkinson. The book really exists, as did Cyril Northcote Parkinson.

To fill you in, Cyril Northcote Parkinson was born on July 30th 1909 at Barnard Castle, Durham. He was a historian and author, who jogged along quietly without raising much of a ripple until articles that he had published in the Economist in 1955 were published in book form in 1958.

His First Law, the one about work filling time is without doubt very true; no matter how much I don't have to do it still seems to take me all day to not do it!

His Second Law states that 'Expenditure rises to meet income.' I'd like to put that one to the test!

His Third Law is the deep statement that 'Expansion means complexity, and complexity decay.' All throughout history there are examples of this – look what happened to the Roman Empire!

His Fourth Law suggests that 'The number of people in any working group tends to increase irrespective of the amount of work to be completed.'

Think back to school days, when the maths teacher would come up with a problem such as: If three men take two hours and twenty minutes to build a wall, how long will it take five men?

Obviously two hours and twenty minutes! The maths teacher had not factored in how fast each individual of the original three men will work – one might lay three bricks a minute, while another might only manage three bricks in two minutes.

Then the two extra men; how fast will they work? Will they be three bricks a minute men, or will they add to the problems by laying, for instance, two bricks in a minute and a half?

Then, of course, we are not told if the five men are five different men, in which case it is no help knowing how long the original three man brick laying team took.

And what about tea breaks? Nobody mentioned them!

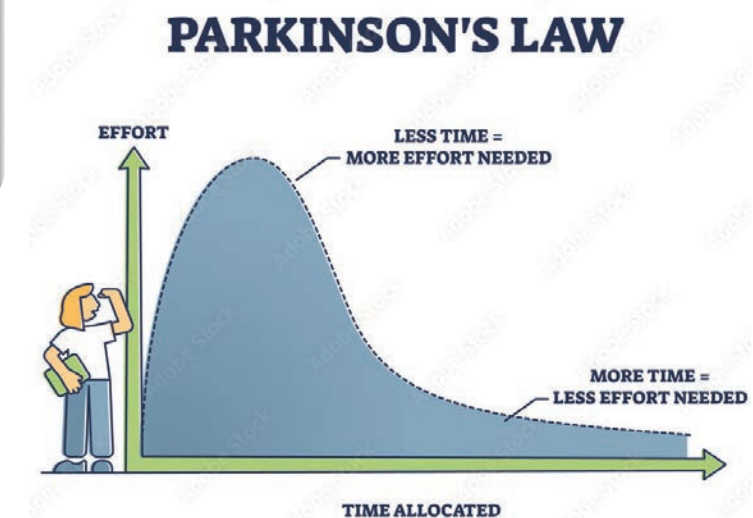
I rest my case. Funny though, the maths teachers never seemed to understand that the variables mentioned would make the whole question quite impossible to answer until further information was

forthcoming.

But my favourite Law is the one so hilariously covered in 'Yes Minister' and its follow-up 'Yes Prime Minister.'

It states that: 'The work done is in inverse proportion to the number of Civil Servants employed to do it.'

And lastly, a very comforting Law: 'The nice thing about standards is that there are so many to choose from.'



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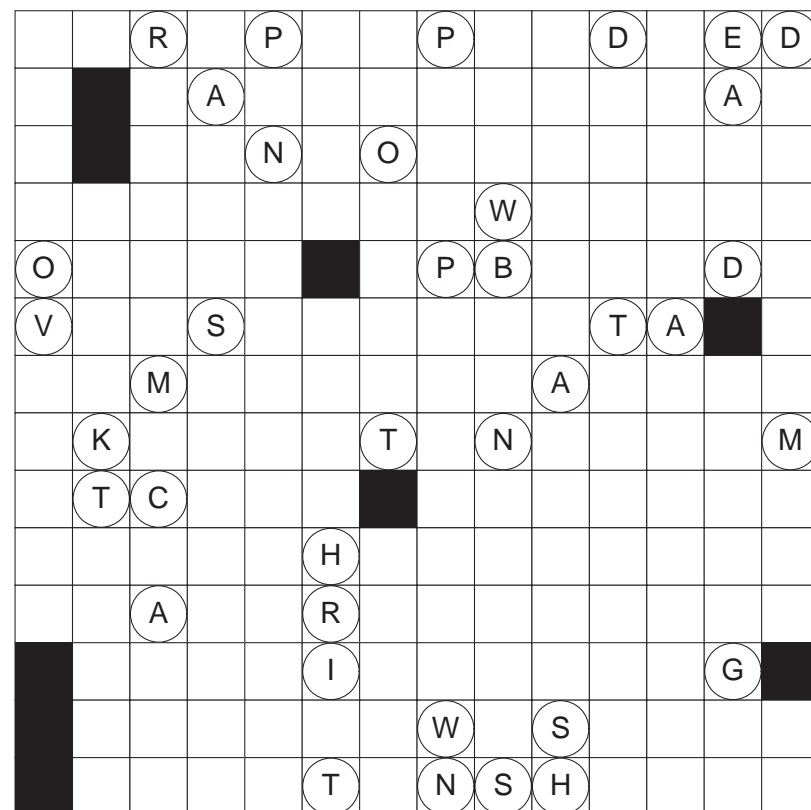
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Puzzle Time

Reverse Word Search

Puzzle solutions on page 74



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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Amens	Merit	Storm
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What is Happening in the Local Property Market. April 2024

By Voss Homes Estate Agents with offices in Huércal Overa & La Alfoquia

January & February were great months. March was absolutely amazing and the April diary is full already with buyers and property take on's. As usual there are lots of buyers coming from the UK, Ireland, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Germany etc. Just a point...Please do not think that automatically someone from say Belgium as an example will only buy a property from an agent from Belgium. This is wrong. Buyers do their research and choose to go out with estate agents with the best local reputation and one they can trust. Not someone just because they come from the same country.

We are continually having conversations with people where they are assuming that the British are no longer buying due to Brexit. This is sooooo far from the truth. The British by far are still the main buyers in Almeria.

Occasionally sellers say when they are thinking of putting their property on the market that they might put their properties with more than one agent. The main reason is that they think it will give them a wider audience and increase their chances of selling...Well, I am sorry this is the best way of actually REDUCING the chances of getting your property sold.

You are now Over Advertising and Degrading your Property. – If you go “Multi-Agency” then each of those agents will more than likely send the photos etc. to other agents without you even knowing so it will go on their sites as well. Next, every agent will then advertise



your property on the same portal website such as Rightmove, A place in the sun, Kyero etc. When buyers do their property research on the internet the first website's they will probably go on will be these. They will then see your property listed 3,4, 5, 6 or more times right next to each other on the same page. If YOU were looking again for a property and you saw this, what would you think of that property? Yes, you would automatically think there must be something wrong with it and would probably not even bother to enquire.

Too often when we have a property on our books that is also with other agents the very first question potential buyers ask us is “I’ve seen this property on lots of agents websites... What’s wrong with it?”. No matter what we say to defend the property the seed of doubt has already been planted.

Even if a potential buyer did decide to view your property, they will be assuming that as

you have gone with so many agents you must be desperate to sell and you will accept a ridiculously low offer.

Lastly, by going multi agency do you really think you will end up with 2, 3 or 4 estate agents all fighting over each other to sell your property? Sorry, NO! You will end up with lots of agents who can't be bothered to sell your property because they are thinking “Why should we put the effort in to selling this property when it will probably be one of the other agents who will sell it”.

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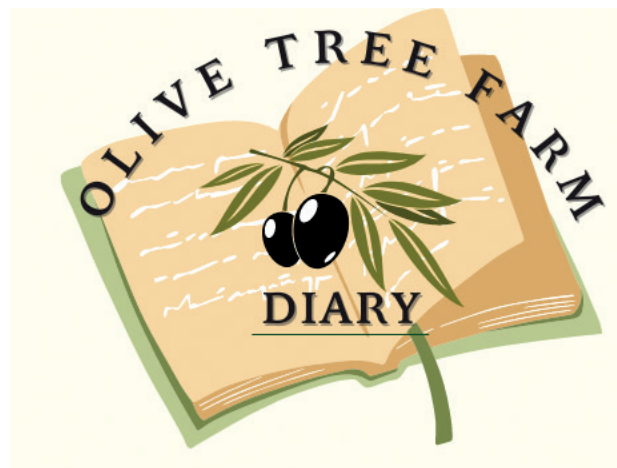
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March was an odd one indeed for Olive Tree Farm, and for many, many local areas. Still hardly any rainfall, which means a lot of extra irrigating to make sure our Olive Trees get the water they need and deserve.

As I'm sure you know, last year many olive farmers had little to no olives to press, which has sky-rocketed the price of olive oil – a big staple to many families in Spain. We were terribly affected too, along with our neighbours, and in the end only one or two of our trees had some olives (and even then not many), certainly not enough for a press. We were fortunate, however, to have a couple of bottles left in storage from the year before, which has been fine to use.

Never in my teenage life did I believe the words “I miss picking olives” would ever leave my lips, but as a 30-something adult, they did. I missed it... and I certainly missed our tradition that always ends our Press Day: pouring fresh, golden oil into a bowl, serving it with a warm loaf and a spot of cheese. Yum!

Ben has been working hard on the farm when he isn't hard at work renovating pools, and has created a watering system to make sure the channels take it in turns every day to get a real decent flow of irrigation water... and it seems to be working! Our trees are delightfully filling with buds and growth, on the cusp of flowering and – fingers crossed – preparing to turn into that coveted fruit.

But that does add a new worry. Every year there are talks of thieves stripping trees in the night, or taking off with crates that have been stored waiting for their press date.

We will have to be vigilant, but that's where our animals certainly come in handy. The geese make effective guards (trust me, I've



experienced first hand if they don't want to let someone in), and they are loud. Loud enough that I can hear them from my bedroom at night if something is suddenly amiss.

This is also why I'm pushing to bring Guinea Fowls back in to the farm. Talk about an alarm system, and no batteries required! Plus the added bonus is they eat a wide arrange of insects, including ticks. I don't think Ben needs much more convincing.

We'll be keeping an eye out to buy some over Spring, but if we can't get hold of them locally, then we will order in fertile eggs to incubate ourselves

Speaking of incubation... We had a mishap on the farm, and the Khaki Campbells' eggs had been discovered and eaten by an animal. We were gutted, and suddenly worried for the goose eggs, which had amounted up to nine!

We apologised profusely to Mrs Goose and liberated her eggs to try in the incubator, just in case her clutch was lost in the moments she wasn't in the nest box. She wasn't spending time in there sitting on the eggs yet, her first job being to get the numbers up first.

Continued on page 52

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..... Continued from page 51

This was followed by... disappointment. Unfortunately, the eggs weren't fertile, as we candled at day 12 and saw nothing within the shells. Still, it is better to have tried than not at all.

Mrs Goose herself has built up four more eggs, which we have let her keep (sorry Ben, he does love a good fried goose egg). They are most likely infertile, but we didn't want to upset her again and lose the trust we have with her.

That hasn't slowed our incubating bug though! We are now up to 24 chicken eggs in the incubator for another fresh batch, to hatch in around two and a half weeks from now. We also found the cradle and auto-turner, so we don't have to remember to turn the eggs every 4-5 hours, only keep an eye on humidity levels. Much more easy-going (and no more late-night gasps of "did you do the eggs this evening?!")

The last lot of chicks we hatched are in a larger growing on tank now, which was donated by a friend to Ben who knows his passion for reptiles. Perhaps it will house something exotic one day, but for now it's giving the chicks some much needed space to grow before we take them up to the farm to join the flock. Ben even added in some perfect, narrow logs for them to perch on, and they cuddle close together at night right across the wood to

sleep. So cute.

All in all, nine survived the first few days after hatching, and they are delightfully funny to care for.

It's been a very interesting experience to grow the chicks on in the way we have this time, and I think they are the tamest little chickens we have ever had – and we've had some right snuggle-lovers in the past!

On a final note, our biggest upset this month has been our failing with the ducks... but 'lo how they have surprised us. For over a week we have been collecting chicken eggs from the hens' houses, and what do you know? We accumulated five duck eggs!

We definitely need to make some adjustments to their own nest box so they feel safe and secure to use it once more, but for now we shall keep collecting their eggs and incubate them ourselves.

Thank you for reading, and do stay posted - I hope to have some quacking news next month!

You can follow the progress of the family and farm on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/OliveTreeFarmSpain/

You can also find our YouTube channel, just search for Olive Tree Farm! We will be adding new videos soon as we dig into some projects, so subscribe now so you don't miss any.






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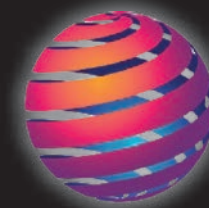
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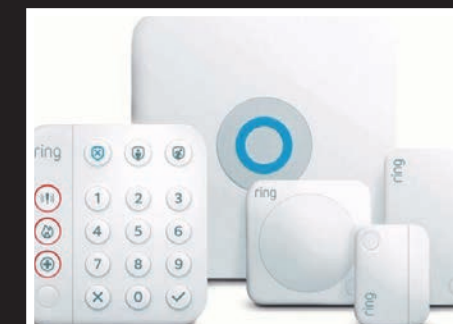
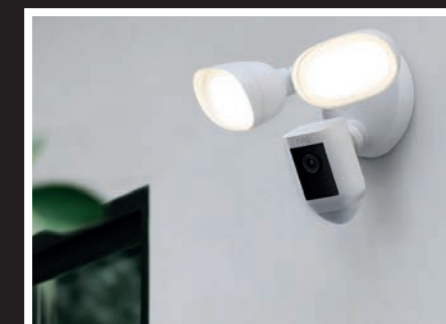


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Have you ever wondered what makes you, “you”?

Perhaps that’s a bit of a heavy way to start but still makes for an interesting conversation and something that I want to get back to very shortly.

I did briefly toy with the idea of covering car safety this month but as it would be on the back of a very recent automotive brush with death, I decided it best to change tack.

The whole thing would have very easily degenerated into a rant about poor signage but suffice to say, if you are ever a passenger in a car that takes off from the road and flies through the air before landing nose first in two metres of water at about 80kmh then I can thoroughly recommend the Citroën C3 as a structurally-sound carriage. It also floats remarkably well... for a while at least. All joking aside, it did bring to my attention, one aspect of vehicle safety of which many may not be fully aware and that is airbags.

Airbags are designed for one thing – to stop your head hitting the steering wheel in a front-on crash. Contrary to popular belief, it is not a balloon that gently inflates so as to cushion your head. It is a violent piece of equipment, filled with an explosive that goes off with something of a bang when deployed and then deflates almost as rapidly.

The explosives used also generate a significant amount of heat, meaning that should your head come into contact with it then you are likely to end up with scorch marks on your face. This is, of course infinitely better than having a rearranged forehead so I’m not going to complain – that would be foolish.

Airbags are one of the few features of modern cars that are worth having (that and the 3 point seat belt – thank you Volvo). You can take your lane departure assist and adaptive cruise control and find



somewhere dark to put them!

I would however urge a word of caution – please don’t sit too close to the steering wheel if it has an airbag. If you are ever unfortunate enough to need the services of one, it could cause you more harm than good at close quarters.

So ends this month’s Tufty Club lecture. It’s good to get it off your chest and I don’t think anybody really noticed... now where was I?

Ah, yes... You.

“You” are a complex machine, organism... the list goes on. Your character is largely based on your life experiences, the coping mechanisms you pick up en route and the environment in which you function. The myriad of events and movements made during your lifetime all have an effect on what evolves into a unique entity – you.

Beyond the existential aspects of individuality there are also the genetic variables. As a species we share 99.9% of our DNA with all other humans on the planet.

DNA (or Deoxyribonucleic acid – catchy little name) is a complex molecular structure consisting of bonded pairs of organic molecules (phosphates, sugars, nitrates and hydrocarbons), which are common to all life on Earth.

That point does make sense when you look at it objectively. Life on this planet depends on transference of energy, be it photosynthesis or digestion so it would make sense for that energy to be compatible with all forms of life. It has been widely theorised (with strong scientific evidence) that life started in the oceans some 2.5 billion years ago and not on a Saturday afternoon, a “few thousand” years ago...

Much mirth and frivolity has been had about the amount of shared DNA there is between us and other animals; we share roughly 98.8% of our DNA with Chimpanzees but that statement is something of a white Elephant (with which we share 89%).

How can that 1.2% make such a difference?



Well, each human DNA molecule contains approximately 23,000 genetic codes, some of which determine the colour of your eyes, hair, skin, your height, propensity for weight gain amongst a myriad of others.

That 1.2% equates to 276 differences, some of which can be quite significant.

Incidentally, humans share 98% of their DNA with pigs. Does that make bacon cannibalism and is that why it tastes so good? Food for thought!

All flippancy aside, as a result it has been possible to use pigs as donors for organ transplants. This does raise some significant ethical issues but is also a good indicator of the whole inter-connectedness of it all... At the other end of the scale we share 55% of our DNA with Mosquitos and 50% with trees so maybe it is possible to talk to plants after all. We even share 25% of our genetic makeup with yeast!

Once you grasp that concept it is easier to understand how and why we interact with the world around us, how we are affected by bacterial and fungal infections (athlete’s foot, for example).

The Covid-19 virus is a prime example of an organism that used shared genetics in order to propagate itself. With each infection, the virus altered slightly (learning?) but as this virus was “new”, our own DNA did not have the necessary code to deal with it. The result? Well, we all remember that...

The basic function of DNA is very similar to a computer program. It holds a complex set of instructions that are orchestrated and carried out so that the machine it controls can function. This has been refined over millennia by natural selection, trial and error.

DNA has been quite rightly called the building blocks of life. It is not a code that is set in stone and has the ability to adapt itself so that the host organism can

survive in it’s surroundings.

It is possible to trace our ancestry with genetic analysis and many of us have been surprised at how diverse our origins can be. It can unlock all kinds of revelations and family secrets, some of which have been kept under wraps for years.

Genetic research is a multi-billion dollar industrial sector and the companies involved have dramatically improved our understanding of how nature works. They have managed to grow crops that are resistant to certain parasites and have found cures for diseases.

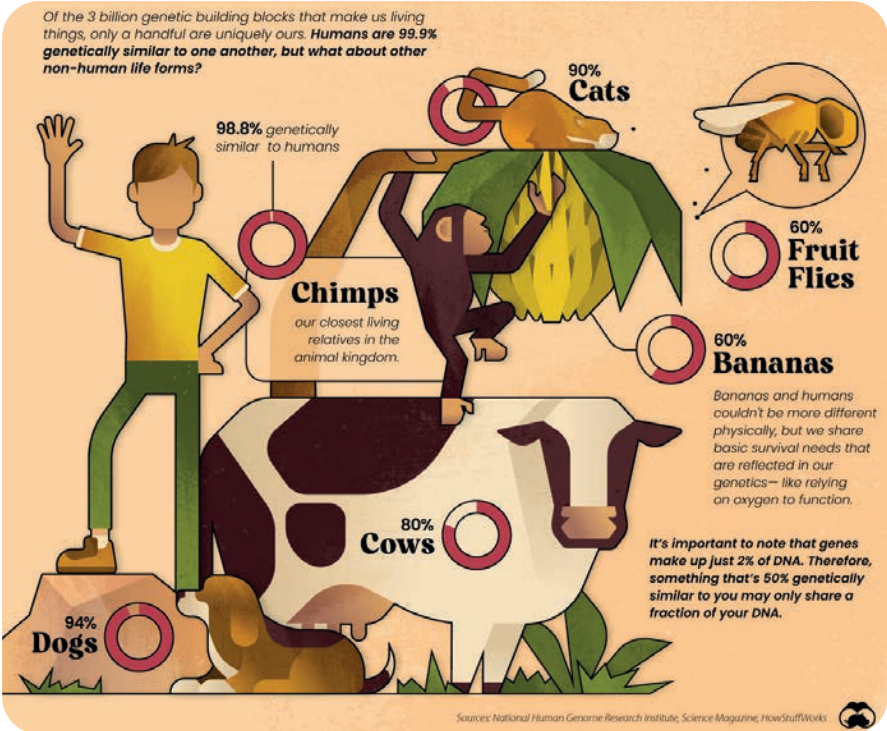
There are those who argue that nature already has ways of dealing with parasites and pollination. Ways that are being destroyed by practices that have consequences that we may not understand for generations to come...

Nonetheless, that does not detract from the beauty that is in the world.

The next time you are out and about, just take a minute to stop and look at the animals and plants around you. How much do you have in common with it all? As living organisms we are all dependent on each other in some way. From the humble earthworm (72% shared DNA) to cows (80%). We all have bits of this somewhere in our make-up, so if you ever call someone a “Cow” then at least you know you’re 80% right!

So, who are you?

Well, depending on your individual ancestry you are either 60% apple, 84% wolf or 70% slug (strangely enough) but unequivocally, what you are is unique and that’s always a good thing!



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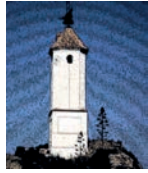
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The Humble Car Radio

Seems like cars have always had radios. Not so. Here's a true story.



One evening, in 1929, two young men, William Lear and Elmer Wavering drove their girlfriends to a lookout point high above the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois, to watch the sunset.

A romantic night to be sure, but one of the women observed that it would be even nicer if they could listen to music in the car. Typical!

Lear and Wavering liked the idea. Both men had tinkered with radios (Lear had served as a radio operator in the Navy during World War I) and it wasn't long before they were taking apart a home radio and trying to get it to work in a car. Not as easy as it sounds.

Cars have ignition systems, generators, spark plugs, and other electrical equipment that generate noisy interference, almost impossible to listen to the radio with the engine running.

One by one, Lear and Wavering identified and eliminated each source of electrical interference.

When they finally got their radio to work, they took it to a radio convention in Chicago. There they met Paul Galvin, owner of Galvin Manufacturing Corporation. He made a product called a "battery

eliminator". A device that allowed the old battery-powered radios to run on household AC current.

As more homes were getting wired for electricity, radio manufacturers were now making more AC-powered sets. Galvin needed a new product to manufacture. When he met Lear and Wavering at the radio convention, he found it. He believed that mass-produced, affordable car radios had the potential to become a huge business.

Lear and Wavering set up shop in Galvin's factory. When they had perfected their first radio, they installed it in his Studebaker.

Galvin went to a local banker to apply for a loan. Thinking it might sweeten the deal, he had his men install a radio in the banker's Packard. Half hour after the installation, the banker's Packard caught on fire (They didn't get the loan).

Galvin didn't give up. He drove his Studebaker nearly 800 miles to Atlantic City to show off the radio at the 1930 Radio Manufacturers Association convention.

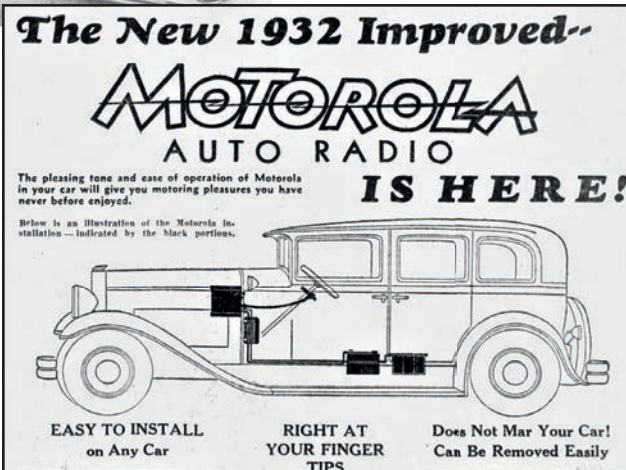
Too broke to afford a booth, he parked the car outside the convention hall and cranked up the radio so that passing conventioners could hear it. That idea worked. He got enough orders to put the radio into production.

At today's cost, a radio for a new

car would cost about \$3,000.

In 1930 it took two men several days to fit a car radio. The dashboard had to be taken apart so that the receiver and a single speaker could be installed, and the roof had to be cut open to install the antenna. These early radios ran on their own batteries, so holes had to be cut into the floorboards to accommodate them.

The installation instructions run to 28 pages! Selling complicated car radios that cost 20% of the price of a brand-new car wasn't easy in the best of times, let alone during the Great Depression. Galvin lost money in 1930 and struggled for a couple of years.



William Lear

But things picked up in 1933 when Ford began offering their radios pre-installed at the factory.

In 1934 they got another boost when Galvin struck a deal with Goodrich Tyre company to sell and install them in its chain of tyre stores. By then the price of the radio, including installation, had dropped to \$55. The Motorola (a play on the name of the record company Victrola) car radio was off and running.

In the meantime, Galvin continued to develop new uses for car radios.

In 1936, he introduced push-button tuning! Then introduced the Motorola Police Cruiser, a standard car radio that was factory preset to a single frequency to pick up police broadcasts.

In 1940 he developed the first hand-held two-way radio. The Handie-Talkie for the US Army.

A lot of the communication technologies that we take for granted today were born in Motorola labs in the years that followed WWII. In 1947 they came out with the first television to sell under \$200. In 1956 the company introduced the world's first pager.

In 1969 they supplied the radio and television equipment that was used to televise Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon. 1973 they



Paul Galvin

made the world's first hand-held cellular phone, then one of the largest cell phone manufacturers in the world. All started with the car radio.

Whatever happened to the two men who installed the first radio in Paul Galvin's car, Elmer Wavering and William Lear? They took very different paths in life.

Wavering stayed with Motorola. In the 1950's he helped change the automobile experience again when he developed the first

automotive alternator, replacing inefficient generators. The invention lead to such luxuries as power windows, power seats, and eventually, air-conditioning.

Lear also continued inventing. He held more than 150 patents. Remember eight-track tape players! But what he's really famous for are his contributions to the field of aviation. He invented radio direction finders for planes, aided the invention of the autopilot, designed the first fully automatic aircraft landing system and in 1963 introduced his most famous invention of all, the Lear Jet, the world's first mass-produced, affordable business jet. Not bad for a guy who dropped out of school after the eighth grade. Whatever that is.

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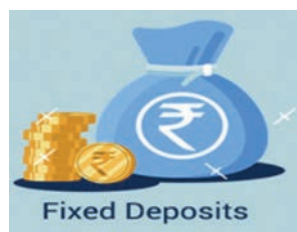
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Cash Savings vs Investing



Fixed Deposits



Equity Investments

Are you getting an acceptable return on your money held on deposit?

Is it time to review what your options are to achieve better returns on your Money?

Here are three things to consider:

1. Don't put all your eggs in one (cash) basket

Cash savings may be viewed as lower risk when compared to investing in shares. However, any gains made in deposit/savings/bank accounts will likely be taxable in the next year's tax return.

2. Can you beat inflation?

Slightly higher savings rates may not mean cash is keeping pace with inflation, which has just dropped from 11% in the autumn of 2022 to around 4.00% in the UK – the lowest for two years, but still above the Bank of England's target of 2%*. The rate in Spain is currently around 3.4%** , from around 6.00% a year ago.

3. When is the right time to return to investing?

Whilst savings rates may look attractive, knowing when to invest is difficult to judge, especially if markets are volatile. Holding funds in cash savings, possibly waiting for investment conditions to improve or volatility to reduce, means you may risk missing the market upturn. Historically stock-market based investments tend to do better than cash savings over the longer-term.

What are the options?

Investing may not be for everyone; we know this but many people can benefit from getting good financial advice and making some subtle changes to their wealth management to make their money work for them.

So, ask yourself the question: are my cash savings getting a return anywhere close to inflation?

If you would like to discuss how making some changes to wealth / savings can make a difference, then get in touch and ask for your free Wealth Check.

The value of investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount you invested. We can't predict the future. Past performance isn't a guide to future performance.

* UK Current inflation rate: 4.6% as at 31/01/2024. www.bankofengland.co.uk

**Spain Current Inflation rate as: 3.4% at 31/01/2024. <https://www.ine.es/en/index.htm>

Please contact Tim at tim@indalo.partners

The Humble Turnip



The humble turnip is actually quite the little champion when it comes to health benefits. Underneath its unassuming exterior it hides a wealth of goodness, and if you don't already, you should make sure to include it in your regular diet.

The turnip is a good source of vitamin C, which helps our organism in so many ways. It strengthens our immune system, works as an antioxidant, and builds up and maintains the collagen that gives structure to our skin and hair.

Its high content of vitamin A also helps our skin and hair, as well as our body tissue.

Turnip greens are high in vitamin K, the great protector of our bones. It helps prevent osteoporosis; it is widely known that lack of vitamin K increases the risk of bone fractures, so it is essential to maintain a sufficient intake of vitamin K and calcium. The turnip greens even contain a small amount of calcium.

If you are on blood thinners, though, do not suddenly up your vitamin K intake drastically without consulting your doctor first, as it can interfere with the medication.

It is generally known that a high consumption of vegetables is connected to a lower risk of cancer. I always hesitate to include cancer prevention in these pages, and I must reiterate that no food on its own can guarantee against, or cure, cancer. That said, turnips contain quite a few different antioxidants that all have cancer prevention qualities.

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¡Buen Provecho!



Turnip is rich in glucosinolates, antioxidants that are known to improve our health and provide protection from serious diseases such as colorectal cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer, and myocardial infarction.

It also has a high content of flavonoids, especially anthocyanins, which are a group of antioxidants that help prevent cancer.

The greens possess an antioxidant called alpha-lipoic acid which is beneficial to diabetics. It can lower the sugar level, increase the insulin sensitivity, and it is low on the glycaemic index.

Turnips placed in a plastic bag in the fridge can keep up to two, or even three, weeks. If you blanch them for about three minutes, they can also be frozen.

You can eat your turnips raw, boiled, or roasted, and the turnip greens are lovely just steamed.

The smaller turnips are the best suited for eating raw, grated in a slaw, or sliced very thin and marinated with lemon juice, olive oil, and thyme.

Turnips can be eaten fried, sauteed, barbequed, steamed, deep-fried, or roasted in the oven with other root vegetables.

The larger ones are best peeled, boiled or steamed, and then mashed.

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Better Make the Most of It!

The day of reckoning is near... After having eaten more or less what I felt like with little thought for the consequences for three or four years, I'm now in line for a blood test, and no doubt in for a serious telling off by my doctor!

I hate the thought of having to limit my self-indulgence, so for now I make the most of not knowing how I am.

For this reason, I have some seriously scrummy recipes for you again this month with no thought of salt, saturated fats, or carbs.

This may be our last such collection of recipes, so Read, Cook and Enjoy!

Chicken with Gorgonzola and Mustard

What a combination! I can almost hear you exclaim, and you're right – it really is quite unusual. But that doesn't mean to say that it's not dee-lish!! Because it is!

So put on your adventurous hat and get started!

Ingredients for two:

- 2 chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 50g gorgonzola
- 2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
- 200ml cream

Season the chicken breasts with salt, pepper, and oregano. Heat the oil in a frying pan and brown the breasts for 1 minute on each side. Turn down the heat a little, cover, and fry them for 5-6 minutes on both sides. When they are finished, turn off the hob, put the gorgonzola on top of the meat, return the lid and leave them until the cheese melts.

In the meantime, pour the cream into a small pan, add the mustard and mix well, and cook it over a low flame until the consistency is to your liking.

I had mine with roasted green beans, smashed potatoes and cherry tomatoes – all doing themselves in the oven while I was doing the hands-on on top.

It was marvellous!!

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Chicken Casserole with Olives



A lovely and tasty combination with chicken and lots of vegetables! Everything a chicken casserole should be, in other words.

And the olives give it that little bit of something special!

For pasta I used 'gurullos'. These look more like rice than pasta, and they are traditional here in Andalucía in many of the dishes that they denominate 'spoon food'.

Ingredients for two:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 skinless chicken thighs
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 red pepper, coarsely chopped
- 125g mushrooms, quartered
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp sambal oelek
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 large, ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 200g cauliflower florettes
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 chicken gel stock cube, dissolved in 300ml hot water
- 100g gurullos (or other pasta)
- 75g black olives
- Salt and pepper

Heat the oil in a large frying pan and brown off the chicken thighs. Set aside.

In the same oil, fry the onion, pepper, mushrooms, and garlic until the onions are soft. Add sambal oelek, paprika and tomato purée and mix thoroughly.

Now add the tomatoes, cauliflower, and most of the parsley together with the chicken stock. Return the chicken thighs to the pan, mix and let it bubble for 25 minutes.

Finally add the pasta, and a couple of minutes before the pasta cooking time is complete, the olives.

If it looks dry, add a little water, or chicken stock if you have any left.

Adjust the seasoning and serve in bowls with chopped parsley and sliced olives sprinkled over the top.

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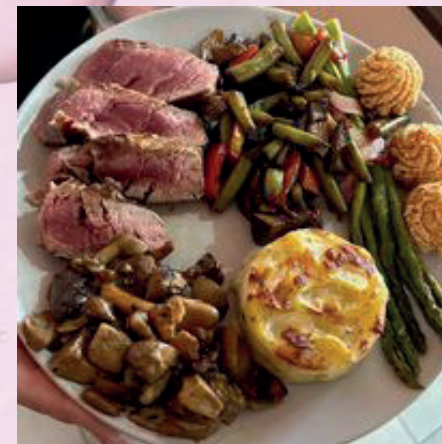
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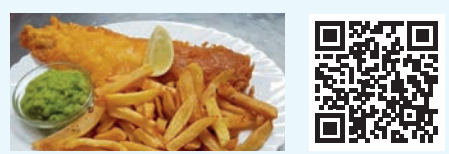
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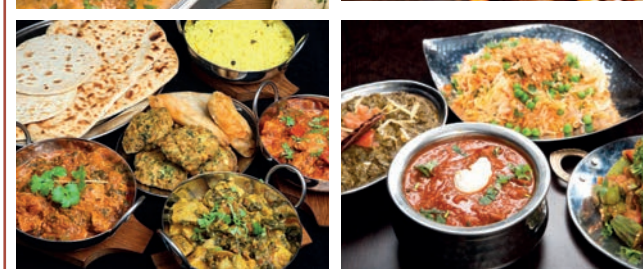
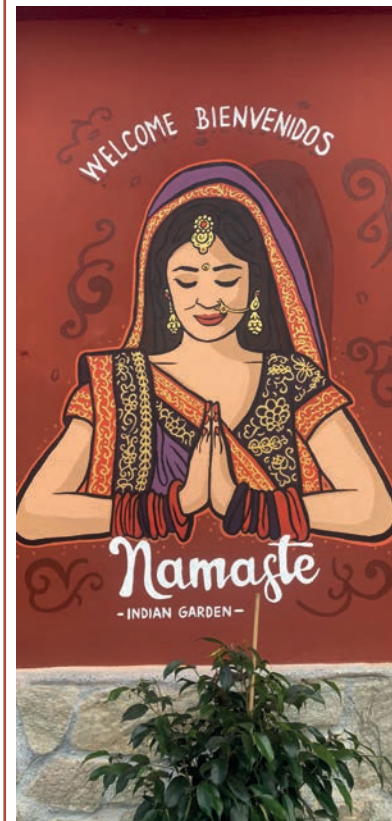


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Minced Beef Patties with Green Pepper Sauce

I'm very aware of the impact on the environment of consuming beef, but sometimes I can't help indulging myself and have minced beef. I'm such a minced meat fan, and for this particular type of preparation, it just wouldn't be the same with pork or chicken.

I did small, halved potatoes in the oven to go with it, and they went a treat!

Ingredients for two:

- 250g minced beef
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 50ml brandy
- 2 tbsp green peppercorns
- 1 tbsp ketchup
- 250ml cream

Divide the meat into two equal portions, and press both halves into firm balls. Place them on a chopping board, flatten them slightly, and gently chop the surfaces with a knife in a criss-cross pattern to flatten them to the desired thickness. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat butter and oil in a frying pan until the butter is golden. Place the patties in the pan and fry for four minutes on each side. Reserve and keep warm.

Add mustard and brandy to the pan and let it bubble for a couple of minutes. Add the peppercorns, ketchup and cream, and let the sauce cook until it turns creamy.

Serve patties and sauce with potatoes cooked as you prefer. I also treated myself to some sautéed green asparagus.

Hallelujah!!

Stuffed Cabbage Leaves in Gravy

This is a good old-fashioned Danish recipe, which my sister cooks for me when I'm in Copenhagen.

It is a bit fiddly, which is why I'm very happy for her to cook it for me, because sometimes it tries my patience!

Preferably use a cabbage that is not too tightly wound, and in order to loosen the individual leaves, immerse the whole cabbage in boiling water for five minutes.

As the leaves get soft enough to pull off whole do so, and when you have enough, cut off the bottom thick bit of stem and let them boil again for a few minutes to make them pliable.

You can use savoy or white cabbage.

Ingredients for four:

Stuffing:

- 400g minced meat
- ½ onion, grated
- 2 eggs
- 40g flour
- 200-250ml milk
- Salt and pepper

Furthermore:

- 8+ whole cabbage leaves
- Butter for frying
- 500ml water from boiling the cabbage
- 1 chicken stock cube
- Half of the rest of your cabbage, roughly chopped
- 100ml cream
- Gravy thickener made from 1 tbsp flour and enough water to turn it into a paste
- Gravy browning

First, make your stuffing.

Mix the meat with the onion, eggs, and flour. Add the milk little by little until the mix is moist but not wet.

Add salt and pepper to taste and mix everything thoroughly. Leave in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Place the par-boiled cabbage leaves on your kitchen worktop and put a dollop of stuffing on each. Wrap the leaves around the stuffing to form neat parcels and fasten them with cotton string.

Dissolve the stock cube in the cabbage water.

Heat the butter in a large sauté pan and add your cabbage parcels. Brown them on one side before gently turning them over to repeat the process on the other side.

Add the rest of the cabbage and pour over the cabbage water.

Lid and let them simmer for 15 minutes. Turn and leave them simmering for another 15 minutes.

Gently remove the parcels from the gravy and reserve.

Bring the gravy to the boil, add the cream followed by the gravy thickener. Season to taste, add gravy browning and let it bubble for



a couple of minutes before gently returning the parcels, reducing the heat and leaving it all to settle over a very low heat.

Serve with plain, boiled potatoes and a vegetable of your choice.

Your first try may not produce picture perfect parcels, but they are so tasty that you will want to try again, and before you know it, you will have mastered the parcels too!



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Jason's Meat Free Recipe: Shakshuka

There are many national variations on this dish that have evolved from its north African origin, such as menemen, huevos rancheros, piperada and the wonderfully named uova in purgatorio (eggs in purgatory) but the base is the same: eggs and tomatoes. Given that it's Easter, it seemed appropriate.

The other ingredients you can include, and the spicing that you choose, can transport us to the Middle East, Central America and all stops in between. This one incorporates Spanish smoked paprika, and cumin. A one pot meal that is easy, attractive, nutritious and delicious, what more could you want? It works just as well as brunch or supper, and for ease versus outcome it's hard to beat. If you don't have an oven proof frying pan, no worries. You can make it on the stove top in a cazuela, or, make it in a pan and transfer to a cazuela before adding the eggs and putting in the oven. It is gluten free and can be made vegan by roughly chopping-up some silken tofu and using in place of the eggs. It can be made to look, and taste, 'eggy' by taking a little bit of the tofu and mashing it with half a teaspoon of turmeric to make a 'yolk' and sprinkling some Indian black salt (kala namak) on top.

Serves 2 for supper (maybe 4 for brunch)

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 red pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp chilli flakes/powder (optional)
- ½ large jar chickpeas
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- Generous handful of spinach or rocket (optional)
- 4 free range eggs, or 1 small block of silken tofu to make it vegan
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pickled guindilla pepper/piparra to serve (optional)
- Chopped flat-leaf parsley or coriander to garnish (optional)



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Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C. While it's warming up, heat the oil in an oven-proof frying pan and add the onion, turn the heat down and sweat the onions slowly, as they become translucent add the sliced garlic.

Add the red pepper and continue to cook making sure it doesn't catch. Add the paprika, cumin and chilli (if using) after about 5 minutes and then the chickpeas, ensuring that they are well coated in the mixture.

Add the tinned tomatoes, bring to the boil and simmer for 5-6 minutes until the sauce is thickening. At this point, if you're using it, add the spinach/rocket and stir through until it is slightly wilted. Make 4 wells in the sauce with the back of a ladle and crack an egg into each (or spoon some rough-chopped silken tofu topped with a 'yolk' and some black salt).

Sprinkle the grated cheese, if using, over the top and put into the oven for 6-8 minutes. All ovens are different, you know your best, so check about 6 mins in and see how the eggs are cooking. The idea is to have a set white and still runny yolk. Remove from the oven, scatter the herbs over the dish and add the guindilla to serve. Goes well with pitta, crusty bread or a gluten-free alternative to mop up the sauce.



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Mojacar	950 451 601	Trains	902 240 202
Oria	950 639 707	www.horarios.renfe.es	
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POLICE STATIONS		Alicante Airport	913 211 000
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Huércal Overa	950 470 585	Endesa - Vera	800 760 909
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Cancer Support Charity
Irene 643 638 177
Claire 644 602 249

MARKET REPORT
Where & When

Monday Antas, Huércal Overa	Thursday Cuevas del Almanzora, Olula Del Río
Tuesday Albox, Los Gallardos, Cuevas del Almanzora	Friday Garrucha, Turre, Zurgena
Wednesday Bédar, Mojácar, Lubrín Cantoria	Saturday Águilas, Arboleas, Vera
	Sunday Fines, Villaricos

Is your local market listed?
If not please let us know



WHEELS

MOTORING SECTION

Top 10 Ways to Protect Your Car From Sun Damage

We all know that sun exposure can harm our skin, but did you know the sun's rays can also damage your car? When you leave your car in the sun for extended periods of time, the temperature inside can reach as high as 145 degrees Fahrenheit, while the surface of the car's exterior can reach much higher – up to nearly 200 degrees Fahrenheit!

Your car is not immune to negative effects caused by such heat. Here are 10 simple ways to protect your vehicle from sun damage:

1. Regularly check your fluid levels: When it's hot outside, the fluids in your car can get used up more quickly than under normal circumstances. If you happen to be low on coolant, transmission fluid, or oil anyway, then that suboptimal condition coupled with high temperatures increases the chance of damage to your car.

2. Have your battery tested once or twice each summer: When it's hot outside, there is often a higher load placed on your car's battery from running systems like the air conditioning. Periodic testing of your battery and charging system in general prevents you from unpleasant surprises (i.e. the car not starting) on hot days.

3. Get the air filters checked: There is typically more dust and debris



circulating in the air during the warmer months, particularly in arid climates, and this can clog the air filters in your car. If this happens, your gas mileage may suffer, and it could even damage your mass air flow sensor, which helps regulate the air and fuel levels in your engine.

Continued on page 72

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..... Continued from page 71

4. Use reflectorized sun panels on your front and rear dashes: While it may seem like a hassle to whip these fold-out panels out every time you go to the store, it pays off in the long run. These panels greatly reduce the overall temperature inside your car, which you'll appreciate when you return, and need to use less air conditioning to cool the car. These panels also help to prevent the bleaching effect the sun has on your interior surfaces and upholstery, which can lower the value of your car should you wish to sell it.

5. Perform tyre pressure checks monthly: Extreme heat, trapped air, and rubber can be a volatile combination, and it's one on which your entire vehicle rests in the summer months. Underinflated tyres are more likely to blow out in high temperatures, so prevent accidents (and poor fuel mileage) by checking your tyre pressure at least once a month. Do this as early in the day as possible when the temperatures are coolest for the most accurate pressure readings.

6. Park smart: If you have the choice between parking your car in the middle of a blazing parking lot or under a broad tree, opt for the shade. This doesn't require any fancy props and will keep your car's interior as cool as possible.

7. Regularly clean your car's interior: The pairing of dust and hot sun can wreak havoc on your interior, essentially caking grime onto your dash and other surfaces. With periodic cleaning, however, this becomes a non-issue; just be sure to use cleaners intended

for automobile use to avoid stains and unnecessarily drying out materials at risk of cracking.

8. Wash and hand-dry your car often: Just as dust and debris can cake onto your interior surfaces when exposed to high temperatures, your exterior paint can suffer in the summer sun. Frequently wash your vehicle to keep the surface clean, and dry it thoroughly by hand with a soft cloth, so bits of minerals and grime don't stick to the residual moisture after a rinse.

9. Use a protective wax: It's not enough just to clean your car from time to time; you should wax it at least twice a year to lock in the natural oils in the exterior paint and provide a layer of protection not just from grimy bits that can scratch the surface, but also from the sun's rays.

10. Consider paint protection film: If you truly want to be vigilant against potential sun damage to your car, you may want to invest in a paint protection film kit. Some kits only cover the acrylic headlights, but some kits are available that cover your entire vehicle.

If you adopt some or all of these simple tips to provide protection from the hot sun, your car will age more gracefully, much like your skin will with the regular application of sunscreen. They don't take much effort to implement, and these small actions can save a lot of money down the road and help retain your car's value over time.



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DON'T FALL ASLEEP!!!

At the wheel

All drivers have experienced tiredness at the wheel and felt how our eyes suddenly start feeling heavy. It may be accumulated tiredness or due to long, non-stop driving. No matter the reason, our body knows that our reaction capacity has been reduced, and it is asking for a rest.

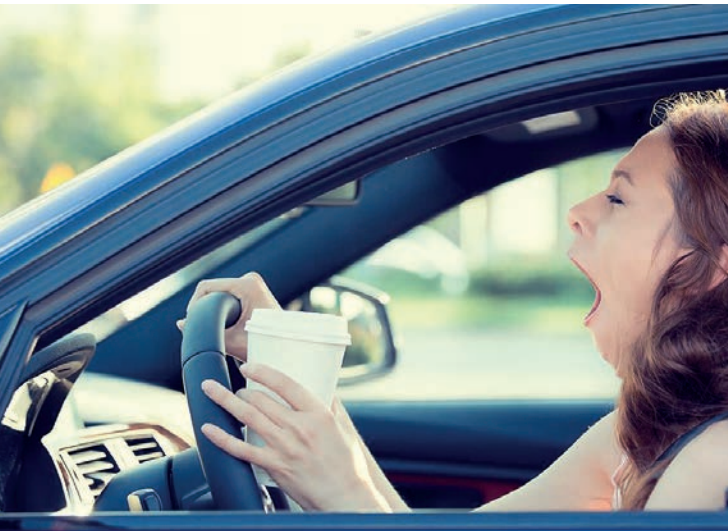
This far too common phenomenon is an extremely dangerous situation which puts both ourselves and other road users at risk. 'I want, I can, and I will' is not the correct response in this situation; this may easily lead to an accident. According to the DGT, between 15 and 30 per cent of accidents are caused by sleepy drivers.

So let us look at some other ways of combating tiredness at the wheel.

No driver falls asleep suddenly. First, we will feel signs of tiredness: blurred vision, difficulty in responding correctly to other drivers' manoeuvres, and problems concentrating. These are symptoms we have to take seriously, and they are not going to go away on their own.

Often, we just want to reach our destination and ignore the signs of fatigue. However, do listen to your body and pull into a resting area or somewhere safe to stop, and shut your eyes for 20 minutes. You'll be amazed by how refreshed and alert it will make you feel.

Long journeys are tiring, the monotony of them makes us sleepy. Travelling long distances without stopping is a bad idea, and especially the hours between 3 and 5 am and 2 and 4 pm are times with a heightened risk of falling asleep.



The DGT recommends that you have a 20 – 30-minute rest every two hours or 200 kms of journey.

When you are driving, although you want to be comfortable, do not sit exaggeratedly slouched or relaxed. Sit upright and keep both hands on the wheel. If you listen to music, make it something upbeat, or listen to the radio or talk to your passenger. While at the same time, of course, keeping an eye on other cars and vehicles and any other obstructions you may find on the road.

It goes without saying that you should not consume alcohol or drugs before setting out on a journey. But do not drink an exaggerated amount of coffee either; once the initial high of the caffeine has worn off, it can produce tiredness. Also, avoid heavy meals just before a journey.

These simple rules are well worth taking into consideration before setting out on a journey, and they may well help saving lives.

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Interesting Car Facts

The First Petrol Car

The creator of the first car with an internal petrol combustion engine was Karl Benz. On 29th January 1886 he applied for patent for the Benz Patent Motor Wagen, which, incidentally, had only three wheels.

Seat Belt Patent

Nils Bohlin, a Swedish mechanical engineer and inventor, created the first three-point seat belt as we know them today. In 1956, Ford implemented seat belts experimentally, but it was not until 1959 that Volvo installed Bohlin’s creation. Volvo kept the patent until 1962, when it was released to enable all car makers to use them.

The Remarkable Origin of Cruise Control

The first cruise control was created in 1945 by Ralph Teetor, a blind engineer, who wanted to avoid the uncomfortable sensation of sudden breaking and acceleration produced by his chauffeur who drove with unnecessary and unexpected stops and starts.

The World’s Most Sold Car

A common sight on roads, the Toyota Corolla, which was put on the market in 1966 by the Asian giant Toyota, has held the title of the world’s most sold car since 1997. A total of 46 million cars of this make and model have been sold.

Spain’s most sold car is the SEAT Ibiza, which was lanced in 1984. It is popular here due to its combination of technical characteristics, its appearance and, not least, its price.

The World’s Longest Tail-Back

The average Madrid driver spends 40 hours a year in traffic jams, and it is one of Spain’s most traffic jam plagued cities, and number 80 of the world’s most traffic clogged cities.

This list is headed by Los Angeles in the USA where drivers spend an average of 104 hours a year in traffic jams.

The world’s longest ever tail-back happened in France between Paris



and Lyon in 1980. It measured 180 km. The second longest happened in the Hamburg area in Germany in 1993; this one measured only 160 km.

By the way, the average car is stationary for 95% of its operational life.

How Many Parts Does a Car Have?

100 years ago, a car consisted of 43 parts. Today this figure lies between 70,000 and 90,000, and the number keeps rising in time with technological advance.

Guinness Record Winner

A Volvo P1800 holds the record for most driven kilometres: Five million! It had just one owner, Irv Gordon, a teacher from Long Island, who had the car for 50 years.

Estimated Number of Cars

It is estimated that there are more or less 1.4 bn cars in the world with a daily production of 165,000 cars. China alone accounts for 12.5% of the world’s cars.

An Industry for Robots

The motor industry mainly uses computer-controlled arms, each of which is made to carry out its special function. Robots are more useful than human hands in the car industry, and it employs more than half of today’s existing robots.

The Smell of a New Car

Many people love the smell of new car. This love of the smell is part of the excitement people feel when buying a new car. The smell is a combination of 50 organic compounds which are used in the production of a car. Thankfully, none of them poses a health risk.

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