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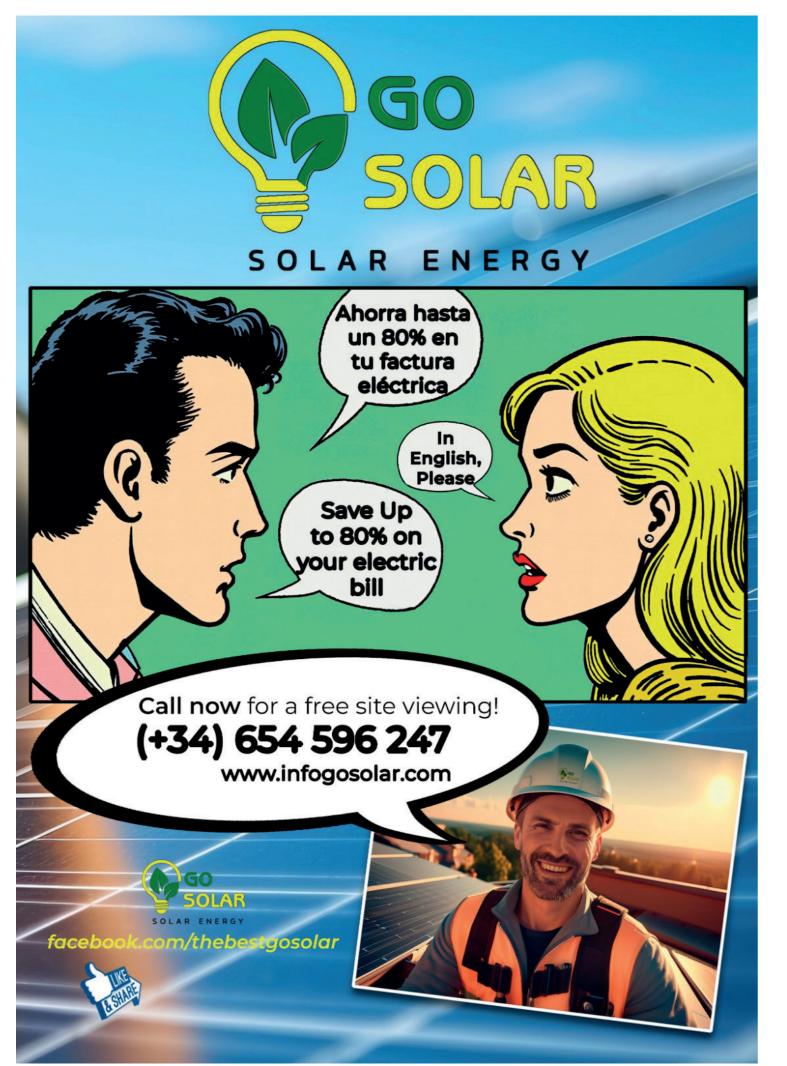
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As I write, because I can now power has been restored, there is much speculation how Spain, Portugal and areas of France could all be without electricity for up to 24 hours!! 12:32 on Monday 28th April will be etched in many of our minds for some time to come.

Zurgena, where we call home, was one of the last places in Spain to be restored, some 23 hours later. A very surreal 23 hours indeed!! Cut off from all the technology that we have become accustomed to and the complete inability to communicate with anyone who wasn't in the same room!

I do hope that all those affected managed to stay safe and well!

The gardens and countryside are still benefitting from the March rains and everything is growing and blooming in abundance. Of course there is always a downside and that comes in the form of garden weeds!! For me, it was something I could attend to during a blackout as it didn't need any electricity!!

In this issue...

Once again, I offer grateful thanks to all my scribes, who have brought us a collection of stories and articles that help keep our magazine a great read.

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 June!!

Karen (Ed)

Change your

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Spain's Non-Lucrative Visa - New & Renew

Spain's Non-Lucrative Visa allows non-EU citizens to live in Spain provided they can support themselves financially.

It is used by those planning to retire to Spain and is an option for British retirees and other people who do not plan to work in Spain after Brexit.

It is also an alternative for those who would like to spend a year in Spain without working, before obtaining a work permit. The Non-Lucrative Visa entitles you to travel freely within the Schengen zone too

The visa allows you to stay in Spain for one year after entering the Spanish territory. You must spend a minimum of 183 days in the country to be able to renew. This also means that you will become a tax resident and taxable on your worldwide income (subject to double tax treaties).

The application process is divided into two parts, the initial visa application, and then obtaining the residence card once you enter Spain. The application should not be made more than 90 days before your intended travel date, at the closest Spanish Consulate in your country of origin. In the UK you can apply in Manchester, London, and Edinburgh.

You must prove that you have 400% of the IPREM (Spanish minimum income) annually. You will be required to provide a bank certificate or bank statements from the last six months. State and private pension letters are also accepted. The funds may be in multiple accounts.

Applicants must have a private health insurance policy with full coverage in Spain with no co-payments, provided by a Spanish insurance company for at least one year. If you are a UK state



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pensioner, you are entitled to an S1 form which will cover this requirement too.

Confirmation will be within one month, the visa will then be printed in your passport, and you will be free to travel to Spain. The visa will also include your NIE number.

Once you have the visa you must enter Spain freely within a maximum of 3 months. They must also stamp the page opposite the visa at border control on your arrival in Spain.

Having arrived in Spain, you will need to register on the Padron at your local town hall and apply for the TIE (Foreigners identity card).

Renewing the Non-Lucrative Visa

The visa can be renewed every 2 years until you can get permanent residency, which is available after 5 years in the country.

The renewal application is applied for at the Foreign Office in your province, within the 60 days before your current visa runs out, or during the 90 days after it has expired. We recommend you apply before it runs out to avoid penalisation.

It can take a minimum of 3 months for the application to be processed. As your current visa will expire while the application is being processed, you are given an extension when you submit the renewal application.

For the renewal you do not have to provide the UK ACRO police certificate, nor the medical certificate proving you have no restrictive diseases. Proof of income and medical cover for 2 years will be required. They will accept Spanish title house deeds (escrituras) as proof of income with this renewal procedure.

Dependent children aged 16 and under must provide proof they are enrolled and attending school in Spain to be able to renew their visa.

For more information and advice or help to apply/renew the Spanish Non-lucrative Visa please contact CAT Services.

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Spanish Provinces

There are 50 provinces in Spain, each with its own capital city which usually, but not always, carries the same name as the province. In April we journeyed to Barcelona and now our next of Spain's provincial Capitals takes us back inland



The province of Burgos lies in the north of Spain and is part of the autonomous region of Castilla y León. It borders Cantabria to the north, the Basque Country, La Rioja and the province of Soria to the east, the province of Segovia to the south and to the west the provinces of Valladolid and Palencia.

The province covers 14,292 m2 and in 2024 had a population of 359,740.

It is the Spanish province with the highest number of municipalities, a total of 371, and three of these have a population of over 30,000.

Burgos has a host of historical monuments; the famous Camino de Santiago crosses the province, and it is also the home to one of Spain's most well-known wines with the coveted title Denominación de Origen: Ribera del Duero.

The Camino de Santiago is actually several different routes that all lead to Santiago de Compostela. The route that crosses Burgos from east to west, entering from La Rioja, is the so-called Camino Francés (French Camino, because it starts in France). This is the oldest and most traditional of them all, and it is also considered the hardest. It is 770 km long and takes about a month to complete. The Burgos stretch is 114 km.

The Ribera del Duero wine district is shared by four provinces, Burgos, Valladolid, Soria and Segovia, but most of the vineyards are located in Burgos, around the town of Aranda de Duero. The town is unique for having wine cellars that interconnect below the streets of the town centre.

Burgos is also partly home to Europe's largest pine forest, which covers a surface of 100,000 hectares. The largest part is in the province of Soria, but it extends into Burgos.

In fact, Spain is the European country with second most extensive forest surface (7.5 billion trees), and Burgos is the fourth Spanish province in the number of trees it contains – 262 million.

The summers are short in Burgos with hot, dry weather and clear skies. The winters are long, cold and partly cloudy. Over the year the temperature goes from -1° to 27°, and it is seldom below -6° or above 33°.

The yearly rainfall is about 450 mm, with spring and autumn being the wettest months.

The capital city of Burgos is Burgos! The city is home to 175,895 (2024) souls distributed on 107.06 km2. It lies dead centre in the province and is surrounded by a green belt.

Historically it has been the capital of the County of Castilla, the Kingdom of Castilla and the Crown of Castilla. It was in the city of Burgos that the Catholic Kings dictated las Leves de Burgos (the





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Laws of Burgos) which were directed at the new colonies in the Americas, and actually constituted the basis of the present Human

Later on, the city became the capital of the former province of Castilla la Vieja, and it was the first provisional capital of the autonomous region of Castilla y León.

So, Burgos is definitely a capital city!

The city lies 244 km north of Madrid and is situated in an area of low mountains with the height of the city varying between 827 and 997 metres above sea level. The centre of the city is at 859 m. The city is divided in two by the river of Arlanzón.

Due to its high altitude the average temperature of Burgos is about five degrees Celsius lower than those of other cities in the same area. The rainfall averages 4-600 mm a year with spring being the wettest season closely followed by autumn. The summers are hot without too much rain fall, and the winters freezing with the temperatures often dropping below -10°C.

As mentioned above, the city of Burgos has played an important role in the history of Spain over the centuries. But its importance goes back far beyond any written history.

In the valley of Arlanzón, only 15 km from the present city centre, human remains have been found which are more than a million years old. Human bones found in the area, which is considered the crib of Europe, belong to three different species: Homo antecessor, Homo heidelbergensis and Homo sapiens, and scientists have also found remnants of Homo neanderthalensis in Merindad de Sotoscueva, north of the capital.

The city of Burgos experienced its golden age in the 16th century when the economy turned its main focus from agriculture to commerce. However, it did not last long, and at the end of the century it entered a period of decay caused partly by outside influences (the most important of which was the transferal of the capital to Madrid),

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and partly from inside events such as a succession of outbreaks of the plague which decimated the population.

The downward trend lasted until the end of the 18th century, when a long, slow revival of the city and its economy started.

Today, Burgos's main source of income is industry, but the service sector is gaining ground and more and more tourists, mainly from Germany and France, visit the city, which has many cultural attractions and museums, and is also well known for its gastronomical delights.

The most visited spots include the Gothic cathedral, the Museum of Human Evolution and the Castle of Burgos.

On the gastronomical side, Burgos's traditional animal farming makes roast meats, black pudding and fresh cheese the stars of the restaurant menus.





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Are You a Guiri?

The Spanish Word 'guiri' (pronounced 'geeree' with a hard 'g') is well known among expats – as it is often used by the Spanish as a nickname for we foreigners. But not all foreigners; immigrants are also foreigners, but the term does not apply to them. One disgruntled Brit said it was used derogatively by local Spanish people about British tourists who ate 'fluorescent paella' and frequented bars that no Spanish person would set foot in. Another definition is 'a foreign tourist who makes his presence known through festive or formidable behaviour, sometimes even for years'.

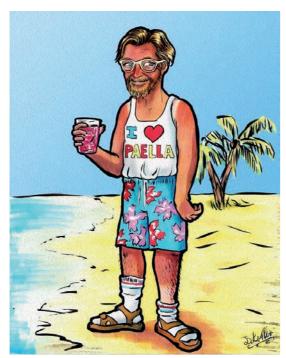
But where does the word actually come from?

Some people have tied it to the Turkish word 'gauri' which means infidel or foreigner, but it does actually have its own Spanish origin. It is thought to be derived from the Basque word 'giristino' which

again comes from the word 'cristino', meaning loyal to Queen María Cristina's side; so guiris were, in other words, the soldiers from the opposing side.

The word popped up in Spanish literature for the first time in a story by Emilio Pardo Bazán; he put it into the mouth of a Basque local who was complaining about parties of foreign tourists who unceremoniously ran about in the mountains that had formerly been





visited only by country lads and wild beasts. Benito Pérez Galdós used the term in his novel 'Zumalacárregui' about the 1st Carlist war; this caused the word to be included in the Royal Spanish Academy's dictionary in 1925 with the following definition:

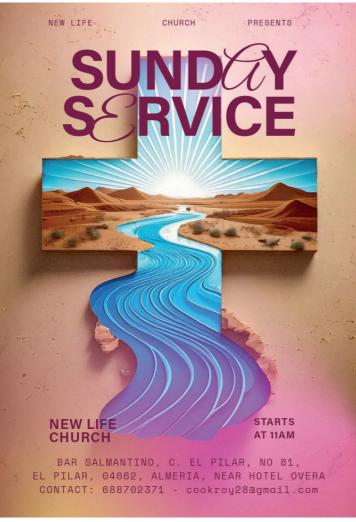
A name which was given, during the 19th century civil wars, by the Carlists to the followers of Queen Cristina, and later on to any liberal, especially government soldiers

In the early 20th century, guiri was used as a slang word for the Guardia Civil, and it was not until the 1950's that the word came to describe 'foreign tourist'; this was the definition of the Spanish dictionaries towards the end of the century.

In our part of Spain, in the province of Almería, we also have a special use for the word: it is used to describe a bush which

in the rest of Spain is known as 'retamo' or 'espinillo'. The origin of this is thought to have been a pun on the amount of Western movies filmed here in the 60's and 70's: We have a good handful of planted 'guiris', and a good number of acting 'guiris'.

But whether you feel offended or not, at the end of the day each person uses the word with his own connotations and meanings, and being a 'guiri' is far from always something negative.



AQUAVERA PRESENTS "A CRAZY SUMMER"

THIS SEASON WE HAVE A NEW ATTRACTION: AQUA JETS



Aquavera, Vera's waterpark, will open its doors on Saturday 17th May for everyone to enjoy a day of adrenaline and fun! The 2025 season has a new attraction: Aqua Jets; a water games area (Splashpad) suitable for all ages, with directional water cannons, animal silhouettes, arches, flowers, water jets... and much more.

Aquavera is the perfect place to spend a day in the water, the sun and have lots of fun! The variety of our attractions makes it an ideal place to come with your family or friends and everyone, big and small, is welcome.

In addition, we have lots more attractions, like the children's area, with slides adapted for little ones; Cubo Splash, where litres of water suddenly fall, very much delighting children as much as adults; the wave pool and the lake pool are other attractions for the family to enjoy.

The most intrepid can slide down the Zig Zag Slides or Adventure River, you won't be able to stop laughing! But if what you want is a good adrenaline rush, you must try the Kamikaze, the Aquódromo or the Tsunami, only suitable for the bravest! And if you want to be surprised, Black Flash or Black Hole are the attractions for you.

And don't forget the dances, games, aquazumba... with our entertainers, they are the laughs and smiles of the park!

An extensive food menu

Take your time to recharge and enjoy the food choices available at Aquavera in ideal surroundings; in our restaurant, on our terrace or in our picnic area, under the wonderful shade of the pine trees.

The park offers a wide range of options to enjoy a delicious meal, from our extensive and tasty menus to our à la carte options, where you will find hamburgers, pizzas, sandwiches and salads, all freshly prepared for our visitors.

By the way, you can't miss snack time either, freshly made waffles with chocolate and doughnuts, they're so good! Everybody loves them!

Amenities to enjoy a perfect day

To make your day at AquaVera a ten out of ten, you have at your disposal a variety of amenities which will make your stay much more comfortable: secure lockers, where you can keep all your belongings safely and without queuing; changing rooms with showers, lost and found office, information desk. As well as hammocks in the shade, where you can rest and relax between going down the slides. Also,



if you rent a float, you can slide through the attractions without having to wait for one to become free.

At Aquavera enjoyment is guaranteed, as much for children as adults. You can get your ticket either through the website or at the ticket office and remember there are always very affordable offers and promotions for groups that you can find out about online. There are also individual one-off offers that will be announced across our social media networks and our website www.aquavera.com

Get ready to come and enjoy Aquavera! It's the best choice for fun, adrenaline and uncontrollable laughter!







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

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,

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

The

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.

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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

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.

Avurvedic face oils

Ayurveda is an alternative medicine system with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. Among the Avurvedic 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

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.

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Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 74

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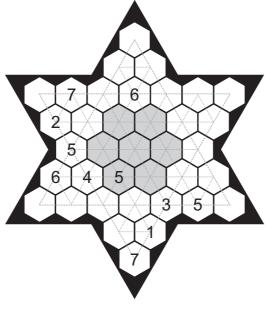
Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row of each 9x9 cube must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

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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

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Spring Allergies

Spring allergies occur for most people because of pollen. There are different types of pollen to consider (like tree pollen, grass pollen, ragweed pollen). Tree pollen hits in late March and April, and grass pollen isn't far behind it. Other types of pollen hit later in spring into summer. That's when most of the flowers and trees are blooming.

Experts say that warmer-than-average winter temperatures and climate change mean allergy season starts earlier and ends later. These factors lead to early tree pollination which leads to higher pollen counts than normal for the time of year.

As a result, we experience an early start to allergy season. If you suffer from tree pollen allergies, you're likely among the first to feel the effects.

Tips for Dealing with Spring Allergies

Use these simple tips to avoid symptom-triggering pollen and breathe easier this spring:

Know Your Pollen Count

Keep an eye on the daily pollen count for your area. You can use a pollen alert tracker to track daily reports. On days the count is high (120 or above), stay indoors as much as possible to keep pollen exposure to a minimum.

Close Your Windows

Although it's tempting to open your windows and let fresh spring air indoors, it may not be the best thing for your symptoms. Keep windows and doors closed to avoid letting pollen spores circulate and settle inside your home. Using an air purifier can help reduce pollen levels



Shower After Spending Time Outside

Take a shower after spending time outdoors to wash pollen out of your hair and keep it from falling onto your pillow.

Consider Using An Air Purifier

Air purifiers, especially those that have HEPA filters, filter even the tiniest pollen spores out of your air along with other symptom triggers like dust, mould, and pet dander. With regular use, you can reduce and even eliminate your symptoms.





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Signs and Symptoms

Below are the most common signs and symptoms of allergies:

- Watery discharge through the nose or throat.
- Pain and / or discomfort behind the eyes, in the lower forehead
- and eyebrows, in the cheeks and upper teeth, in the temples
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy, passing out
- Flushing
- Stomach pain, feeling nauseous, vomiting
- Itchy and irritated skin and eyes
- Swelling in the mouth, throat, hands, and feet
- Hives
- Fever, headache

Treatments

The following remedies will relieve mild allergic symptoms, but if you are experiencing any of the more serious ones on the above list, you may need urgent medical assistance.

Tea with peppermint and nettle

Nettle is very popular in Europe both as a home remedy ingredient and a cooking ingredient. It contains loads of iron, which helps lower blood pressure, relieve arthritis and help allergies. On the other hand, peppermint contains flavonoids that reduce the secretion of histamines, thereby minimizing discomfort a great deal.

Local pollen

Local pollen is a great way of preparing your immune system for the spring. It has to be local, as you have to develop tolerance to

the pollen in your area. Pollen is available in powder, capsules and granules, but the last form is the best.

Citrus Fruit Juice

Most allergies flare up in the spring and summer, when it's nice and warm and you want to be outside. This calls for a refreshing, zesty Vitamin C-rich drink! Citrus fruit juice can provide allergy relief because it strengthens and enhances the immune system.

This has some clear advantages as the immune system is fighting as best as it can!





For information call: 0034 850 992 814



2025 May 12th FIBROMYALGIA AWARENESS DAY

Fibromyalgia is a long-term condition that causes widespread pain, persistent tiredness, and problems sleeping.

It's thought that fibromyalgia may be caused by an issue within the body's central nervous system, causing pain signals to become confused and misinterpreted.

According to the National Fibromyalgia Association, around 3%-6% of the world's population are believed to be affected by fibromyalgia.

Most commonly developing between the ages of 25 and 55, it affects more women than men.

People often say that besides pain, fatigue is the worst part of fibromyalgia, leading to memory difficulties and problems thinking clearly; sometimes known as 'fibro fog'.

Fibromyalgia can also cause:

- stress, irritability, depression
- tingling, numbness or swelling of your hands and feet
- headaches

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- restless legs syndrome
- symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- · sensitive joints and muscles
- sensitivity to temperatures, noise, and bright lights

Diagnosis:

There's currently no specific test available, but as more research is conducted, and understanding of the condition increases, diagnoses are becoming more common.

Osteopathic management:

Regular gentle Osteopathic treatment has been found to help fibromyalgia patients manage their symptoms; relieving muscle & joint pain, improving mobility and decreasing stiffness







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Benefits Of Artificial Grass

Have you ever wondered why artificial grass is blowing up in popularity? You see, at one point, "fake grass" was a term that would turn off most homeowners. But, over the past few years, artificial grass technology has improved massively.

So, whether you're considering artificial grass for your new home, or if you want to upgrade your existing garden, here are just a few of the benefits of Artificial Grass.

One of the biggest concerns homeowners have before installing artificial grass is whether it will look "fake" or "tacky".

But here's the truth; In terms of looks and feel, artificial grass is almost identical to natural grass. Modern day artificial grass technology is very advanced. Today you can get artificial grass that is so realistic that every single grass blade is carefully shaped just like real grass.

If you've ever taken care of a natural lawn, you'd understand how much work it is to maintain it. From regular watering and weed removal, to fertilization and trimming, to repairing patches and pest control. Real grass actually requires a lot of maintenance work!

But with artificial grass, all this work is eliminated with most artificial lawns only requiring a brief sweep every week to look fresh and healthy. This saves you a ton of time and money down the road. And when you consider the fact that a well-installed artificial lawn can last up to 20 years, that's a lot of hours and euros saved over time!

Climate is another important factor in gardening and lawn care. For starters, some areas of the world are generally hotter than others, while humidity varies from place to place too. What's more, these factors all fluctuate differently with the changing of seasons. All these factors place certain limits on the species of grass you can grow on top of the long list of lawn care and maintenance tasks required. With artificial grass, all these worries are removed.

Another common concern homeowners have is whether artificial grass is safe for their dogs and cats. Good news; It's great for pets! Not only is it safe for them, but it makes it a lot easier to clean up after them too. Simply scoop up the solids and rinse the area down with a garden hose!

A well installed artificial lawn also drains exceptionally well, meaning the artificial grass will not trap as much moisture as natural grass. This means your pet is less likely to pick up diseases



or parasites from droppings or urine, leaving you with an overal cleaner and more hygienic lawn.

Artificial grass adds value to a home, as long as it is properly installed and of high quality. You may not think so at first, but in many ways artificial grass is a greener choice than real grass. First off, you will save a lot of water with an artificial lawn, simply because there is no need to water it. The more time passes by, the more water you will be saving. What's more, artificial grass removes the need for any fertilizers or pesticides.

Artificial grass is a great and versatile option for anyone looking to expand their landscape. Not only does it look and feel good, it also brings a myriad of benefits that you just won't get with a real lawn. More importantly, it removes most of the maintenance requirements that natural grass requires, leaving you with less stress and fewer worries.







April brought with it a little wave of early summer here at Olive Tree Farm, so we've been taking advantage of the warmer days.

Primarily the weeding. As you may know, we've had quite a lot of rain in the past few months, and all it took was a bit of sunshine in between, and finally a decent break from the wet, and boom. The garden is blooming, and the paths had swiftly become a jungle for us to navigate in order to reach the pond and aviary.

A long weekend and a lot of sacks filled, and it's like a whole new garden! And luckily, we know a good place to dispose of those leafy greens. The animals sure do love to help us during Springtime clean-up, and we are keen to let them.

If you followed last month's article, you would know of our terrible news about the ducks on the farm, where all but one male had disappeared overnight. Aside from the decision to keep the surviving ducks (mum and her very grown babies) down in the garden, we have little news to share further. We are switching the flock between the two aviaries, so the ground doesn't become too sodden and make access to feed the other birds too difficult.

The eggs we'd placed into the incubator towards the end of last month only hatched two more Muscovy ducklings, and the goose egg we had suspected of being fertile also yielded no young. Oh well - better to try than not!

With the suspicion of a foxy culprit still on our minds, we spotted a small hole in the back fencing of the farm. Possibly large enough for a fox to squeeze through, and something we were going to have to keep an eye on and sort out. But, upon the day of writing this article, Ben went up and found the gap to be considerably wider, made so with the helping horns of a pair of goats. Thanks, ladies.

The afternoon feed swiftly turned into a game of cat and mouse,



as the duo were happily munching on the weeds and grasses on the other side, and then for Ben to repair the gap — the animals certainly understand that we don't like to be bored!

In final news, we have the incubator set for a final time. Our male to female ratio of chickens on the farm is at odds, and while we can cut the number of males, we really need to boost our girl numbers up. We also seem to get a lot more consistent laying with the White Star hens, so we've collected a good number of white-shelled eggs and have our fingers crossed. Our success rate with chicken hatchings tends to be higher than our luck with ducks, so I should see you next month with some cute news!

Thank you for reading. I hope you enjoyed the news of the month

and join us again in the next for all our farm-life updates!

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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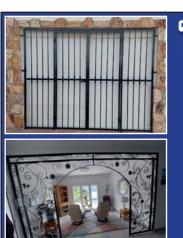












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TECH, TV, GADGETS & GIZMOS

Hi there folks and welcome back!

I am lucky this month to be surrounded by technological events which may be just enough to distract me from the pantomime of chaos that is occurring in the world of politics. I'd say, "On what planet?" but unfortunately it seems to be happening on this one, but I digress...

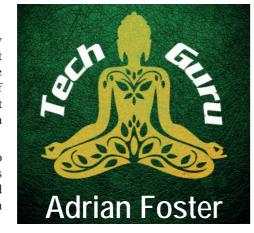
Maybe now would be a good time to investigate the recent discovery by the James Webb Space Telescope (previously covered by me in August 2022) - possible life on exoplanet K2-18b.

K2-18b (or Brian as I like to call him) has gases in his atmosphere that are by-products of activity by marine phytoplankton and bacteria – putting him on a similar evolutionary trajectory to Donald Trump.

As a reference point, the emergence of similar biological life on Earth started roughly 800 million years ago and Brian is a bit later to the party by a mere 124 light years away.

Here's an interesting fact for those of you who like that sort of thing; marine phytoplankton and bacteria account for roughly half the

METAL WORKS BY JON



photosynthesis activity on Earth and as you may know, photosynthesis creates oxygen. So, if you dismiss the news reports on falling biodiversity on equatorial coral reefs in Australia and the like, then think on....

Oxygenated sea water sustains life as part of the global water cycle (sea, evaporation, rain, rivers, sea). I do understand why people switch off; we are bombarded with information, most of which is skewed "Green washing".

One example of this is the rise and now inexorable fall of electric cars, especially Tesla. The electric car boom was sold as a

trendy way of solving the climate "crisis", when in fact the cars' manufacture creates massive amounts of toxic by-products. Not only that, but the infrastructure also needed to charge all these cars has largely failed to appear.

It is my opinion that the race to electrify cars had more to do with dwindling oil reserves in the Middle East and the West's inability to find an alternative source (why do you think Trump is so interested

> in Greenland?) than it does with solving an ecological problem.

> We may be able to pat ourselves smugly on the back about how good we are to the planet, whilst turning a blind eye to the goods we buy in from China & India where they are not so ecologically

> There are many ways to be eco-friendly, but they don't make mega-bucks for global businesses and are therefore glossed over.

> Take a look at your Spanish neighbours. The older generation especially is quite happy to do without the latest this & that and sees no reason to change the Citroën Berlingo they bought in 1998. They live off the land and are consequently sensitive to its needs. They are fervently protective of the scarcer natural resources such as water. Federico doesn't care about Elon Musk's Starlink low-orbit internet satellites or that Jeff Bezos has just sent Katy Perry into space in a giant penis.

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Telephone: Steve +34 643 157 708 Email: sgr.property.es@gmail.com Can we just take a moment and deal with that particular elephant-in-the-room? Surely there must have come a point in the rocket's development when the reveal was made, Jeff's big "ta-daa!" moment. Did no one have the gumption to stand up and say,

"Listen dude, we're super enthusiastic about the whole thing and 100% behind you and you know we all love you but... do you think you could make it look a bit more rockety and less like a... erm... tampon applicator?" At least it wasn't pink...

I am aware that space rockets all have a whiff of "compensation" about them but at least NASA gave the Saturn 5 rockets sharper edges and fins. The only saving grace is that conventional space travel is not up to getting as far out as Brian. Can you imagine the reception if that happened? Picture a delegation of Brianlings

lined up, quietly giggling as Katy Perry flew into view over the mountains in a giant c**k, whilst singing 'Roar' over the P.A. Not my idea of first contact!

Shall we get back to life on Brian? Probably for the best.

The two compounds identified in Brian's atmosphere are dimethyl sulphide (DMS) and dimethyl disulphide (DMDS). These are associated with marine life on Earth. Measurements indicate that levels of these gases are thousands of times higher than on Earth so it is likely that Brian has oceans that are teeming with life! In an interview with BBC Radio 5 Live, Professor Nikku Madhusudhan

"If we confirm that there is life on K2-18b, it should basically confirm that life is very common in the galaxy.", "If there is one example, and the universe being infinite, there is a chance for life on many more planets."

Beyond that existential bombshell there is a question waiting to be asked; "How did they find out?" - good question. The answer to that is both simple and extremely complicated at the same time – light.

The James Webb Space Telescope is so powerful that it can analyse the chemical composition of the planet's atmosphere from the light that passes through from the small red Sun it orbits.

Our sky is blue due to the composition of gases in our atmosphere, the sky on Mars has a red tint but the JWST is so sensitive that it can detect the minute colour differences caused by different chemicals in Brian's atmosphere.

From 700 trillion miles away. It is able to do that as the raw elements are common to all planets and star systems in the entire universe just take a picture and compare it to known local references.

The likelihood of life elsewhere in the Universe has been postulated in theory, even calculated by Frank Drake as an icebreaker for the first SETI meeting in 1961. If you want to have a crack at it yourself, here it is N = R*fpneflfifcL.

The JWST team are 99.7% certain of their facts but need to obtain a 99.9999% certainty (five sigma rating) before announcing that there is indeed life on Brian.

That benchmark should then allow them to search elsewhere with a higher degree of accuracy and certainty, but it does seem that the question "Are we alone?" has been answered. That happens to be bacteria for now but there may be more in a galaxy far, far away...

Talking of which – the month of May holds a venerated place in the calendar for a very special reason. I love a good pun and they don't come much better than international Star Wars day. So with that in mind, please raise a glass to Brian and "May the 4th be with you!"





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Bletchley Park The Heroes. 3 part series. Pt.2

TOMMY FLOWERS

Last month, I wrote about Gordon Welchman. Unsung, and who was instrumental for some of the most incredible code breaking work at Bletchley Park during WW2. Judging by the queues of people lining up outside the shop wanting a signed copy, I thought I would remember another brilliant chap; Tommy Flowers. Tommy was responsible for the creation of the first programmable computer, which was key in the decryption of German Teleprinter traffic toward the end of the war.



After his apprenticeship and obtaining a

Degree in Electrical Engineering, Tommy went to work for the GPO's (General Post Office) cutting edge research centre at Dollis Hill in North London. He worked on the idea of creating an all-electronic telephone exchange that could be programmed. Up until then, the Strowger exchanges were electro-mechanical, slow, high maintenance and space hungry. By '39 Flowers had put forward plans for the modern exchange.

Alan Turing, working at Bletchley Park, had been responsible for creating the mechanical "Bombe" deciphering machine. He had heard about Flowers working with electronic switching and asked his boss at Dollis Hill if he could come up with a system to help decode some of the data produced by the Bombes. Tommy put forward his ideas. However, the project never took off. Instead, Turing, being so impressed by Tommy's work, asked him to set about making a machine to decipher the German Lorenz code. This cryptographic system was much more complex than Enigma and was used in conjunction with the teletypewriter system. The magical solution put forward was a piece of electronics containing something in the order of 1,500 valves! This actually frightened staff at Bletchley, including Gordon Welchman, who said it would be unreliable due to the large number of valves. Gordon favoured a mechanical version. This, however, would only work at a tenth of the speed. Flowers' view was that valves were reliable if they were never switched off, which of course is spot on.

With the blessing of his boss and team at Dollis Hill, Flowers (funding a significant part of the work from his own pocket to prove a point) in 11 months, had created this monster valve machine. Put to work with cipher data from Bletchley, the system produced vital data from day one. The machine was called Colossus, for obvious

reasons! Seeing the requirement for more deciphering and faster speeds, a Mk2 machine, (with upwards of 2,400 valves) was designed, installed and up and running at Bletchley by 1st June '44. This immediately started to produce crucial information relating to the pending D-Day landings. Flowers later recalled the atmosphere when a motorcycle courier presented Dwight D. Eisenhower with a pile of Colossus decrypts just before D-Day started. The information was instrumental in the planning. Without this data, things

would have been very different.

By the end of the war, 10 Colossi were in service at Bletchley. As a lover of all things valves, this must have been a great sight! Just working out the power required to feed this hungry lot would give rise to losing huge amounts of heat alone, on the basis that each valve would dissipate a couple of Watts! By '45, the 11th machine was moved to GCHQ. It was put to use in Cold War activities, monitoring electronic communication traffic from those naughty Ruskies. It was

Post war, the government recognised his personal investment in creating Colossus. They gave him a brown envelope with a Grand in it. Great, eh? In fact, it was nowhere near what had been spent and he shared it with staff who had stuck by him. He wanted to create a computing system for commercial use, but could not get funding by the bank as they couldn't see how such a machine would work. Ironically, he couldn't say "look mate, I have made loads of these" as he was governed by the Official Secrets Act. How ironic? He continued his work at the GPO research establishment and put in place the first electronic telephone exchange installed at Highgate Wood in the early '50s. Latterly, he worked for Standard Telephones and Cables where he headed a team working on modulation techniques for sending voice calls around the world.

His work on Colossus and related equipment set the rules for modern day computing. It was all driven with a common clock signal for accurate synchronization of all different parts, the backbone of any computer today. He was never fully recognised for this, again as a result of the Secrets Act. So, if you wouldn't mind, sit up, a quick salute to Tommy please.

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THERE IS ALWAYS A SOLUTION AT REVOLUTION

Las Leyes de Burgos

In the article about Burgos there is a mention of The Laws of Burgos, Las Leyes de Burgos.

Las Leyes de Burgos were instigated by Fernando el Católico. He realized that the conquests of the Americas could be rendered illegal due to the brutality of the conquerors, as the Pope had issued a papal bull demanding the evangelization of the natives. Fernando reckoned that the natives would not be converted to Christianity using violence, whereas if they were given certain rights and benefits, they might.

He therefore convened the Junta de Burgos, a council of legal and theological experts, who were to put together a law to organize the conquests and aid in the conversion of the natives.

The Laws were passed in 1512 and are today considered the basis of the present code of Human Rights. The main points were:

- 1. The Indians are free men and women and should be treated as such.
- 2. The Indians should be instructed in the Faith as per the papal bull.
- 3. The Indians must work, without this disturbing their instruction in the Faith, and in a way that is beneficial both to them and to the state.
- 4. The work the Indians carry out should be in accordance with their constitution and what they can manage, and they must have their leisure and resting time.
- 5. The Indians must have their own homes and farms, and they should have time to work on their maintenance and cultivation.



- 6. Indians must have contact and communication with Christians
- 7. The Indians should receive a fair salary for their work. This could be paid in money or in kind.
- 8. Pregnant women and mothers of children up to three years of age are not to do hard labour or work in the mines, they may only do domestic work.
- 9. Children under 14 should not be forced to work and should only carry out duties appropriate to their age.
- 10. Married Indian women are only to work in the mines if they chose to or their husbands order it.

The Laws were first implemented on the island of Hispaniola, then extended to Puerto Rico and Jamaica. And eventually found their way to the mainland, in what is today Venezuela, from where it spread to the rest of the colonies.

However, the observation of Las Leyes de Burgos was very limited. The landowners' local power combined with the long distance to the governing power did not help to make the Laws work well, but they were in place and served as testimony to the crown's efforts to improve the life quality of the main victims of the conquest.

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As from April 1st, I have changed the name of the company from Indalo Partners to **Tim Taplin Financial Services**, this will not have any impact on either our service to you, or on the policy that you hold with us.

I have not taken this decision lightly but it will be the best way forward for both us as a company and for you as the client.

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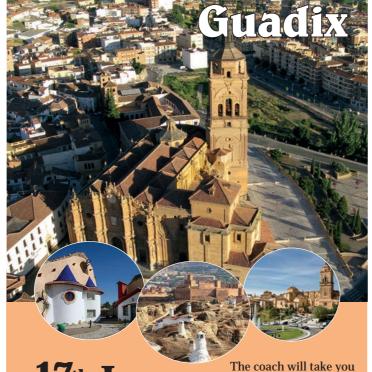
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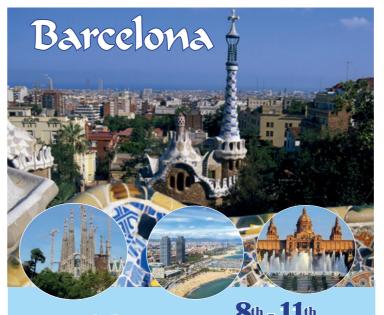
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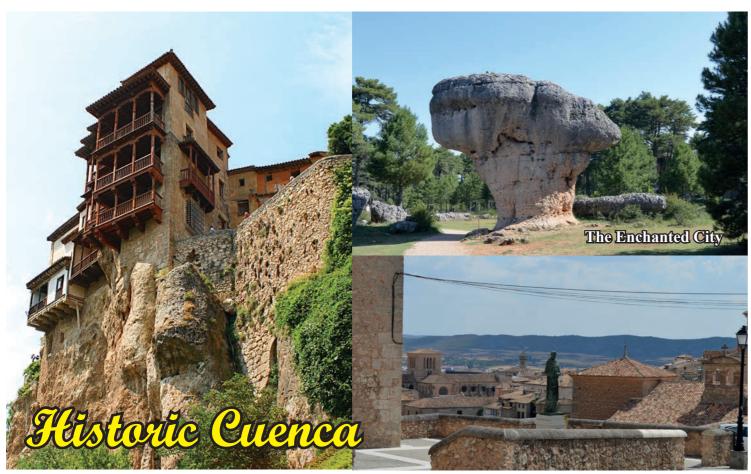
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The beautiful city of Cuenca is situated in Castilla La Mancha between the Júcar and Huécar river canyons.

It has a wealth of monuments and its historic centre overlooks rocky canyon walls in the heart of the Cuenca mountains.

Cuenca's old town has been granted the UNESCO World Heritage designation, and the city spreads out from atop a promontory overlooking the ruins of its Moorish castle, the ancient Kunka fortress. Meanwhile, below, the modern city grows on the Júcar plain.

The old city with its medieval streets that give it its character begins beside the parish church of Nuestra Señora de la Luz, next to the San Antón bridge. Here begins a tour of the hills, steps and viewpoints which provide beautiful views.

The first stop might be the church of San Felipe Neri, a sober construction which becomes a focus at Easter, with the singing of the traditional "Miserere" on its steps. Inside it is decorated with Baroque and Rococo motifs. On the other side of the Plaza del Carmen you can climb to the Plaza de la Torre Mangana, a former watchtower for Cuenca and one of the symbols of the city, visible from any other point. Very nearby is the Science Museum.

Before reaching the Plaza Mayor, you walk through the Plaza de la Merced, where you can see good examples of Cuenca Baroque in the church and convent of La Merced, and in the great seminary of San Julián. In the Plaza Mayor you will find the arches of the Town Hall and the Gothic Cathedral of Nuestra Señora de Gracia, thought to hae been built on the site of a former mosque. Its structure alternates Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque elements, the result of a long period of construction. Its unfinished monumental façade accompanies the wooden balconies and wrought iron grilles of the square's aristocratic houses, whose ground floors are occupied by inns.

Behind the church a street begins leading to the Casas Colgadas, symbolic monuments of the city, which date from the 15th century. One of the houses contains the Museum of Spanish Abstract Art, one

of the best in Spain. The wooden balconies of the Casas Colgadas hang over the course of the Huécar, but you have to cross the river to get one of the best panoramic views. On this bank, you can visit the city's Parador de Turismo the former convent of San Pablo. Here you can try some of the mouth-watering Conca recipes offered by its restaurant: "Zarajos" (roast lamb tripe), "morteruelo" (a kind of pâté served hot) or ajoarriero (cod stew) to which can be added vegetable stews, roasts and river fish. Almonds, honey and figs are included in all kinds of imaginative cookery and make up the dessert known as "alajú" (a cake made of honey, figs and almonds). As for drinks, wines with the La Mancha Denomination of Origin and "resolí", a liqueur made with coffee, sugar and orange peel, are outstanding.

Back in urban Cuenca you will find corners full of charm where there are fountains, little arches and narrow streets. Between the Cathedral and the Casas Colgadas we can also visit the Provincial Museum, the Casa del Curato, the Diocesan Museum and the Bishop's Palace.

On the way to the highest point in the city, interesting religious buildings like the churches of San Miguel, San Nicolás and San Pedro, and the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de las Angustias await. It is worth doing this tour when it is already dark and the whole city is lit up. Another possibility is to walk around the Rondas, paths offering the best views of the gorges and the city, integrated into the natural environment.

Cuenca is only one of many points of interest in the province. Some 30 kilometres from the city you will find the first hills of the Cuenca Mountains, home to the unique landscape of the Enchanted City, made up of weird and wonderful formations, reminiscent of objects, animals and human forms, that water and wind erosion have carved out of the huge limestone rocks. This unusual place is open all year round, from 10am until dusk, and it takes about two hours to see it. Although it is easy to see the similarities, there are notices with the names of each of the rocks: the "Boats", the "Toboggan", the "Elephant", "The Sea of Stone", the "Diplodocus".

With its charm and multitude of sights and monuments, Cuenca should be a must on any traveller's agenda.



Sad Hill Cemetery

'You know in this world there's two kinds of people, my friend. Those with loaded guns and those who dig. You dig.'

This is one of the most memorable quotes from the unforgettable film 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', which almost everybody has seen at least once, and which most consider a true classic of the Western genre.

We all know that Sergio Leone fell in love with Almería and put it on the map when he filmed the majority of his famous 'Dollar Trilogy' there.

What is largely unknown is that many scenes from 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly' were actually filmed in Burgos in Castilla y León. And the most memorable of them all, the final scene in the circular cemetery 'Sad Hill' was one of them.

The cemetery was constructed in 1966 – by soldiers from the Spanish army, which the Franco government had put at the disposal of Sergio Leone for this purpose, and as extras in the battle scenes.

Continued on page 30









..... Continued from page 29

Nobody has ever been buried under any of the 5,000 crosses that were erected in a circular pattern in accordance with Leone's vision of a 'circus of destiny' for the epic 20 minute scene which has gone over in history as a monument to human emotions.

Once the filming had finished, the cemetery was abandoned, fell into disrepair, was reclaimed by nature and it all but disappeared.

Then suddenly in 2015, somebody realised that the following year would be the 50th anniversary of the filming, and a decision was made to restore the cemetery to former glory – and preferably in time for the anniversary.

The Sad Hill Cultural Association was born and fundraising and a lot of backbreaking work started, carried out by volunteers from all over the world who cleared the site to reveal the famous stone circle and its hidden graves.

One of the ways of raising money was offering the crosses for sale: For 15 euro anyone, anywhere could have their name, nickname or initials inscribed on a cross. So apart from being the setting of a 'monument to human emotions', Sad Hill is also the only cemetery in the world where you can visit your own grave.

The efforts inspired Spanish film-maker and cinema fanatic Guillermo de Oliveira. He had always had a passion for visiting the sites where famous movie scenes had been filmed, and when he visited Sad Hill he decided to make a documentary about the project.

Apart from filming the efforts of the volunteers as they painstakingly moved decades' worth of dirt to unearth the stone circle and the crosses, Oliveira also interviewed Ennio Morricone, who composed the unforgettable soundtrack, and famous fans such as Gremlins director Joe Dante and Metallica front man James Hetfield.





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And after ten months of phone calls, he also finally managed to interview the only surviving star of the film, Clint Eastwood!

Apart from conceding to the interview, the film legend also sent a message of thanks to all those who had worked to recover Sad Hill.

Today, Sad Hill is a popular tourist attraction which has worked wonders for the economy in Contreras in Burgos where it is situated, and the beautifully restored cemetery is well worth a visit.

When researching for this article, I fell over the following extract from Wikipedia, which I thought you might enjoy reading as much

It refers to Sergio Leone's slapdash approach to the safety of his employees, and the lack of basic measures and forethought to ensure everybody's wellbeing:

Wallach and Eastwood flew to Madrid together and, between shooting scenes, Eastwood would relax and practice his golf swing. Wallach was almost poisoned during filming when he accidentally drank from a bottle of acid that a film technician had set next to his soda bottle.

Wallach mentioned this in his autobiography and complained that while Leone was a brilliant director, he was very lax about ensuring the safety of his actors during dangerous scenes.

For instance, in one scene, where he was to be hanged after a pistol was fired, the horse underneath him was supposed to bolt. While the rope around Wallach's neck was severed, the horse was frightened a little too well. It galloped for about a mile with Wallach still mounted and his hands bound behind his back.

The third time Wallach's life was threatened was during the scene where he and Mario Brega-who are chained togetherjump out of a moving train. The jumping part went as planned, but Wallach's life was endangered when his character attempts to sever the chain binding him to the (now dead) henchman.

Tuco places the body on the railroad tracks, waiting for the train to roll over the chain and sever it. Wallach, and presumably the entire film crew, were not aware of the heavy iron steps that jutted one foot out of every box car.

If Wallach had stood up from his prone position at the wrong time, one of the jutting steps could have decapitated him.

Who said being an actor is a cushy job?

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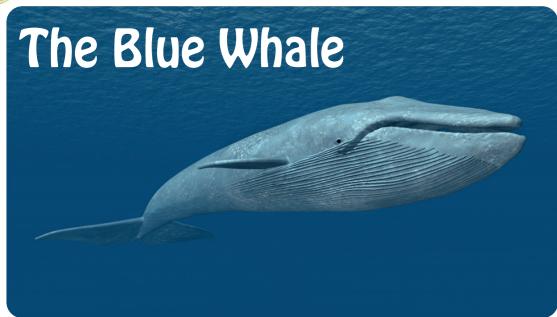
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measure 1.80m. His heart weighs almost 200 kilos.

In the right circumstances, a blue whale can live up to 90 years.

Blue whales live in all the world's oceans, and in winter they can be seen around the Canary Islands; they prefer spending the warmer months in Arctic waters.

The blue whale reaches sexual maturity at the age of five. The mating is a quick affair, however preceded by complex courtship rituals with plenty of male rivalry, although this is not fatal. The female appears to make her decision according to the rituals and the 'singing' ability of the

The gestation takes 10-11 months. When the calf is born it measures 6-7 metres and weighs 3 tonnes. It lives off the mother's milk for seven months, and it takes two to three years before mum is ready

The most important part of the blue whale's diet is krill. He can eat up to three tonnes a day (2-4% of his weight). He can also eat small fish (sardines, anchovies and herring) depending on where he is and the time of year.

His top speed is 30 km/h, but he usually moves about at less than 10 km/h. The young ones enjoy making spectacular jumps out of the water from time to time.

The blue whale can stay emerged for up to 30 minutes and go down to a depth of 150 metres although he usually only feeds down to a depth of 100 metres.

Normally, blue whales live alone or in pairs. In the mating season they all tend to meet up in certain areas and the females often form groups when they bring up their calves, and sometimes even share the babysitting with female fin whales.

The whales' singing has been much investigated, but even so no firm conclusions have been made. It seems clear that the whales use their singing as a means of communication although what it is for nobody

> is sure. According to some studies, a large whale's singing can be heard and understood by another individual at up to 4,000 km's distance; if this is true, the whales have the oldest and most extensive communication network on earth.

> The blue whale's singing is very slow and monotonous, and only partly distinguishable to the human

The blue whale was almost extinguished through intensive hunting in the 20th century, but thankfully worldwide bans and public awareness have turned the tide, and it is thought that there are between 10,000 and 25,000 blue whales alive in the world's oceans

Although the blue whale cannot be said to be a particularly Spanish beast it does, like us, quite enjoy a visit to the Canary Islands in winter, and it can also occasionally be seen off the coast of Cantabria.

So being a great lover of whales, I have permitted myself to include the blue whale in our monthly fauna feature.

The blue whale (balaenoptera musculus) is the largest living creature on Earth. Some specimens have been observed to be up to 33 metres long, weighing 190 tonnes. However, this was in the 30's, and these enormous creatures did not survive the ruthless whale hunting of times gone past. The largest specimens today measure up to 25 metres, the females being slightly larger than the males.

The blue whale is easily confused with his cousin the fin whale which has a similar shape and size; however, the fin whale's colouring goes between dark grey and black as opposed to the blue hue of this month's protagonist.

The stomach of the blue whale often looks grey or yellow-ish due to the algae that adhere to his underside. The upper side of the whale is blue or blue-grey. He has a large, slim head which measures almost a third of his total length with lengthways stripes on his throat. Of all the species of whale, the blue whale has the biggest baleen plates – half a metre wide and one metre long. They are suspended from the upper jaw and are used for filtering the crustaceans that constitute his staple diet.

On top of his head, the blue whale has two blowholes used for breathing. Every so often when the whale breathes out he emits a column of vaporized air which can be up to 9 metres tall.

The individual blue whale specimens can be identified by their dorsal fins which are proportionally small and different in each individual.

When the blue whale is exerting himself his heart rhythm is between 18 and 20 beats per minute as opposed to 120 in humans in the same situation. An adult person could stand straight inside the whale's widest arteries which



NEXT SUMMER



That last summer - Did the sun really shine every day? Was the sky a deeper shade of blue? The air more fragrant? The birds chirpier?

Maryanne gazes out of her rain splattered window at the bleak scene unfolding before her. In the far distance is the devastation caused to that first row of cottages. Right under her nose lurks the threatening shadow of the bulldozer, ready for yet more destruction.

On her calendar there's a prominent black cross against tomorrow. That's the day she moves out of her cosy house - the little cottage which has been her home for almost thirty years.

She sighs - forced at her age to make a new life in what the Council grandly describes as "a unique development for the nineteen seventies" incorporating all the latest conveniences bathroom (hers will be in avocado), kitchen with electric cooker, large bedroom, rubbish chute, a laundry, a lift. Even balconies.

The shiny brochure sits on the coffee table - on the front an artist's impression of gleaming high storied flats, smart looking people walking past, mothers pushing smiling babies in prams, happy children playing on swings and roundabouts. Trees and shrubs in abundance.

But this is only one person's interpretation (no doubt a man) drawn in the comfort of a pristine office, all pencils lined up in a row.

In reality, only the actual building work has been completed - the surrounding area still wallows in mud and rubble.

Going round there only yesterday, she had waved to the few brave souls already installed, venturing out dressed in raincoats, and trying to shield themselves with wobbling umbrellas as they trudged through the mire.

One such had been Jack.

"How's it going, Jack? Settling in?" Maryanne had tried to sound



By Evelyn McCrorie

cheerful. It couldn't have been any easier for him to up sticks and venture into the unknown. And being independent he had shunned any offer of help, though had made short work of her

His fine features had lit up. "I'll have the kettle on tomorrow,

Maryanne smiles to herself. Last summer evoked happy memories. Jack had become a regular visitor, always enjoying her cooking and taking time to admire her roses and compliment her on her green fingers.

Panic sets in - how will she cope without her garden? Could window boxes ever be the same? Her heart sinks as she contemplates never again seeing her washing blowing in the

Her anxious glance goes past the neatly stacked boxes containing all her worldly goods, and settles again on the coffee table. Beside the brochure nestles her bunch of shining new keys, labelled 177.

Yes, last summer had been good. But next summer, sitting out on the flower decked balcony of No. 177, who knows?





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Grandma's Old Dresser

By Charles Roberts

It was old, battered and took up an entire wall in Grandma's kitchen, all her best china was displayed on the top half while the bottom half was all cupboards full of little secrets. Cupboards big enough to climb in and hide when playing hide and seek, or think of as a ship sailing across the endless oceans looking for new lands and different peoples. Or a space ship speeding through the emptiness of space to a brand new planet where new races lived. Yes, that old Welsh dresser of Grandma's was something different to each and every one in the family.

Everyone who had entered the kitchen that day had walked up to it and touched it, each with their own thoughts and memories, trays of food had been placed upon it ready for after the... well, when the family got back from... got back from the service in the church.

Grandma was the linchpin of the family, if you wanted advice? Ask grandma. If you wanted help? Ask grandma. It made no difference what advice or help you needed she seemed to have the answer to anything and everything. It was as though she was the font of all knowledge, and she was always right. "Who we gonna turn to now?" someone said helping themselves to some egg mayonnaise sandwiches which were on a tray on the dresser. It was a question on everyone's lips, but no one dared to ask it until now. A silence fell on the house, no one said a word as though they each expected an answer to that question, "who we gonna turn to now?"

Gerry, her eldest son at seventy-two, leaned on the sink, which was opposite the dresser, and looked out of the window, silent tears running down his face and dripping from his chin onto the dry

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porcelain below. He was only a year younger than his Pa when he'd passed. He looked out at the kids playing on the lawn and running round the old willow tree, his Grandma and Grandpa had planted that tree when they first moved into that old house; that had been two years before Gerry's father had been born. He'd grown up with everything he could see, from a baby being born in Grandma's bedroom upstairs, to leaving and going overseas with the army, then coming home to a big party with all his brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles gathered in that house to welcome him back from the war in Europe, safe and sound. His marriage to his childhood sweetheart, then building another house just down the lane so he could help his Pa work the land. He watched his kids grow and play on that lawn, climb that willow tree, and now his grandkids were doing the very same as he did when he was their age.

He felt a hand on his shoulder and wiped his face with his coat sleeve before he turned to them.

"Are you all right hun?" Wendy, his wife, asked sliding her arm across his back as she moved closer to him.

"Gonna miss her," he said, still watching the kids playing.

"We're all gonna do that hun," she said putting her head on his shoulder, "you're the one they'll all look to now."

"No! You're the oldest woman and it's always been a woman in charge of this family. Always been a woman everyone has looked up to."

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"What!"

"My Ma, her Ma, her Ma before that. The men folk have always done what the matriarch has told them, going right back to when the family came from the old country and settled in this here valley, two, three hundred years ago," he turned to look at her, "what are we gonna do with our house?"

"What do ya mean?"

"Well Ma would want us to live here. I mean you've spent most of the last seven years here anyways."

"Ya mean to move in here? I reckon our Jody wouldn't say no to our place. Willy helps you round the farm anyways."

"And Walt seems to enjoy helping out when he can."

"So that'll be three generations all working the land that your folks settled three hundred years ago. Seems fittin' really."

"My Pa was seventy-three when he died."

"So what?"

"I'm seventy-two now."

"So what are you sayin'?" That you're goin' to up and die on me next year?"

"Maybe."

"Well Gerry, you can just get that idea outta your head. Why, you've

got another twenty years in you at least."

"I hope you're right Wendy, I sure hope you're right. What will we do with Ma's furniture?"

"We got stuff of our own Gerry."

"I know. But what about that dresser? I know that you've hated it ever since..."

"This room would be empty without it. We'll keep it, if it's the only thing of your Ma's we keep, it'll be that old dresser."



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Swallows and Almanzoranos

By Aileen Cleave



Our swallows have arrived home early this year, last week in March, and when I say home, that's exactly what I mean because we are home to quite a colony of swallows.

Some eight years ago a lone pair of swallows decided to build a nest in our garage. We were fascinated by the skill and precision used to create this home for their unborn family and made sure that either the door or the window was always open. We did that very happily that first summer, feeling truly privileged to have been chosen, after all the mess on the tiled floor was easily swept away and cleaned.

We were rewarded with the most amazing display of parental care. When the chicks eventually hatched, no matter where the adult birds

were when we entered the garage, they would immediately return, bravely confronting us with wings flapping, making it clear they considered it their territory. When it came to the chicks fledging, we watched the adult birds clear the area of sparrows and coal tits and saw the first halting flights of these beautiful birds that would eventually become aerial ballerinas.

We thought that would be it. Once the young had hatched, the swallows would disperse to different climes. They had fledged at a convenient time for us to close up the garage before leaving for our August holiday. How wrong were we!

We began sweeping and washing the garage. Couldn't bring ourselves to knock down their lovingly built nest, of course, but we made sure the windows and doors were closed so they couldn't get back in. The birds, now five or six in number (it's difficult to count, they fly so fast) flew repeatedly past our terrace where we were sitting, making low distressed tweeting sounds.

I started to read a little more about these birds, and I discovered that once they have fledged, if they can't return there to roost, they fly round and round until they simply die from exhaustion. Naturally, we couldn't allow that to happen.

So, my husband set about cutting a square hole, roughly 9 x 5 inches, in the garage wall just above the door. We watched anxiously at first to see if the swallows could manoeuvre this small aperture, but we needn't have worried. After a few tentative flights up to it, they sailed through - or rather flew through! It is the same if we leave the window open, when they have to manoeuvre the narrow bars of the rejas. This they do with the skill and aplomb of a fighter pilot, flying sideways.



It is now fair to say that something approaching 8 generations of swallows call our garage home for 5 months of the year. There are now three nests, though the first (their grandparent's, I suppose) is still the most handsome. And yes, it's true, there have been times when I've decided enough is enough with the mess it now entails, but that bit of extra effort compared with the degree of pleasure they give us is definitely worth it. When we see that first flash of jet black wings, we know the world goes on regardless of wars and tariff's.

And of course, they know us, nobody will ever convince me otherwise.



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German Sterling



Germany came very close to crashing the British economy during the Second World War.

Hitler was around when hyperinflation hit the German Weimar Republic in 1923. Prices doubled every few days, the monthly inflation rate exceeded 300%, and the exchange went from four Marks to one US\$ to 4.2 trillion Marks to one US\$.

Hitler's plan was to crash the British wartime economy by flooding the country with fake sterling. With this counterfeit money in circulation all over the country, hyperinflation would rip through the

An SS officer called Hans Krueger knew exactly who to employ to create the perfect counterfeit sterling notes. And exactly where he could find them, as he had been arresting counterfeiters and putting them in jail before the war.

Salomon Smolianoff was a former portrait painter who turned to forgery. Arrested in the 1920's for pushing fake Sterling £50 notes, he had been released just in time for the great Kristallnacht purge against the Jews. People were desperate to escape Germany, so a whole new industry of forged papers was created. And Salomon "Sally" Smolianoff was at its centre.

Forging paperwork is an art. It needs the hand of a true artist, a master forger to fool the authorities. Smolianoff was such a man. He eventually was caught again and sent to the slave labour camp of Mauthausen. Here he survived by drawing flattering pictures of his Nazi guards. But in 1943, he was pulled out of Mauthausen, by Kruger, who appreciated his artistic talents, and sent to a special area within Sachsenhausen concentration camp. And given the job of crashing the British Economy.

The plan was for the Luftwaffe to drop millions in fake sterling over Britain. Thereby creating hyperinflation and destroying the British

Smolianoff's very life, and those of his team, depended on figuring out what material the English were using for their banknotes. Smolianoff was put in charge of a specialist team, consisting of printers, dyers, fine artists, engineers, engravers, metalworkers, mathematicians and photographers.

It had long been rumoured the British sterling notes were made from a reed that only grew in Malaysia. This proved to be untrue. It was discovered they were created with pulped rags. But first they had to create the fake British £5 notes. And these had to be so perfect, they'd even fool the Bank of England.

A German businessman was sent to Switzerland with the first

By Tom Fynes

batch of £5 notes. Depositing them in a Swiss bank he demanded they be checked for forgery. The Swiss bank informed the German they were indeed Bank of England £5 notes. But still not happy, he insisted that they were double-checked by the Bank of England. The Bank of England came back and confirmed, that these were indeed genuine notes. So, the game was on.

But unfortunately, the Luftwaffe could not provide a plane to fly the millions of sterling to drop them on the UK, as their planes were getting blown out of the sky by the RAF.

£134,610,810 was printed and ready to be used. (About £7 billion in today's money.)

And used it was. The Germans started using the forged sterling to buy much needed war material.

A massive black market in passports and visas was also paid for, using fake sterling.

The Bank of England suddenly became aware of these fake millions sloshing around the global system, so they first retired all the old £5 notes, and then started destroying the forgeries as they came across

So, what would you have done back in the day? If a million sterling had dropped in your lap from the night sky, like manna from heaven.

Handed it over to Her Majesty's Government? Or bought a new Bentley!







Divine Intervention or Just Plain Luck?

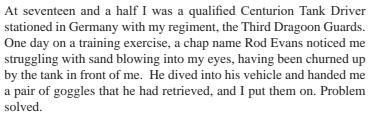
By Dave Dawson



It's not uncommon to be asked 'do you believe? In God, in Divinity, or fate? Well, despite a strict Christian upbringing through boarding school and attending church and Sunday school, I concluded in my twenties that actually, no, I don't believe.

That being the case it might surprise you to know that on two occasions in my life, that scepticism has been put to the test; two times when my life may have ended or, at best, been changed for ever, were it not for... divine intervention?





Now, the nature of this exercise was that we were pitched against an enemy portrayed by another regiment, The Royals (now the Blues and Royals) and each was charged with effectively 'killing' the opposition by radioing a 'contact report,' once spotted.

I heard my Commander issue his contact report and saw a Royal's tank approaching a road junction a few hundred yards ahead. I halted whilst a decision was made by an umpire about who issued the first contact report and whilst stationary, the Commander atop the enemy tank pointed his Very pistol (flare gun) in our direction and... fired!

The flare hit me between the eyes taking out the left lens and blackening the right lens of the borrowed goggles. Without that kind intervention, I would surely have been blinded for life, or worse! Thankfully, I lived to tell the tale.

As a footnote I can tell you that I was charged for the wrecked goggles!!!

The second event, many years later, occurred on a night out with my then wife, Sue. We were in Istanbul staying as guests of the General Manager at the Hotel Royal. Whilst out walking we spotted a promising restaurant just around the corner from the hotel, a typical Turkish pavement restaurant and determined to try it.

We were shown to a table that overlooked the basement where through a window we could see an old man counting his money earned, so it seemed, from selling nuts.

I'm one of those people who, having sat facing the table to eat, likes to relax with a brandy with my legs given the freedom to stretch. I hoisted myself a little and turned my chair a quarter turn into the pavement but failed to notice that I was too close to the gap between the pavement and the basement and before I knew what was happening, the leg of my chair was in space, and I was falling backwards.

I remember somehow having the presence of mind to stretch out my arms and curl my head to my chest as I crashed through the basement window and landed in an unholy heap on the floor, amidst the shards of glass. Chaos ensued! Sue was screaming, the restaurant staff







were in a panic, whilst I picked myself up and checked for injuries. A passing taxi was summoned, and I was rushed to hospital.

The chances of me walking away from such an event without a serious head injury, a broken neck or a broken back are infinitely small but once again, I lived to tell the tale, the only lasting damage being a scar on my left hand where it was stitched, having been cut by all the flying glass.

Once again there is a footnote... When advised by the police that I was not looking to press negligence charges against the restaurant, the manager/owner invited us to dine once again at the restaurant, without charge. We accepted the offer, chose a different table and enjoyed a good meal and attentive service. In recognition of this,

when we were leaving, I left a large tip.

Sue and I made our way back to the hotel and opted for a nightcap in the top floor bar, so imagine my surprise to see that we had been followed up the hotel stairs by a waiter from the restaurant who engaged in conversation with the barman.

I presumed that there had been some disbelief at the size of the tip but, to my horror, I was thanked profusely for the tip but advised that "you didn't pay for the window!"

That restaurant plagued my good friend Yasar, the aforementioned General Manager, for many months seeking recompense. They were given short shrift!

So, was it luck or divine intervention that saved my skin on these occasions?

There have been others from which I have walked away unscathed. A car, at high speed, ploughing

into me at traffic lights and writing off my Hunter GT.

Another time when I took a severe right-hand bend in a borrowed Vauxhall Viva that was incapable of matching my own Mk 2 Ford Cortina 1600e and, turned it over into the adjacent field... If there had been a dry-stone wall instead of a flimsy fence, my passengers and I might not have lived to tell the tale.

Perhaps I'm part cat with a number of lives? Or is someone watching over me? Who knows, however, if you enjoyed reading about my lucky escapes and are of a mind to hear some rather spookier, truelife happenings, let me know.

Life has certainly had its weirder moments!







Joan Miró i Ferrà

Modern day Spanish Catalan painter, sculptor and ceramist

Joan Miró was born in Barcelona on 20th April 1893 to a family of watchmakers and goldsmiths. He was drawn to the arts throughout the early years and in 1920 he moved to Paris, France, to follow his dream. There he developed his own style that is generally regarded as Surrealism. However, he refused membership to any artistic movement in order to allow him to experiment with styles and ideas without compromising the group.

He pursued his own interests in the art world, ranging from automatic drawing and surrealism, to expressionism and Colour Field painting.

Once asked how he got his inspiration - "How did I think up my drawings and my ideas for painting? Well I'd come home to my Paris studio in Rue Blomet at night, I'd go to bed, and sometimes I hadn't any supper. I saw things, and I jotted them down in a notebook. I saw shapes on the ceiling..."

Miró married Pilar Juncosa in Palma de Mallorca on October 12, 1929; their daughter Dolores was born July 17, 1931.

In 1948–49, although living in Barcelona, Miró made frequent visits to Paris to work on printing techniques at the Mourlot Studios (lithographs) and at the Atelier Lacourière (engravings). A close relationship lasting forty years developed with the printer Fernand Mourlot and resulted in the production of over one thousand different lithographic editions.

In 1959, at the request of André Breton, Miró represented Spain in The Homage to Surrealism exhibition together with works by Enrique Tábara, Salvador Dalí, and Eugenio Granell.



La Leçon de Ski - in a Contempory Art Museum in Venezuela



The Tilled Field - can be found in Guggenheim Museum

In the final decades of his life Miró accelerated his work in different media, producing hundreds of ceramics, including the Wall of the Moon and Wall of the Sun that can be found at the UNESCO building in Paris. He also made temporary window paintings (on glass) for an exhibition.

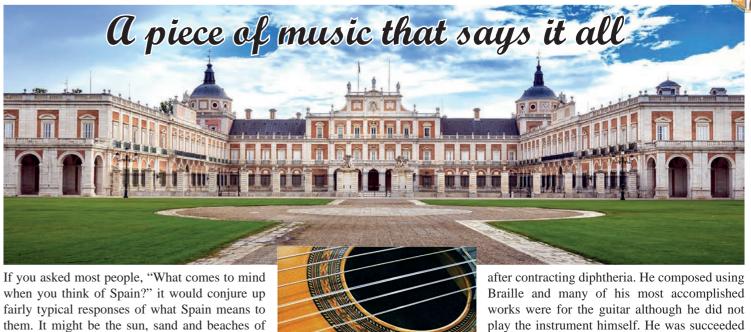
In 1974, Miró created a tapestry for the World Trade Center in New York City where it was displayed for many years. It is reported to be one of the most expensive works of art lost during the attack of the twin towers.

One of Miró's most important works, his only glass mosaic mural, Personnages Oiseaux (Bird Characters), can be found in the Ulrich Museum of Art, Kansas, USA. The mural is one of Miró's largest two-dimensional projects, undertaken when he was 79 and completed when he was 85 years of age. The entire south wall of the Ulrich Museum is the foundation for the 28 ft by 52 ft (8.53 m x 15.85 m) mural, composed of one million pieces of marble and Venetian glass mounted on specially treated wood in 40 panels, attached to the concrete wall on an aluminium grid.

He was to go to the dedication of the mural in 1978, but he fell at his studio in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and was unable to travel.

His home and studio in Mallorca served him from 1956 until his death on 25th December 1983. He had become bedridden and suffered from heart disease and respiratory problems. His body is buried at the Montjuïc cemetery in Barcelona.

Joan Miró won several awards in his lifetime. In 1954 he was given the Venice Biennale print making prize, in 1958 the Guggenheim International Award and in 1980 he received the Gold Medal of Fine Arts from King Juan Carlos of Spain.



MANUEL CUBEDO

My image of Spain is none of these. It's a piece of music. A beautiful and passionate piece of music - Rodrigo's Guitar Concerto de Aranjuez. 'Never heard of it' I hear you say, but I'm betting most of you have at some time or another or at least part of it. It has been recorded by many classical guitarists and also by The Shadows who released it, well back in the day. The Concerto is in three parts but it is the second movement which is usually played and is most recognised. But the story behind its Composer is, perhaps, as

the Costas, or perhaps the majestic Sierra Nevada

Mountains. It could be the hustle and bustle of

its cities. Cathedrals, leafy plazas, restaurants and

bars spilling out onto the pavements; the bullfight

with the swirl of the cape and roar of the crowd,

tapas, paella, flamenco.... the list is practically

interesting and evocative as the piece itself.

Joaquín Rodrigo was born near Valencia in 1901 and showed an aptitude for music from an early age. So much so that as a young man he went to Paris to study music and composition and became an accomplished pianist. He found a mentor in Manuel de Falla, the famous Spanish composer. In 1933 he married and took his new wife Victoria, who was a concert pianist, on honeymoon to Aranjuez, a town around 50 km south of Madrid. There, they visited the Royal Palace which was built in the late 1500's and which evidently made a deep impression on Joaquin as he later wrote the Concerto around

He and his wife returned home to start their new life together. Victoria had given up her own career to devote herself to her husband. Unfortunately, tragedy struck and Victoria miscarried their first child, an event which was to deeply affect both their lives. Indeed, they declared that the Concerto was composed in response to their loss and Joaquin was said to have grieved through his music for their lost baby.

He composed the Concerto in 1939 and it was published in 1940 to great critical acclaim and led to many further commissions from prominent musicians including our own Julian Lloyd Webber and also Andrés Segovia. His fame and respect grew and in 1991 he was raised to the Spanish nobility by King Juan Carlos and was made "Marqués of the Gardens of Aranjuez." In 1996 he received Spain's highest honour bestowed upon a civilian, the Prince of Asturias

Joaquín Rodrigo died in 1999 and perhaps the most remarkable thing about his life was that he was blind from the age of three

as Marquesa by his daughter Cecilia and both Joaquin and Victoria are buried in the grounds of the cemetery at Aranjuez.

Whenever I hear the Concerto and wherever I am, I am transported to Spain. The music evokes so much about the country and I think about that blind composer overcoming life's adversities

and achieving things which, as a child, he could perhaps only dream.

If you would like to experience it, simply log on to 'Youtube', type in the Concerto and choose from one of the many versions presented. You won't be disappointed.





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The Divine Worm



It was 1795, and the Reverend Samuel Henshall had given up on his sermon for next Sunday at Christ Church, Spitalfields.

He was having trouble keeping his mind on Holy matters. In fact what he really wanted was a drink. A vision of the Communion wine floated through his head. No, better not; it was horrible, every drop had to be accounted for, and the Verger was a right stickler.

He mooched out of the Sacristy door and almost fell over a Redcoat of the Royal Artillery sitting on the grass against the Sacristy wall.

'Sorry, didn't see you there.'

'That's all right Reverend.' The soldier held up a bottle of wine. 'Fancy a drink? I don't think He'll mind.' He jerked his head upwards, indicating that the He was God.

Reverend Samuel smiled. 'He created the grape, I'm sure He would like us to show our gratitude by enjoying the fruits of His benevolence.'

He slid down the wall and sat next to his new friend.

'Not easy getting the cork out, is it?'

The soldier laughed. 'No problem when you've got a musket!'

The Reverend gaped at him in horror. 'You're not going to shoot the neck off, are you? You might hit someone by accident. You'd need to be a fantastic aim. You might get glass in the wine. No, my friend, don't do it.'

He rummaged in the pocket of his cassock. 'Here, use this.' He pulled out what looked like a long nail with a large metal head.

The soldier laughed again. 'Nah, they're no good. You need one of

By Jos Biggs

He picked up his musket and undid an object tied to its stock.

'But that's a cleaning rod! It's for cleaning the barrel!' Exclaimed the astonished clergyman.

'And opening bottles of wine. Watch.'

He gripped the bottle between his feet, caught hold of the cleaning rod and held it over the neck of the wine bottle.

'This bit here,' He indicated the helix on the end of the rod. 'It's called the worm. You stick the worm in the cork and twist.'

He stuck the worm in the cork and twisted.

'And then you pull.'

He pulled. And out came the cork.

'Well, bless my soul!' The Reverend exclaimed.

They toasted the blessing of the Reverend's soul right down to the last drop of a particularly nice Bordeaux.

He stood up carefully. 'Better go and write my sermon. I think I'll take The Bounty of the Lord In All Its Forms as my text.'

He paused thoughtfully. 'Don't suppose you've got another one of those cleaning rods I could have?'

The soldier passed it up to him. 'Here, have this one. I can easily get another one from the stores.'

Later that evening the Reverend took the worm off the rod and attached a wooden T to the top of it.

So although the British army inadvertently invented the corkscrew, Reverend Samuel Henshall took it off the rod, stuck a piece of wood over the top, called it a corkscrew and got the credit!



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Percy

By Vic Davey

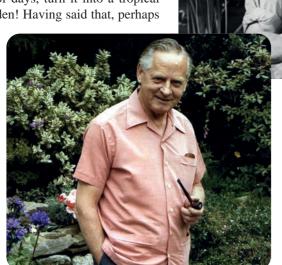
Mrs D and I are not gardeners. We like a nice tidy garden but that's pretty much as far as it goes. The back garden of our house in the UK consisted of a patch of grass which took about 20 minutes to mow, a large decking area and the rest was stones with colour added by lots of pots with plants.

Our house here is much the same but minus the grass. Relatively maintenance free.... except for conifers which are a nightmare!

Although, as I said, we are not gardeners, Mrs D does like to watch these garden "make-over" shows on TV. I can take them or leave them. Somehow they manage to look at someone's back yard, do some sketches and within a couple of days, turn it into a tropical paradise resembling the Garden of Eden! Having said that, perhaps

a little unkindly, I have watched the odd show where they provide a garden for someone who is disabled or wheelchair bound, enabling them to get outside and enjoy somewhere to spend time in the fresh air with family and friends.

These shows are a far cry from the early TV garden shows. I wonder how many people remember dear old Percy Thrower? He was one of the first 'Celebrity Gardeners' a bit like the Alan Titchmarsh of his day, who has said that Percy was an inspiration for him.



Percy became something of a TV personality too, appearing on shows like Morecambe and Wise and Benny Hill. In his early days he worked for Charles Cook who was Head Gardener at the Royal Windsor Palace gardens until Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson interfered once too often and he left. However, Percy ended up marrying Charles' daughter and actually received some china as a Wedding gift from Queen Mary.

Percy had followed in the footsteps of his father and I don't think he ever thought about doing anything else for a living. He was well educated too, got all his qualifications and Diplomas in

Horticulture, so he knew his stuff.

Percy was also a leading light in the "Dig for Victory" campaign during the War and just a few years after hostilities had ended was asked to design a garden in the Tiergarten area in Berlin.

It was his TV appearances which made him famous and endeared him to audiences. He was the gardener in the BBC TV centre, "Blue Peter" garden which I had the privilege of visiting with my daughter when we appeared on The Generation Game. Unfortunately it must have been Percy's day off, so we never got to meet him.

In 1977 he wrote his memoires and in 1984 was awarded an MBE. All in all, not bad for the son of a gardener.

Percy died in 1988 aged 75, leaving behind a legacy which I'm sure still inspires many gardeners today.... but just not us!

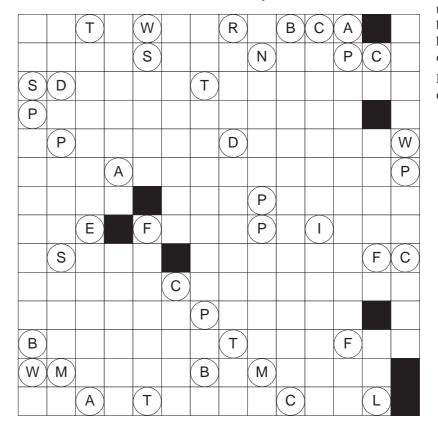






Puzzle Time

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

Remember, any starting letter may be used by more than one word at the same time!

Aping	Fence	Polio
Article	Feuded	Popcorn
Attune	Fiend	Pranks
Beady	Import	Punched
Borrow	Lance	Redone
Bowls	Mates	Shrug
Bridled	Moths	Smash
Casts	Mouth	Speed
Cawed	Nineties	Talker
Cells	Paper	Trays
Cinch	Pares	Treated
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What is Happening in the Local Property Market. May 2025

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

Last year and the beginning of 2025 have been amazing for property sales and we continue to be rushed off our feet. Property vendors, now is a great time to get your property on the market as there are much less properties for sale and therefore much less competition.

However, we are a little worried that the market may slow down a little as property buyers put their property buying trips on hold. Hopefully we are wrong.

In many previous months' editorials, we have been highlighting the damaging

effects of allowing your property to be advertised at too high a price. The obvious one was that you will get much less interest and your property will stay on the market for longer than it should.

Quite rightly it is the job of an estate agent to get our property sellers as much money as possible for their properties. However, when agents deliberately over-value many properties just to get them on their books, it has a much bigger negative effect.

Some sellers and agents forget that there is always a limit to what buyers can afford to, or are willing, to pay. Many property buyers have been watching prices go up and are now thinking that they may have "missed the boat". They now believe they may no longer be able to afford the property of their dreams. You may think that these buyers would just have to buy something that is within their budget but many do not want to compromise on their dreams.



The second point that may reduce the amount of buyers coming over to buy is that from October through to now they saw properties selling like "hotcakes". This is great, but not enough new properties have been coming on to the market to replace them and to keep up with demand.

It may be possible that some property buyers were looking forward to booking their flights, accommodation, hire cars etc. and vitally, looking forward to seeing a large variety of properties to make the trip worthwhile. However, they now see

that there are a lot less properties on the market AND the ones that are for sale are now priced much higher than their true market value and out of their financial reach. Some property buyers may therefore decide to put their buying trip on hold until more reasonably priced properties come on to the market.

Many people have said to us that compared to property prices in the UK, Ireland, Holland, Belgium, Germany etc., the properties in Spain are still cheap so buyers have got lots of extra money to pay more. Our answer is just because people have lots of money it does not make them stupid and pay more than they should.

Property sellers, please make sure your property is perfectly presented and priced correctly to get potential buyers through your door.

Olla Podrida from Burgos



One of Burgos's most emblematic dishes is Olla Podrida, which would translate into Rotten Casserole, or Rot Pot!

That obviously immediately tickled my curiosity, but it turns out that the name does not come from some stomach churning origin like I imagined, with the ingredients being what had been thrown out and then retrieved a few days later because there was no fresh food to be had, or the dish having been left for too long, but poor people having to eat it anyway...

On the contrary. Podrida, which means 'rotten', has been bastardised from poderida, which would translate into 'the powerful' or 'the empowered'. In other words, something that only the very rich could offord

This is not surprising, as the list of ingredients is as long as your arm. No less than 19 ingredients, 7 of which are meat products! Morcilla de Burgos, the famous Burgos black pudding, is of course one of the many meat ingredients.

These are the ingredients: Beans, onion, leek, carrot, green pepper, egg, breadcrumb, olive oil, garlic, parsley, smoked paprika, salt, pig's trotter, pig's ear, pig's tail, marinated pork ribs, chorizo, morcilla de Burgos and pork belly.

Now, this does make for a rich casserole for the rich!

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¡Buen Provecho!

You cook it in two different pots. One for the soaked beans and the vegetables, another for the meats, but leaving the chorizo and morcilla out for now.

When the beans and vegetables are done, you separate them, which makes me think it might be a good idea to have the beans in some sort of net or muslin bag. Stick the vegetables in the blender with a few beans, and puree them completely. Return them to the beans to add flavour to the stock.

Now you add the meats, which have been boiling for an hour, together with the chorizo and morcilla. Cook everything for 15 minutes to mix all the flavours.

Next, make dumplings from the rest of the ingredients: Mix eggs, breadcrumbs, chopped garlic, salt, pepper and parsley to make a dough. Shape portions of the dough into balls which you fry over a high heat until they are golden.

Like with any traditional Spanish 'cocido', you serve the stock first, like a soup starter, and then you feast on the meat, beans and dumplings.

Stick that in your pipe and smoke it – or even better, stick that on your plate and eat it!

Buen Provecho!







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March Showers Bring May Flowers!

Wow, the wildflowers are still abounding, my camera is stuffed almost to capacity with photos from my Dakota walks where I'm frequently left breathless by the lush beauty of the countryside.

However, not even that has managed to keep me out of the kitchen!

I've been productive this month and have selected (as always) four recipes to share with you.

There's a vegetarian mushroom dish, pork osso buco, fish and meatballs. Quite a wide selection, although I say so myself!

Read, cook and enjoy!

Hake in the Oven with **Cheese and Herbs**

This recipe was actually the one that inspired last month's pasta

This time I've gone the whole hog and thrown in hake fillets; however no built-in pasta, I had it with (surprise, surprise) smashed

Ingredients for two:

1 leek, finely sliced

Olive oil

300g hake fillets

Salt and pepper

200ml cream

100ml white wine

1 tbsp Dijon mustard

Salt

1 tsp dried tarragon

1 tsp dried thyme

100ml grated cheese

Gently fry the leek in the oil until it's soft and transparent. Put it in a greased, ovenproof dish. Place the fish fillets on top and season with salt and pepper.

Whip together cream, white wine, mustard and salt.

Pour it over the fish and top with herbs and cheese.

Cook it in the oven at 225°C for about 20 minutes until the fish is

Serve with pasta, rice or potatoes – it lends itself to them all!







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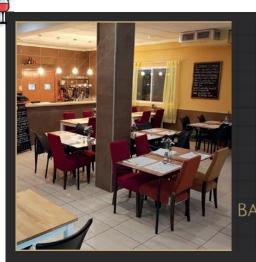


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Meat Balls & Prawns

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It tastes of spring with its fresh ingredients, and the mix of flavours is wonderful! It takes a bit of making, but not too much, and you

And if you're like me and love spending time in the kitchen, you'll enjoy it double!!

Ingredients for two:

Meatballs

250g minced pork

1 tsp salt

2 tbsp flour

1 egg

½ tsp onion powder (optional)

Dash of milk if necessary

Sauce

20g butter

20g flour

200ml (approx.) water from the meatballs

100ml cream

100g small prawns, peeled

Lemon juice to taste

Chopped dill

Mix the meat with the salt, then add the rest of the ingredients, bar the milk, and mix. If the mix is dry, add milk until it is easily workable, but not liquid.

Leave it in the fridge for at least half an hour.

Add more milk if necessary and shape the meat into 12-14 meat

Bring a salted pan of water almost to the boil, and carefully add the meatballs. Let them cook for about 12 minutes, or until they rise to the surface.

Take them out with a slotted spoon and set aside.

For the sauce, melt the butter then add the flour. Let it cook for about a minute, then gradually add first the stock, then the cream, stirring all the time.

Put it on a very low heat and let it simmer for 10-15 minutes, then adjust the seasoning and add lemon juice to taste.

Add the meatballs to the sauce, heat them through, then add the prawns and dill.

Serve with boiled potatoes and loads of green veggies. Yummeee!

















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Portobello Mushroom Ragout

This lovely vegetarian dish is enriched with parmesan and sundried tomatoes, and it is served with pasta.

Do try it, it really does taste great!

Ingredients for two:

150g long pasta

200g portobello mushrooms, roughly chopped

1 red onion, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

30g finely grated Parmesan cheese

2 sprigs rosemary

4-5 sundried tomatoes in oil, chopped

Olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper

Grind the sundried tomatoes in a little in a mortar to bring out the

Cook the pasta al dente; drain but reserve 2-300 ml of the cooking

Fry the mushrooms fiercely until they have released the water and

Add a drop of olive oil and then the onion and garlic. Cook for a couple of minutes and season with salt and pepper.

Add the rosemary, tomatoes and 1-2 tsp balsamic vinegar. Let it sauté for 2-3 minutes then add 100 ml of the pasta water and stir until combined. Add more water if you want it creamier.

Put the pasta into the pan, mix everything and it is ready to serve with a few shavings of parmesan on top.

Bon appetit!



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Pork Osso Buco

I've never tried pork osso buco although I've often seen it at the butcher's; however, seeing as I'm mad about beef osso buco, I reckoned I couldn't go completely wrong with the pork version, so I gave it a go.

And it really was delicious! But I did miss the big lump of bone marrow you get in the beef ones...

Never mind, I still recommend that you try it, here's an idea for how. Ingredients for four:

- 4 pork osso buco
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 100ml white wine
- 2-300ml stock

Flour, olive oil, salt and pepper

Heat the oil in a casserole, turn the pieces of meat in the flour and brown them in the oil. Set aside.

Throw in the onions, let them fry gently for a couple of minutes, then add the carrots, green pepper and garlic. Let it cook for five minutes, stirring occasionally, before throwing in the tomatoes. Let it cook on for two minutes.

Return the osso buco to the pot, add salt and pepper, turn up the heat and pour in the wine. Let it bubble until the alcohol has evaporated, then add the stock, just enough to cover the meat.

Leave it to cook over a low heat for about an hour and a quarter, until the meat is completely tender.

Take it out and keep it warm while you blend the stock and vegetables to a thickish sauce.

Serve with rice or mash and a green vegetable of your choice.

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It may not look like much, but the humble garden pea is actually a little bomb of good nutrition and health!

It is to be found at the bottom of the food pyramid together with other vegetables and fruits, and it is full of goodness.

It is relatively low in energy (calories) and a good source of both protein and dietary fibre.

Dietary fibre makes your tummy feel full and keeps your digestion going. The proteins are fuel for your muscles and tissue and also help keep you saturated.

Peas are high in Vitamin A, C and K, good for your eyes, immune system and bones, respectively; the latter also helps wounds heal quicker. However, in order for vitamin K to work optimally it should be ingested together with some kind of fat.

Peas are also rich in the vitamins B, which help turn food into energy. Especially folate (B9) is much in evidence and it helps you with the upkeep of the red blood cells, your skin and your DNA.

Furthermore, peas are a source of potassium, iron and phosphorus, which help your body maintain your muscles, circulation and immune system. They also help stabilize the sugar levels.

Peas make an excellent healthy snack!

Enjoy your peas slightly boiled or raw. They go well with most mildly flavoured dishes, but hot spices dominate and wipe out the

They go well in soups, cold as well as warm, with rice, pasta, fish and meat.

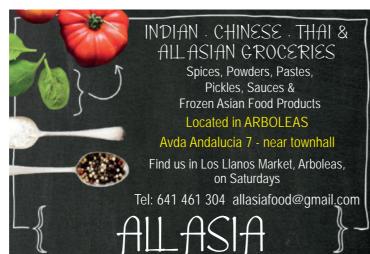
The smaller the pea, the sweeter and juicier. Peas are at their best when they are freshly picked, and it is always a treat to open the pod and see the neat rows of green pearls, just waiting to be flicked out

The only problem about hulling peas is that it is difficult to get the little gems to go into the bowl – they have a strange way of finding their way directly into your mouth instead!

Frozen peas are obviously better than no peas at all, and they do maintain their vitamins through the process, but now, while they are in season, do treat yourself to a few handfuls at the market and use them as you please – as a snack, or try to make them last until they reach the table.

The firmer and shinier the skin of the pod, the more recent it has

Keep your peas in the vegetable drawer in your fridge at 4-6°C. They will keep there for 3-4 days, but as mentioned, the fresher, the tastier. Buen Provecho!



Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 74

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Enter numbers into the blank spaces so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Medium

1 Schedules

2 Metal links

4 Anxiety

6 Clear

13 Rise

12 Satisfies

15 Banger

20 Rapidly

16 Negligent

18 Went slowly

3 Take over for

5 Navigational aid

7 Consumer (3,4)

1 Written accounts

5 Scandinavian

8 Fishing boat

9 Water nymph

10 Brains

11 Light brown horses

12 Mailed

14 Author

17 Otalgia

19 Long baths 22 Reserve

23 Mirror

24 Used a broom

25 Genuine

21 Assail



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Pets Corner

Most people can appreciate the delicate tones and melodious tunes of birdsong, but it is more than just music to birds.

A bird's song is only one type of sound birds make, but it is the most recognisable. Birds have very complex vocalizations, often with more than one tone produced simultaneously, thanks to the specialized syrinx (their equivalent of a voice box) that allows them to create independent sounds in different parts of their trachea. Songs may last 2 to 10 seconds or more and are often repeated in long sequences. A song is generally more musical than other calls, and often incorporates a range of pitches and rhythms into one connected sequence.

Birds use songs for a variety of purposes, depending on the season and each individual bird's needs. The most common reasons for birds to sing include:

• Claiming and defending territory: A loud, complex song advertises to nearby birds that the territory is already inhabited by a healthy, active male.

birds have more time to learn new tones and tunes.

- Attracting a mate: Just as a male's song advertises his territorial boundaries to rivals, it also lets nearby females know that he is strong and able to defend a good region.

 The complexity of a song can indicate health and age, since older
- Courtship duets: In the courtship rituals of some bird species, both genders will sing in a complex duet that strengthens their pair bond. This also helps advertise that they are unavailable to other single

Bird Song



birds

• General communication: While birds have a variety of calls that are used for different types of communication, a song can also be used for more general purposes. A simple, basic song might call a mate to a new food source or summon them to incubation duty, or might keep birds in touch while flying.

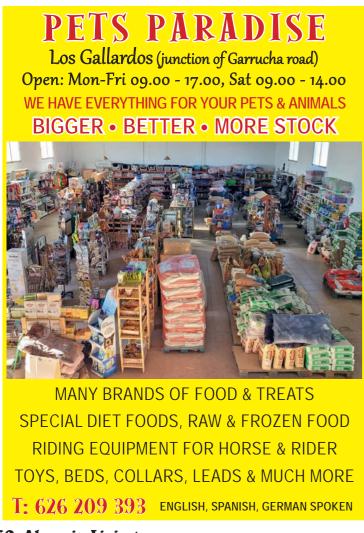
While some bird species sing year-round, most songs are sung from late winter to early summer. This is exactly the time when birds mate and therefore need to claim territories, attract mates, and strengthen pair bonds, and songs are an important part of the process. The birds that do sing year-round are less likely to be migratory and therefore, still defend their territory and often remain with the same mate throughout the year, increasing their need for year-round songs.

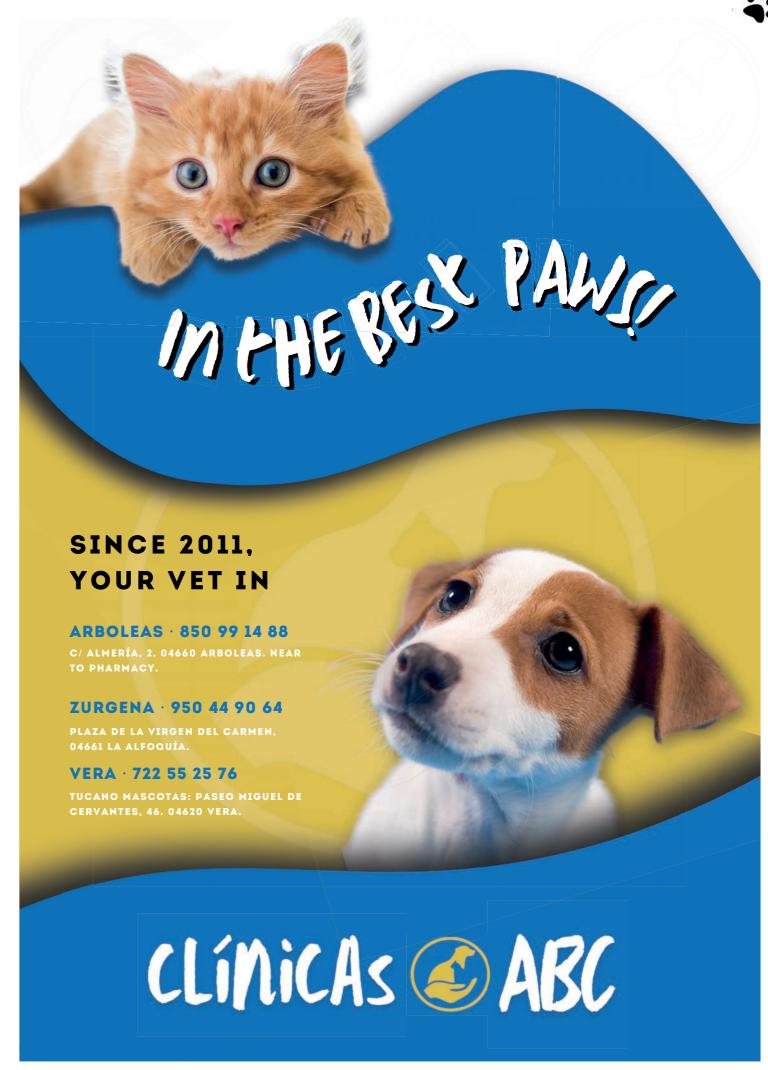
Just as babies aren't born with a full vocabulary, birds aren't hatched with the ability to sing. Young birds first practice begging calls and other attention-getting tones in the nest, but gradually learn to sing by listening to the songs of their parents. Because of this education, birds in different geographic areas will learn slightly different songs.

Singing is not without its dangers. It takes great energy and many calories to produce loud, clear tones, and the sounds can easily attract predators and make the singer more vulnerable. But the benefits birds get from singing, including a prime territory, a healthy mate, and a place to raise their young, are well worth the risk.

Birds may sing at any time of day, but songs are often more energetic, louder, and more frequent in the early morning hours, the dawn chorus. This concert may start as early as 4 a.m. and extend several hours until the sun has risen, and temperatures begin to warm.







THE PINE PROCESSION: dangerous for our dogs!



With spring comes the good weather, the days are longer and the vegetation blooms. But it is also the time of the processional caterpillar

This caterpillar measures between four and five centimetres and is easily recognized because they are found in numerous groups, advancing in indian rows, hence the nickname of procesionaria. Prolific in areas with pines, they are very dangerous for both humans and animals. The processionary caterpillar is covered by up to 600,000 white hairs. These spikes are very urticant, because they contain a toxin called Thaumatopin, toxic to contact. They shed these hairs as a defense mechanism if they feel attacked. Its particular way of moving often attracts the attention of dogs, who may try to smell it and even eat it. If they come into contact with these filaments, the consequences can be fatal, and it will become worse depending on the number of hairs that you have had contact with, as well as the affected area and the time it takes to intervene.

What if my dog has contact with a caterpillar?

Derived from the contact between the pine procesionaria and the



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animal, there are different presentations of this poisoning:

- Facial irritation
- Irritation of legs and areas that have come into contact.
- Eye irritation
- Mild to severe inflammatory tongue damage
- Difficulty breathing and shock

The most characteristic damage is caused by inflammation, ulceration and erosion of the tongue, which can develop into necrosis (death of tissue) and consequently partial or total loss.

Hypersalivation, decay and hyperthermia are very common signs in dogs that have come into contact with the toxic agents of the caterpillar

The contact of a dog with the pine procesionaria is always an emergency. Rapid action is the key to reducing the effect of the bite; you need to go to your trusted veterinary center for proper treatment as soon as possible.

Your veterinarian will assess the need for appropriate treatment. These patients often require hospitalization and monitoring because they may have difficulty drinking or eating.

In the meantime, what can we do until we go to the nearest centre?

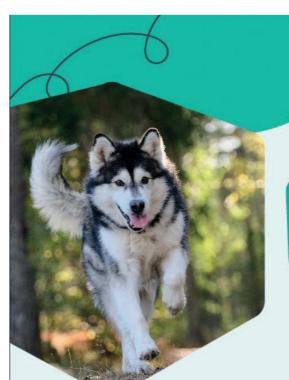
- You should avoid rubbing when washing, as the filaments stick more into the tissue and more toxin is released when they split.
- You should do these actions if possible with gloves and trying to protect your eyes and skin contact.

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Hunter and hunted; self-sufficient and loving; brutal and tender; tough and soft.

The cat is all of these; a complex combination of opposites, all rolled into one balanced being.

Kittens are born blind – but as soon as they gain their sight, they venture away from the warm, protective presence of their mother to meet the bright, new world that stretches before them.

Kittens want to see everything, know everything and touch everything. Puppies sniff at new things to get to know them – kittens touch. They stretch out a paw to touch the obstacles they meet on their way, and if it moves - the game starts!

Many of the characteristics that are distinctive to the adult cat show at an early age. The playfulness and the natural curiosity which do not stop the cat from being careful; the slightest threat will provoke retreat in a defensive pose.

The cat is a very individual creature, and each cat has her own personality which makes her different from others of her species, of her own breed, and even from the same litter. Her personality is formed by her life, her surroundings, her physical and mental wellbeing, heredity – and also, by her adopted parent's character.

Cats remember. Human memory is still being studied by scientists, and even less is known about cats' memory. But they do remember for sure, which is proved by the fact that they learn from experience.

And they also reason. A US scientist tied a piece of meat to a bit of string and hung it inside a cage and put the cage in front of a hungry cat. The cat started circling the cage, but once it realised that it could not get to the meat that way, it jumped on top of the cage, pulled on the string, and managed to get hold of the piece of meat in this

This was the first time the cat had been exposed to the experiment, so it was not a question of memory on that occasion; what it did show is that the cat is capable of reasoning.

Cats are very sensitive to sound, movement, and smell. Dogs are not a cat's arch enemy, despite the general credence that it is so.

Nonetheless, the sudden and loud barking of a dog will often provoke a strong reaction in the cat. Her fur stands on end, she flattens her

What's Going On Behind Those Bright, **Beautiful Eyes?**

ears and whips her tail, all tension and alertness. Her paws leave a damp print on the floor as her adrenal glands whip adrenalin into her system. Once the dog stops barking, she settles down again.

Sudden noise or movement will produce the same reaction. Although the cat is a hunter and a predator, she is also herself prey to larger predators, hence the very well-developed defensive reaction ability.

Have you ever noticed that cats love sitting in an open window or doorway? That is the ideal position for her: The predator in her can look out over her territory and see whether there is anything worth hunting, and at the same time the prey part of her has her back protected against potential attackers.

Cats are independent, and it has often been said that dogs have owners, and cats have servants. Nonetheless, cats can get extremely fond of, and even love, their human co-habitants, and they show this by affectionate behaviour and by making them presents of small animals they have killed.



But do not let the cat's love of one or more persons lead you to think that she will let go of her independence. Independence is one of the cat's most defining traits, and many people dislike felines because of it. They do not like the idea of a pet they cannot dominate. And it is impossible to dominate a cat. You can teach her that certain things are prohibited, but you can never make her do something she does

However, this disdain and indifference go right out of the window when it comes to a cat with kittens. There is almost no end to a mother cat's patience and tolerance with her kittens. They are allowed anything; they can play havoc around and on top of her without castigation. She will patiently move her tail for them to attack for as long as they want, and playfights gently with them while they bite and scratch her with all their might.

And that same soft mum, the moment she's out through the cat flap, turns into a no-nonsense hunter and killer.

A cat is a host of contradictions, and an interesting, exciting, and challenging addition to any household. Those that have no regard for them will lose out on the chance of getting to intimately know a tiger or a panther in a small casing.

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Racing Against the Odds: The Inspiring Journey of Valentina Funes By Ariana Arguedas Bermúdez

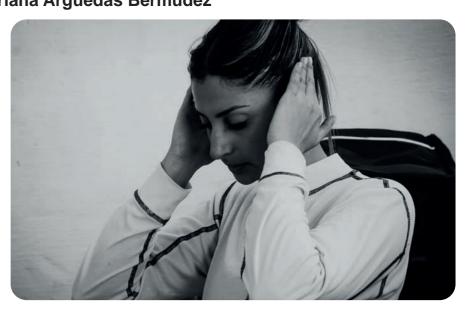
From the quiet town of Lezama in Argentina to the roaring circuits of South America, Valentina Funes is steering her destiny one lap at a time. In a sport still largely dominated by men, Valentina's story is not only about speed and precision—it's about defying expectations, embracing fear, and opening doors for future generations of female racers.

A Girl with a Karting Dream

Born on 7th September 2000, Valentina's journey into motorsport began with an unexpected birthday gift:

"I was always a princess type-makeup, dresses, the lot," she tells Females in Motorsport. "So when I asked for a kart, no one thought I'd stick with it."

Continued on page 71





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..... Continued from page 69

But she did . At just 10 years old, she debuted in Lezama's local karting circuit—the very year it was inaugurated. Within two years, she was a championship contender, narrowly missing a title by half a point.

"I've never had a year without racing," she shares. "Once I got behind the wheel, I never wanted to get off."

Building Grit in a Male-Dominated Arena

Valentina's path was never paved with ease. Competing almost exclusively in mixed-gender races, she quickly became used to being the only girl on the track.

"I never felt different," she says. "But there were times I overheard people saying things like, 'oh no, a girl is racing.' That stuck with me."

What truly sets her apart, however, is how she turned fear into fuel.

"I'm very fearful in everyday life—I don't like driving in the street, I avoid motorcycles," she says. "But in the car, once I'm strapped in, the fear disappears. It becomes about trust and focus."

From Karting to TCR: A Career on the Rise

Valentina's progression through the ranks has been anything but conventional. After achieving national runner-up status in karting in 2018—becoming only the second woman in Argentina to do so—

she made a bold move straight to touring cars, skipping the usual transition through Formula categories.

Now with the chance of competing in the TCR (Touring Car Championship) South America series, Valentina is not only challenging lap times but pushing cultural boundaries.

"There's only one other woman in TCR," she says. "If I make it, I won't just be achieving my dream—I'll be showing other girls that

Continued on page 72







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.... Continued from page 71

Discipline Beyond the Track

While many imagine racing as glamorous and adrenaline-fuelled, Valentina's routine tells another story. A recent graduate in surgical instrumentation, she trained daily while studying full-time.

"It's about discipline," she explains. "Missing birthday parties, skipping social events—everything is sacrificed for the weekend on the track."

Her race weekends begin on Thursdays and stretch through Sunday, and even when she's not competing, the grind doesn't stop. Simulators, fitness sessions, strict diets—it's a full-time commitment.

Racing with a Village Behind Her

Despite moments of doubt, Valentina's support system has been

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unwavering.

"My family has been with me every step—my mum, dad, sister, even my grandma," she says. "When I win, we all win. When I lose, we all lose."

She also credits her racing team, who gave her the opportunity to compete even when finances were tight.

"They believed in me when I couldn't afford to believe in myself," she says.

Why Sponsorship Matters for Valentina's Journey

Valentina isn't just another driver chasing results—she's on the path of becoming one of the few women competing in a male-dominated category like TCR South America, where visibility and representation matter. Backing her means more than supporting a promising career; it's standing behind a shift towards greater inclusivity in motorsport.

As her story gains traction across social media and international platforms, the

potential for brand visibility grows alongside it. For companies seeking purpose-driven partnerships, Valentina represents an opportunity to align with values like equality, resilience and progress.

She also recognises the impact her presence can have on others.

"Maybe I don't see myself as an inspiration, but someone opened the door for me, and now I want to do the same for others," she says. "It's hard—yes, for everyone—but it's possible. You just have to fight for your dreams."

Looking ahead, she dreams of competing on international circuits—and one day hopes to tell her future self.

"Everything you sacrificed, everything you worked for—it was worth it," Valentina says. We couldn't agree more.

Photos all copyright to Valentina Funes Images





That's Just Fine! Or Is It?

In connection with the new traffic rules introduced this year, the police and the DGT have drawn up a series of 'offences' that can in fact hit your purse quite hard.

Some of them seem quite logical and sensible, while others are real jaw droppers!

Here is a summary of the offences.

Use Your Horn with Care

Noise pollution is becoming an increasing problem in our society, and tooting horns are a constant component of the traffic noises of the big cities.

The horn is obviously a great tool when you drive because it helps prevent accidents. However, do not touch it without reason.

In other words, only use the horn in an emergency and not for any other reason. Breaking this rule can cost you 80 euro.

Don't Play Loud Music

It sounds strange that you can get fined for playing music at full volume when you are driving, but it is in fact another measure to help reduce noise pollution.

The rule applies to quiet zones and other places where your music might disturb the peace. Thus, make sure you lower the volume when passing hospitals and rest areas. If you do not, you could incur a fine of 80 - 100 euro, which could even go up to 2,400 euro depending on the area you are driving in!

Careful with What You Wear

It is illegal to drive wearing flip-flops or barefoot. This rule has existed for years and comes as no surprise to anyone. However, it is



also now prohibited to drive wearing high heels.

You can also incur a fine if you drive without wearing a top – and this goes for both men and women! Don't go mad in the opposite direction though, because you can also get fined for wearing an overcoat while driving!

It is not prohibited to wear a coat when you drive, but if you are stopped by a police officer who considers that your coat is too bulky and impedes your movement or obstructs your view of the road and puts highway safety at risk, he may fine you 100 euro.

The wrong, or lack of, footwear will cost you up to 200 euro.

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Keep Your Elbow in the Car

Many of us drive with the elbow resting on the windowsill; this is a way that we rest our arms without thinking about it. However, this can be considered an offence by the authorities.

It is considered that driving like that, the driver cannot manage the vehicle optimally and will take longer to react in an emergency situation. If you are caught driving with your elbow on the windowsill it can cost you up to 200 euro.

Beware When Tanking Up

In this country where self-service at the petrol stations is still a rare beast, many of us take the opportunity, while the attendant fills up our vehicle with fuel, to check the mobile, or pass the time listening to the radio.

However, this is considered a dangerous activity and can be fined with up to 90 euro.

Watch Your Mouth

It seems like common sense not to kiss your passenger while you are driving. It is a distraction and obviously reduces your vision of the road – especially if it is a good kiss and you close your eyes!!!

Kissing is sweet and necessary, but make sure you only do so outside the car or when it is parked, unless you want to fork out 80 euro.

But how about this: You are not allowed to bite your nails while driving! You can actually get fined for lifting your hands to your

Although nail biting is an involuntary gesture, we have to make sure

impair our vision of the road and limit our ability to react quickly in an emergency.

No Eating Behind the Wheel

Many of us have fallen for the temptation to grab a bite while driving, either because of real hunger and not enough time to stop and satisfy it, or simply because we fancy a snack to help us while away the driving time.

However, avoid doing this as best you can, as it is considered that it constitutes a distraction dangerous enough to endanger both your own and other drivers' safety and health, and thus makes you liable for a 200 euro fine.

Do Not Throw Rubbish from the Car

This is a logical and self-evident rule, but unfortunately many people throw rubbish and food out of their car window. Apart from dirtying the environment and putting ecosystems in danger, it can cause accidents.

And of course, dog ends can cause terrible fires.

Thus, throwing rubbish and fag ends from the car does not only incur a 200€ fine, it will also cost the offender four points off the driving licence.

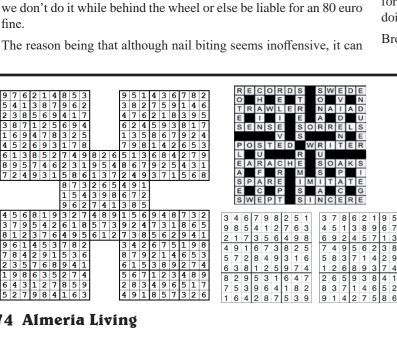


Careful Where You Wash Your Car

If you choose to wash your car by hand rather than using a car wash, be careful when choosing where to do this, as it is actually prohibited

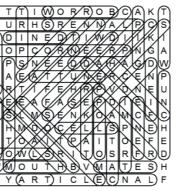
So, do not think that you can wash your car any old where, but look for places that are especially indicated for washing cars or avoid doing it in public areas.

Breaking this rule can cost you a 750 euro fine!



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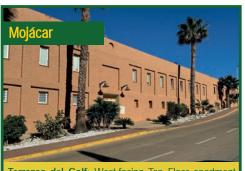
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