

September 2026

Issue 161

Almeria Living

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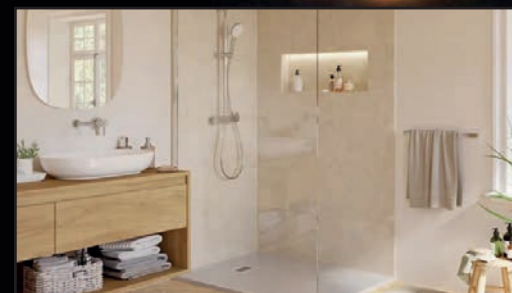
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Welcome to the September 2026 issue of Almería Living. It seems impossible to think it is the 9th magazine of this year already!

It really has been an eternally long inferno of a summer but there is finally some respite on the horizon as we go into our wonderful autumn season. My favourite time of year - just a shame it is so short. For now, I, like many of you, am just enjoying the cooler evenings and early mornings and some overdue restful sleep at night!

C.A.T. Services have a vacancy - if you think you have what it takes to be part of our busy Post Room and Office, then why not get in touch. A driving licence is essential and language skills would be an asset.

In this issue

We have more linked articles this month relative to our featured province of Palma de Mallorca in Islas Baleares (p.6-8), The history of the amazing 'La Seu' Cathedral in Palma de Mallorca can be found on pages 26 - 27 and the famous gin of Menorca is on page 57.

I would like to welcome Joy to my team of scribes, who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from her healthcare background - find out more on page 69. I am always very grateful for the support of our scribes - if you have a story to tell or maybe, like Joy, a vocation to share, why not send it to us for possible publication.

My 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 Almería Living.

Take care and stay safe. Talk again in October.

Karen (Ed)

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An update on the year so far!

In the first 6 months of 2026 Harmony has helped people in need and supported community projects to the tune of over 17,000 euros.

This is well in excess of the funds distributed in previous years.

Over 17 different families and individuals have been helped whether it be arranging and supporting care packages, assistance after the loss of a loved one or other unforeseen matters. Each case is looked at in total confidence and financially assessed dependent on individual situations.

We have also supported local community groups such as the Scouts and local schools.

In addition, this year Harmony has donated the sum of 5,000€ to help those who have been affected by the Bedar and Los Gallardos fire tragedy.

All of the above is funded by the Harmony Community Shop in La Alfoquía, the provision of mobility equipment, the library service and the donations received from individuals and other organisations.

None of this could be achieved without the dedicated work of our Helpers and the support of you, the local community. Thank you so much.



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The application process has two stages. First, you must be accepted for the residency.

You can apply for the Long-Term Residency 2 months before your current TIE expires, or within 3 months after it has expired, although it is always recommended that you apply before your TIE expires, as submitting within this timeframe automatically extends the validity of your current residency until a resolution is reached.

The Foreign Office typically takes up to 3 months to process applications.

Once the first stage has been approved, you must apply for your new TIE card.

As soon as you receive your acceptance letter, you have the full right to start work in Spain if you wanted to do so.

Another option available is the Long-Term-EU Residency (Larga Duración – UE) which provides full freedom of movement, work, and residence throughout the EU. A great option for those wishing to move to another EU country and still retain their rights.

If you are eligible to apply, or want to obtain more information please contact CAT Services. We will be happy to assist you with your application and enquiries.

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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 August we journeyed to Huesca and now our next of Spain’s provincial Capitals takes us off the mainland



Palma de Mallorca in Islas Baleares

The Balearic Islands constitute both an autonomous region and a province. The archipelago is situated in the Mediterranean Sea, off the east coast of the Iberian Peninsula.

The province consists of two groups of islands and numerous islets. Mallorca, Menorca and Cabrera, with their islets constitute one group, called Islas Gimnesias. The other group, Islas Pitiusas, is made up of Ibiza and Formentera and their islets.

The total land area of the Balearic Islands is 4,992 km², and the highest point is Puig Mayor in Sierra de Tramontana in Mallorca. It reaches 1,145 MASL.

Ibiza, the island closest to the mainland is 75 km off the Spanish coast, the same distance which separates it from Mallorca. The distance between Mallorca and Menorca is 35 km.

The Balearic Islands have experienced an explosion in population since the tourist boom of the 1960s. From 1975 to 2005 the number of inhabitants grew by more than 76% compared to the 29.9%, which was the average for all of Spain.

In 2025 the population had risen to 1.266.279, and according to the town hall records, the Balearic Islands are now the number one province in Spain for the percentage of foreigners residing in their territory: 21.5%.

The majority of the foreigners residing in the province come from other EU countries, mainly Germany, Great Britain and France.

Also, immigrants from South America make up a large number.

The islands are famous for their many beautiful beaches, and they boast what is considered one of the world’s most stunning beaches, Ses Isletes. The name refers to the many small islets that are scattered off the coastline and visible from the beach.

The beach is situated on the island of Formentera and forms part of the Ses Salines de Eivissa y Formentera Natural Park.

Because it is in a protected area, parking, access and bar/restaurants are strictly controlled and the beach itself is unspoilt. And with its 450 metres, it is easy to find a spot that is not right on top of the next family.

The island of Mallorca is home to one of Europe’s most astonishing caves, Cuevas del Drach. It is a cave system consisting of four connected caves that boast bizarre formations, stalactites, stalagmites and a large subterranean lake which is navigable. Visitors can go on a gondola on the lake, and classical concerts are performed regularly.

The clever lighting of the cave system enhances the experience.

The island of Ibiza boasts 200 km of coastline with 50 beaches and coves dotted along it. There are noisy and lively beaches like Las Salinas and d’en Bossa, family beaches like cala Tarida and cala Longa. There are also wild coves, surprisingly unusual coves, quiet, lonely coves, and yet others that make you think you have found paradise on earth!



One cove, Atlantis, has earned its name because its scenery brings to mind the mythical island of the same name from the Dialogues of Plato. A cliff covered by pine trees and aromatic plants, rows of dunes that descend towards the sea and the shore, which is formed by large, surprisingly geometrical sandstone blocks set on the edge of the indefinite, crystal clear sea.

The island of Menorca is generally considered the most beautiful of the Balearic Islands with its beautiful cities and towns, pine forested countryside, and pretty coves with astonishingly clear water,

More than 95,000 people have chosen to make the island their home, which makes it the third most populated of the Balearics. However, in the tourist season, the population more than doubles to about 200,000.

The capital of the Balearic Islands is Palma de Mallorca, officially called just Palma. The percentage of the archipelago’s population residing in the capital is well above the average of the rest of Spain at 36.29%, compared to the national average of 31.96%.

Continued on page 8





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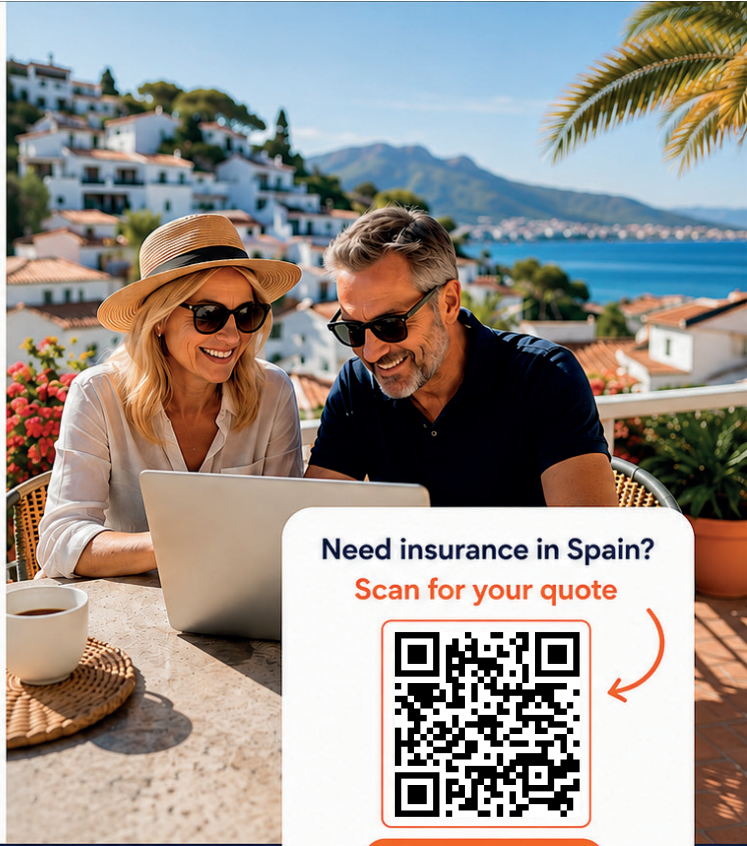
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..... Continued from page 7

There have been many rumours about a prehistoric settlement where modern Palma is today, but it has never been confirmed archeologically; however, it is a known fact that the Roman general Quinto Cecilio Metelo founded the city in 123 BC and called it Palmaria.

In spite of the fact that the city -and indeed all the Balearic Islands - were a favourite target for pirates and raiders, it has more or less followed in the historic footsteps of the rest of Spain with its Moorish period followed by belonging to the Crown of Aragon and finally being under the Catholic Kings.

Palma is a resort city placed on the South Western coast of Mallorca. Almost half of Mallorca's inhabitants live here, and it has a true big city feel. More than 16 million tourists visit the city every year,

a third of whom come from Germany, one third from Great Britain and the last third from the rest of the world.

Palma's cathedral, which is often called La Seu, named after the area of the city where it is situated, sits on the edge of the Bay of Palma. It is the only cathedral in the world which mirrors its image in the sea. It has Spain's highest nave, and one of the highest in Europe.

The Paseo Marítimo, the sea front promenade, is one of the most emblematic parts of Palma. It follows the sea front

from Port Pi to the airport; it is the first four kilometres that are closest to the city centre and the most visited.

It has both a pedestrian and a bicycle lane, and it is lined with palm trees throughout its length. It is one of the most visited areas of Palma, and pulses with life around the clock.

Go in the daytime to enjoy the sight of the many yachts and the old fishing port. Have tapas or a menu in one of the restaurants and bars along the Paseo, and stay until the small hours for music and dancing.

Leading off from the Paseo Marítimo there is a maze of narrow streets and alleys, leading to small plazas which offer no end of boutiques, galleries and, of course, a multitude of bars and cafés.



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Digital Certificate – everyone should have one

A Digital Certificate, also known by many as a Digital Signature, is an electronic tool that allows secure identification of an individual or company in the digital environment.

It is essential for securely carrying out online tasks with the Spanish administration. Whether you need to sign documents electronically, or access government services, a digital certificate ensures your identity is verified and your transactions remain secure.

There are several Certification Authorities authorised to issue digital certificates in Spain. The most well-known is FNMT (Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre) which is a widely used public entity for obtaining certificates and DNIe (Electronic National ID Card).

Some people may already have a Clave, which is also a form of digital identification, but this has its limitations and is not as user-friendly.

With the Digital Certificate, you can carry out various procedures online saving time and avoiding unnecessary travel and allows access to public and private services 24/7 including:

- Access electronic medical records
- Carry out procedures with Townhalls and other public administration offices
- Perform procedures with Traffic (DGT)
- Access the Social Security electronic headquarters
- Sign documents electronically
- Consult and manage requests with the Tax Agency
- Request criminal record certificates

- Tourism License processes

It is only possible to have one active digital certificate – if a new one is requested it overrides any that are already in the system. For example, many people have an accountant who files their tax returns and that company may already have a digital certificate set up for them. The certificate can be shared with anyone who needs to use it.

To obtain a Digital Certificate, it is necessary to register on the FNMT website, which generates a unique code. that must be presented in person, along with photo ID, to an authorised verification entity such as the Townhall or Notary, where they witness the applicant's signature.

Once this has been verified it is possible to download the certificate from the FNMT website. It is only possible to download a certificate from the same device it was applied for so it is important to create a back up that can be used on other devices.

Digital certificates in Spain have an expiration date depending on the type. If it's a personal digital certificate, it expires within 4 years. If it's a company digital certificate, it expires in 2 years.

An email is sent when the Digital Certificate is due to expire and this can then be renewed on the FNMT website. If action is taken before expiry then there is no need to revisit the Townhall for verification.

If you would like help obtaining and using a Digital Certificate or would like assistance with some of the many processes, such as changing address with DGT or obtaining a Fiscal Certificate from the Tax Office then please contact the team at C.A.T. Services.



Trades & Services



The Autumn Season

The world around us never stays the same. Each season slowly fades away and then a new one rushes forth. The striking contrasts between each time of the year can help refresh our mood and offer each and every one of us a chance for a change of pace.

Soon the summer heat will be fading fast, and it won't be long before autumn bursts into life with all its vigorous yet gentle colours, sounds, and smells.

The autumn season is where the nights start to draw in and temperatures start feeling cooler. In the home, it's all about transitioning from summer and making the living space feel warm and cosy.

Are you looking for ways to get your home organised and ready for the autumn season? Nothing beats that feeling of snuggling up in a cosy home with your loved ones around – and the changing season is the ideal time to get your house set up for this.

From tidying away that summer garden furniture, to making your own potpourri, to deep cleaning the house, there are lots of little jobs to do to get your house in tip-top shape. These autumn home ideas will help

when the nights get shorter.

Tidy the garden - Tidy away all the garden furniture that you will not be using during the cooler winter evenings. Remove all soft furnishings into a dry storage area to prevent them from being damaged during the infrequent but heavy rain storms.

Clean the oven - Cleaning the oven is not a popular household chore, but it's certainly a good idea to give it a deep clean at this time of year, especially if you're planning on spending a lot of time at home during the colder months.

There are plenty of household products that make this process easier but make sure you allow the grills to soak and give the inside a really good scrub. If it's one of those chores that you really dislike you might want to consider hiring a professional.

Deep clean the house - We often think of giving the house a spring clean but we forget that autumn is an ideal time for a deep clean too. Give the windows a good clean, wipe down the skirting boards, and dust commonly forgotten areas like the top of cupboards and shelves. These are all jobs which will make your house appear gleaming and ready for the winter.

Clean the fireplace - If you're planning on using your fireplace this autumn, give it a good clean beforehand. Line the area with newspaper and remove all loose ashes and dust with a shovel and broom.

Then, use a wire brush to clean off the soot from the brick, and use baking soda and warm water on a sponge to clean the remaining soot and dust off.

Declutter - Donate all your unwanted clothes to charity and have a good clear out of your kitchen cupboards too. Drop your garments off at clothes banks and donate all your in-date but unwanted food to food banks, where those in need can make use of them.

Set the atmosphere with candles - Candles create the perfect cosy setting for a relaxing night in and there's an array of different scented and non-scented varieties to choose from. Add a few dotted tea lights or go for large pillar candles for that extra cosy feeling.

Add cushions and throws - There's nothing better than curling up under a throw when the weather is frightful outside. Adding new cushions and throws, and even chunky wool blankets, to your sofa and bedroom can really transform your space.

Choose autumnal-themed soft furnishings or go with brighter colours to offset the drabness of outside. And instead of buying new cushions, just invest in cushion covers so you can easily switch up the look.

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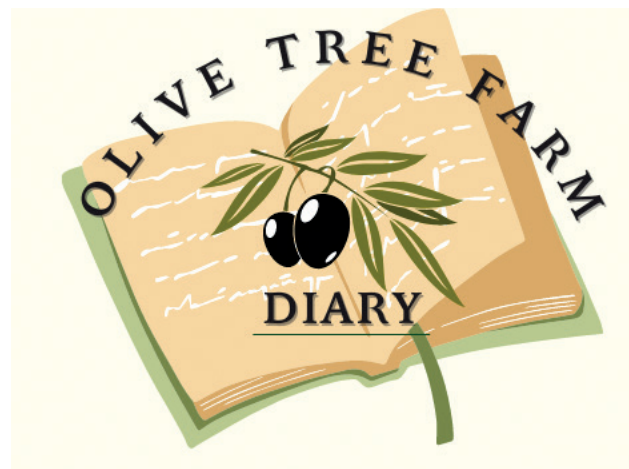
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August came and went in a whirlwind for us here at Olive Tree Farm. It has been a midsummer dance of fighting for my good health and energy, and Ben had to take over all of the roles at home and farm while I was out of it for a couple of weeks.

This is highly out of the ordinary really, as I do rarely get sick — even the winter flus that come by every season barely graze me for anything more than a week if I am so unfortunate, so this was quite an eye opener for us as a team facing all that we're doing and caring for here on top of a family of three young children.

So you can imagine that this has rebirthed the idea of an automated system on the farm, and wherever else we can manage in the garden. We had planned on doing this a year or so ago, but eventually phased out the idea as we decided that it could cause us to become lazy with the feedings, as that is also the time we use to sit and watch who's eating, how is everyone behaving, is anyone missing, etc... questions we won't answer as easily and readily if there is such a system in place that might make us think we can just do a brief glance tonight instead.

We probably won't use it all the time, as we still agree it isn't really a method we should rely on when animal care is our top priority, but if something takes us by surprise like this again then at least the Last One Standing aka Sudden Home Nurse isn't driving themselves into the ground to keep on top of everything. Thank goodness for Ben's parents, Greg and Rosemary, for coming and helping us out during the worst days!

It took over a month for me to get back on my feet properly and energy levels back to normal, so we're slowly gearing ourselves to get back to the bigger jobs as we also prepare for the return of the school year.

Ben has even managed to finish off transforming one of the aviaries into Ziggy the iguana's new summer house! And in the other aviary, where Ben had repaired and resituated the budgies, we also have a female or two nesting in the boxes, which is super exciting!

Ben still has ideas for improvement for Ziggy's part of the garden, the image of the finished design forming as he puts it together, and there will definitely be some kind of pond structure for Ziggy to bathe in, and while he's at it, fix up the misting system for her and the budgies on the other side.

In other news, our female Muscovy that we had raised in the house alongside the male, is now sitting on a nest of eggs in a border under the widespread, sticky blooms of plumbago. We had wondered for weeks whether or not she was laying in the garden, and we never thought of looking there until she disappeared into the border one day and Ben investigated.

We estimate she has around 2 weeks left until her babies are ready to hatch, which means we have to think and act quickly to prepare a safe place for her and the little ones — cats roam the garden when they can, and it'd be devastating to lose any after all the secret work our young mama had been doing.

Ben and I have already tossed a few quick suggestions to each other, so hopefully we'll have the problem resolved in no time — the next month will tell!

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!

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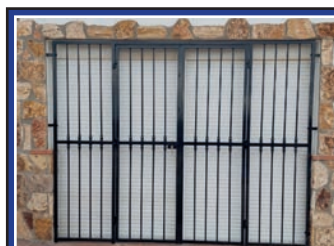
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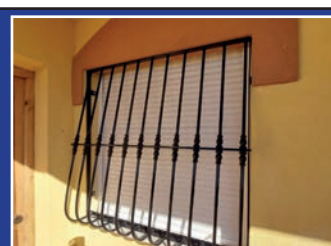
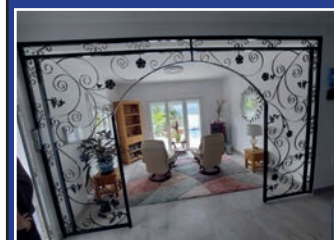
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The Humble Car Radio

Seems like cars have always had radios. Not so. I'll tell you a story.



One evening, in 1929, two young men, William Lear and Elmer Wavering drove their girlfriends to a lookout point high above the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois, to watch the sunset. A romantic night to be sure, but one of the women observed that it would be even nicer if they could listen to music in the car. Typical!

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

Not as easy as it sounds. Cars had ignition systems, generators, spark plugs, and other electrical equipment that generate noisy interference, almost impossible to listen to the radio with the engine running. One by one, Lear and Wavering identified and eliminated each source of electrical interference.

When they finally got their radio to work, they took it to a radio convention in Chicago. There they met Paul Galvin, owner of

Galvin Manufacturing Corporation. He made a product called a "battery eliminator". A device that allowed the old battery-powered radios to run on household AC current. As more homes were getting wired for electricity, radio manufacturers were now making more AC-powered sets. Galvin needed a new product to manufacture. When he met Lear and Wavering at the radio convention, he found it. He believed that mass-produced, affordable car radios had the potential to become a huge business.

Lear and Wavering set up shop in Galvin's factory. When they had perfected their first radio, they installed it in his Studebaker. Galvin went to a local banker to apply for a loan. Thinking it might sweeten the deal, he had his men install a radio in the banker's Packard. Half an hour after the installation, the banker's Packard caught on fire (They didn't get the loan).

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

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

At today's cost, a radio for a new car would cost about \$3,000. In 1930 it took two men several days to fit a car radio. The dashboard had to be taken apart so that the receiver and a single speaker could

be installed and the roof had to be cut open to install the antenna. These early radios ran on their own batteries, so holes had to be cut into the floorboards to accommodate them.

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

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William Lear

lost money in 1930 and struggled for a couple of years.

But things picked up in 1933 when Ford began offering their radios pre-installed at the factory. In 1934 they got another boost when Galvin struck a deal with Goodrich Tyre company to sell and install them in its chain of tyre stores. By then the price of the radio, installation including, had dropped to \$55. The Motorola (a play on the name of the record company Victrola) car radio was up and running.

In the meantime, Galvin continued to develop new uses for car radios. In 1936, he introduced push-button tuning! Then introduced the Motorola Police Cruiser, a standard car radio that was factory preset to a single frequency to pick up police broadcasts.

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

A lot of the communication technologies that we take for granted today were born in Motorola labs in the years that followed WW II. In 1947 they came out with the first television to sell under \$200. In 1956 the company introduced the world's first pager. In 1969 they supplied the radio and television equipment that was used to televise Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon. In 1973 they



Paul Galvin

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

What ever happened to the two men who installed the first radio in Paul Galvin's car, Elmer Wavering and William Lear? They took very different paths in life. Wavering stayed with Motorola. In the 1950's he helped change the automobile experience again when he developed the first automotive alternator, replacing inefficient generators. The invention led to such luxuries as power windows, power seats, and, eventually, air-conditioning.

Lear also continued inventing. He held more than 150 patents. Remember eight-track tape players! But what he's really famous for are his contributions to the field of aviation.

He invented radio direction finders for planes, aided the invention of the autopilot, designed the first fully automatic aircraft landing system and in 1963 introduced his most famous invention of all, the Lear Jet, the world's first mass-produced, affordable business jet. Not bad for a guy who dropped out of school after the eighth grade. Whatever that is.

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Elmer Wavering

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The Hydrogen Heresy: When JCB Forgot to Read the Memo

For the past few years, the future of transport and machinery has been presented to us with the confidence normally reserved for tablets brought down from a mountain.

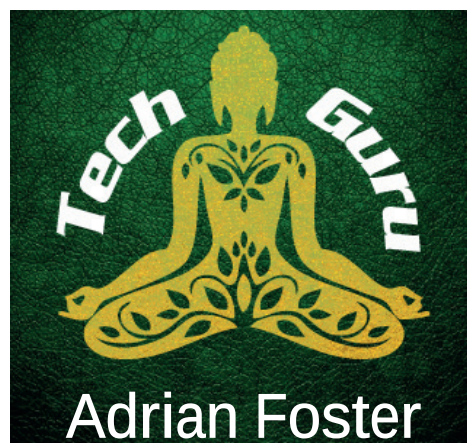
Thou shalt have batteries. Thou shalt plug them in. Thou shalt wait... Battery-electric is the answer. The only answer, apparently. So imagine everyone's irritation when JCB, a company whose principal contribution to modern civilisation has involved digging enormous holes, went away and built a hydrogen-powered internal combustion engine. Not a concept. Not a glossy computer animation of a futuristic machine operating somewhere suspiciously clean and sunny. An actual engine.

The internal combustion engine, you see, was supposed to be dead. It had been condemned to join the steam locomotive, the typewriter and the Sinclair C5 in the man drawer of history. The problem, it now appears, may not have been the engine but what we were putting in it. That is a rather awkward thought. JCB's hydrogen engine takes a refreshingly practical approach to the problem. Instead of throwing away more than a century of accumulated engineering knowledge and declaring that everything with pistons must immediately be melted down, it asks a simple question.

What happens if we change the fuel?

Quite a lot, as it turns out. Hydrogen behaves differently from petrol and diesel. The engine therefore has to be designed around its particular characteristics rather than simply treating hydrogen as diesel with better public relations. JCB's engineers have developed an engine that runs very lean, helping to control combustion and avoid the unwanted pre-ignition and knocking that hydrogen can otherwise encourage. There is another interesting consequence. One of the standard objections raised whenever anyone mentions hydrogen combustion is, "Ah, but nitrogen oxides." Well, not necessarily in the way critics often imply.

Under JCB's carefully controlled lean-burn conditions, there is very little opportunity for the nitrogen in the intake air to react. There simply



isn't enough available fuel, or sufficient time under the relevant combustion conditions, for significant NOx formation. This is the trouble with engineers. They keep finding ways around things. You announce confidently that something cannot work, only to discover that somebody in Staffordshire has made it work anyway, just to spite you.

JCB's solution is particularly interesting because it does not demand that the entire industrial world starts again from scratch. Manufacturing knowledge can be adapted. Engineering skills can be retained. Factories do not necessarily have to be demolished and rebuilt as giant battery warehouses. In actual fact, JCB makes these new engines on the same production line as their existing diesel units. This is an unfashionable idea in modern technology. It is called not throwing perfectly good things away. There is a word for that, of course.

Sustainability.

We tend to use the word while talking about recycling yoghurt pots, but the principle ought to apply equally to manufacturing infrastructures, enormously complicated machines, manufacturing infrastructure and

the accumulated knowledge of generations of engineers. Perhaps the greenest future is not always the one in which we replace everything. Sometimes it is the one in which we keep what works and just improve it.

For years, environmental progress has sometimes been sold to us on the understanding that inconvenience and sacrifice is a price worth paying. Your car will be greener, but your journey may require military-grade planning. Your vehicle will be wonderfully advanced, provided you can find somewhere to charge it.

Continued on page 18



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..... Continued from page 16

Your enormous excavator will eventually be electric, although quite where you intend to charge the thing on a muddy building site in the middle of nowhere remains, apparently, a detail for later. JCB appears to have taken the radical approach of asking whether a machine could be cleaner without becoming less useful.

Extraordinary concept.

Now, none of this means batteries are useless. Far from it. A small car doing predictable journeys? Battery-electric makes a great deal of sense. A city delivery vehicle returning to the depot every evening? Again, perfectly sensible. There are applications where batteries are almost tailor-made for the job. But this is precisely the point. Not every job is the same. A machine working for twelve hours on a remote construction site is not a family hatchback popping to Tesco.

A long-distance lorry is not a supermarket delivery van. Agricultural machinery cannot always stop for an extended recharge because somebody has decided that electrons are ideologically superior to molecules.

Engineering is supposed to be practical. You look at the job. You look at the available technology and then you choose what works. Somewhere along the way, however, we seem to have turned the energy transition into a football match: Electric good, Hydrogen suspicious. Battery good, internal combustion bad. Anyone suggesting that there might be more than one answer is immediately asked to explain why they hate the planet.

Hydrogen's real attraction may be that it obeys an entirely different set of economic rules. The traditional energy economy is wonderfully simple: Find something valuable. Extract it, process it, sell it, burn it then sell some more tomorrow. Coal, oil and gas have powered the modern world brilliantly, but their economic model depends upon continual extraction and continual consumption. Once burned, that particular fuel has gone. Hydrogen potentially changes the game.

Imagine a windy night when renewable generators are producing electricity that the grid does not currently need. In the traditional system, surplus generation can become a problem. Prices collapse. Production is curtailed. Perfectly usable energy may be wasted simply because it has arrived at the wrong time. Hydrogen offers another possibility: Use the surplus. Turn electricity into stored energy. Make hydrogen. Keep it. Use it later.



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The wind that blows when nobody wants the electricity can potentially become tomorrow's fuel. That is a remarkably different economic proposition. Suddenly, the important question is not simply, "How much fuel can we extract from the ground and sell?" It becomes, "How intelligently can we use the energy and resources already available to us?" Water can be purified and processed. Renewable electricity can be used when demand is low. Energy can be converted into a storable form. Infrastructure and machinery can potentially be adapted rather than discarded.

Efficiency begins to include timing and reuse. And making something useful from what would otherwise have been wasted. This is where hydrogen starts to become rather heretical. The old economic model likes scarcity. Scarcity gives things value. If you own the hole containing the useful stuff, you are in a very good position. A system based increasingly upon sunlight, wind, water and intelligent reuse is less comfortable for established ways of doing business.

That does not mean there is a secret room somewhere beneath an oil company headquarters containing a giant red button marked SUPPRESS HYDROGEN. We don't need conspiracy theories. Economic interests are perfectly capable of defending themselves without one.

Companies invest billions in technologies, factories, supply chains and infrastructure. Once that happens, there is a perfectly natural tendency to produce forecasts, reports, advertising campaigns and very confident people explaining why the particular future into which everyone has invested enormous sums of money is, coincidentally, the only sensible future. This applies to everyone: Oil companies, car manufacturers, battery producers, Hydrogen companies and Governments.

The problem isn't necessarily dishonesty. It is technological tribalism. Once you've spent billions backing a horse, you become rather keen to explain why the other horses have Rickets. JCB's hydrogen engine is annoying because it refuses to fit neatly into anyone's preferred category. It isn't traditional diesel. It isn't battery-electric. It doesn't require us to pretend that one technology will solve every problem and worst of all; it actually works in the sort of environment where machines are expected to work. The real world, in other words. Perhaps that is why this story matters.

The argument should never be whether hydrogen defeats electricity or electricity defeats hydrogen. That is childish. The sensible future will almost certainly involve both. Batteries where batteries make sense. Hydrogen where hydrogen makes sense. And perhaps other technologies in places where neither is ideal. The real heresy is daring to suggest that we should be allowed to choose.

JCB has done something wonderfully unfashionable. Rather than waiting for a committee, a government department or a marketing executive to explain what the future ought to look like, it has built an engine and put it to work. And perhaps that is the lesson. The internal combustion engine may not have been the environmental villain we thought it was.

Perhaps it was simply a very good machine with a very bad drinking habit. Change what goes into it, and suddenly the old technology begins to look surprisingly new again. This is going to be terribly inconvenient for anyone who has already announced that the future was settled.

Especially now that somebody has forgotten to read the memo.



Pets Corner

Dakota - Back from Holiday!

Wow, what a lot of holidays I've had this year! But that's all over now, and it's back to the grind. Which will, in truth, be quite nice as well.

First, mum went off and left me in July. I'm getting used to it now, and no longer scream and shout at the gate, but I don't really like it when she takes me to the training centre and leaves me behind rather than staying with me for a class.

I tried to be positive and count my blessings. My run was large, clean and shady. There was fresh water. I tried and tried but couldn't really think of any other blessings to count, so I started wondering whether she'd just popped out for an hour without me like she sometimes does, or whether I was in doggy day care. Or whether... I couldn't even form the thought that she might have gone off on holiday without me; it just seemed too ghastly to contemplate.

An hour went by and she didn't come back. The time for training came and all my mates arrived, but still no hair nor hide of mum. I started fearing the worst...

When the class was over and I saw all my mates leave, I started accepting my fate... and then, lo and behold, Mistress Diana, one of my teachers, came and got me and put me in her van. After driving for a while, she stopped and let me out. The place smelt of her – and of dogs!

As you know, I'm not too keen on other dogs, but when a welcome committee consisting of two goodlooking hunks and an elderly gentleman showed up, I decided to try to get on with them. (Otherwise, they'd probably have beaten me up!)

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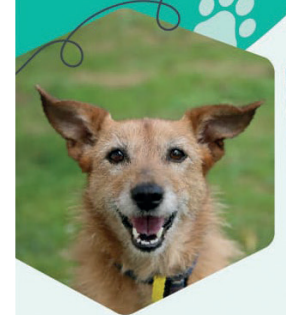
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..... Continued from page 19

At first, we mucked about a little trying to establish a preliminary pecking order. I reckon I came out very close to the top. Either that, or they just couldn't be bothered in the heat.

Soon we settled down and started talking. It turned out that Mistress Diana is their mum and they all live there with her and their dad. They said they often had holiday visitors, and that made me feel better, because although it was all very exciting, I didn't think I'd fancy living there forever.

So, I realised, mum had done it again. Gone off on holiday and left me behind. But in good company, I hasten to add.

We had a quick walk, then dinner and bed.

When I woke up next morning, I was a bit confused at first about where I was, but then it all came back to me. My new friends woke up just after me, and I started what was to be my Two-Week Reign of Terror!

I teased them all a little and soon found out that they were well behaved and patient and not too hard with the comebacks, and after that there was no peace for them for the rest of my holiday!



No paw, tail, ear or snout was safe from me, day or night, and they'd only have their siesta in peace once I was good and tired and ready for a rest, not a moment before! I had the time of my life, I've never played so much – or slept so well at night!

We slept outdoors at night, but in the hot afternoons, when Mistress Diana was at home, we were allowed in the cool house. That was bliss! I've never known Cool in the heat of the day before, I wish mum would get some!

It turned out that Mistress Diana loves running, she even does something called a Marathon, which is supposed to be a very long run. In the evenings when it had got a little cooler, she took us out

for runs, or put us in her van and took us walking or running in exciting places, some with rabbits, others with water. And how we'd run after a long day of inactivity (apart from me doing my best to keep everyone awake), it was fantastic!

But all good things come to an end – and this one came to a very Happy End, because suddenly mum stood on the doorstep, ready to take me home.

Man, was I glad to see her! I can't say I'd thought of her too much during my holidays, I'd been far too busy, but once I saw her and smelled her and touched her and heard her voice, it was like coming back to my beautiful reality after a very exciting dream!

I jumped into My Car, and off we went, only stopped to pick up Pimpernel on the way, and then home to my own Personal Paradise at the foot of the mountain. Both Pimpernel and I were over the moon to be home!

We soon settled back into our usual routine, mum off to work, me guarding the house, Pimpernel (the lazy bugger) sleeping in the shade. And mum and me going to training classes three evenings a week.

And then suddenly the next holiday appeared completely unexpectedly: Because me and all my mates at training had made it very clear that it was, in fact, too hot to do anything properly in class, it was decided that there would be no classes in August.

I was both happy and sad. While it was nice enough not to have to get in the hot car at 7 in the evening and work in the heat, I also thought it was a bit boring not to go to classes. In fact, I think they should put some Cool in the training court, that way we could go on training without getting too hot and bothered.

Well, that's all by the bye, it won't happen this year, but maybe next? But like I said, I'm quite happy now to get back to my usual routine,



and hopefully soon it'll be cool enough to start agility again!

Maybe when I talk to you next in November, we'll be back at it, and I can tell you all about it.

See you then!



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HOMES & GARDENS

A Brief History of Spain....part 13 By Mike Woolnough



Technically, Philip V had been King of Spain since 1700 but, until the War of Spanish Succession was settled, his rule was somewhat nominal. In reality, his reign began in 1716. He was the first of the Bourbon dynasty to rule Spain. The Bourbons also ruled France which caused something of a bone of contention as every time there was a conflict of interest between the two countries Philip tended to side with France!

On the plus side, he did try to modernise Spain, officials were appointed on the basis of ability rather than family connections although the aristocracy still filled most of the top jobs! It was an uphill battle though, Spain was not too keen on being dragged kicking and screaming into the 18th century. Chief amongst those holding on to the past was the Catholic church, mid-century it had about 3,000 monasteries and convents and about one nun or priest for every 90 people. Universities were church-run and whilst those in other parts of Europe were pushing back the frontiers of science Spanish students were more likely discussing such topics as "what language do the angels speak?"!

In January 1724 Philip abdicated in favour of his eldest son, the seventeen-year-old Louis, for reasons that are not entirely clear. Philip was aware of his declining health, especially his mental capacity and may have felt it necessary to pass the throne to someone better able to carry out the duties. On the other hand, it must be remembered that he was a French Bourbon and potential heirs to the French throne kept dying. The treaty of Utrecht prevented him from reigning over both Spain and France and it has been suggested that by removing himself from the Spanish throne he might gain the greater prize of the French one! If this was his plan it fell flat on its face in August of the same year when Louis contracted smallpox and died. The next son, who would later become Ferdinand VI, was still only 10 years of age and, consequently, Philip had to return for a second term.

He continued with his attempt to reform the country with limited success, though to be fair to him the economy did improve, mainly due to increased trade with the Americas. There were fewer famines thanks to his attempts to improve agricultural methods and although his policies had less success than he would have wished, in the long-

term under later monarchs they were to turn Spain into a modern country. On the downside he became more and more melancholic, perhaps not helped by a very domineering second wife. These bouts were relieved when, in 1737, the castrato singer Farinelli, became the "Musico de Camara of Their Majesties." Farinelli would sing eight or nine arias for the king and queen every night, usually with a trio of musicians.

Philip eventually died in 1746. The sum of his two reigns, 45 years and 21 days, is the longest in modern Spanish history. He was succeeded, finally, by his fourth son Ferdinand VI. (Numbers 2 and 3, both called Philip, had died in infancy. Amongst the 6 children he fathered with his second wife there was another Philip and another Louis.)

Ferdinand VI not only inherited the throne from his father, he also inherited his mental instability. At times he would neither wash nor dress for weeks and could be seen wandering around the palace garden in his nightgown. Most of the day to day running of the country was entrusted to the Marquis of Ensenada, the Secretary of the Treasury, Navy and Indies.

Continued on page 24

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..... Continued from page 23

Ensenada was a capable man, he proposed changes to the taxation system so that people paid according to the value of the property they owned – called the cadastre. He took on the Church and succeeded in reducing its influence. He stimulated trade with the Americas and changed the way the ships were licensed also reducing fraud. Next, the Navy was under review. Ensenada believed that if Spain was to be taken seriously again as a major power then the Navy needed modernising. The arts also got a look in, he helped found the Royal Academy of Fine Arts.

In 1758, the wife of Ferdinand VI, Barbara, whom he adored, died. Her death tipped the already melancholic Ferdinand over the edge and he died, insane, a year later. Having no children he was followed by his half-brother, Charles III. Now there was a man who knew how to be king!

To be fair he'd had a bit of experience elsewhere; due to the way the royal families of Europe, even then, were interwoven and to certain clauses in the Treaty of Utrecht Charles already was King of Naples (as Charles VII) and King of Sicily (as Charles V)! Fortunately for him, he was spared the confusion of yet another post regnal number as he had to renounce the other two in order to become Charles III of Spain.

Charles was one of the most organised people that ever lived and is generally considered one of the best monarchs of all time. During his



reign Spain was embroiled in the Seven Years War which involved conflicts on five continents; some historians refer to it as “World War Zero”! The fighting involved a lot of political manoeuvring particularly during the treaty negotiations where there was much horse trading of territories conquered by the various factions. Spain had sided with Britain’s American Colonies in their battle for independence. In the long run, this was probably not a good move as it set a precedent for a bid by their own colonies to sever links with Spain.

Charles followed a policy of enlightenment in his running of the country. One of the side effects of this policy was the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain! Whilst he considered himself a good Catholic he did not like the fact that there were a large number of monks who contributed nothing to the economy of Spain, so sought ways to reduce their number. He had enlightened policies to develop industries, porcelain, crystal, etc

in various areas as well as developing agriculture.

It was under Charles that Spain became one nation in reality rather than name only. Previously, it was more of a number of separate Kingdoms with the same ruler. Much of what we know as modern Spain is due to Charles III, he started the National Lottery, introduced Christmas cribs, decreed that “Marcha Real” be the National Anthem (one of only four in the world with no official words) and amongst other things created a network of roads radiating from Madrid (which he made into a capital city worthy of the name). The Royal Arms and national flag introduced by Charles survived until 1931 and the modern flag is substantially the same except for the coat of arms. (The present king is a direct descendant of Charles III. In fact, four of his great, great grandparents were also direct descendants.)

Although considered one of the all-time top monarchs there was an internal policy that didn’t quite go to plan. March 23rd, 1776 was not like an ordinary Sunday morning in Madrid. A new law had been passed. The normal dress for Spanish men at the time was the broad-brimmed hat and long, flowing cloak. Unfortunately, the cloak was a cover for not only the body but for all manner of criminal activity. It enabled criminals to hide weapons and their loot. Charles decreed that there was to be a limit on the length of the cloak and the hat was to be replaced with a French tricorne. If that was not enough “enforcers” were employed and equipped with giant scissors to cut offending cloaks down to size. There were murmurings outside the churches and they were not about the quality of the sermon. These were the beginnings of a revolt! During the afternoon and evening, mobs gathered and ran through the streets ransacking public buildings. Charles took fright and fled the city, the next day the law was repealed. Charles got his own back; he ensured the demise of the fashion by making it official - the official uniform of the public executioners!

Charles died, aged 72, in December 1788 leaving behind him a nation that could stand side by side with the other nations of Europe and not feel like the poor relation. He also left Spain in the hands of a useless slob, his son Charles IV.

My inspiration for these articles comes from “SPAIN, an amazingly short history” by Bob Fowke. Published by Travelbrief Publications. ISBN 0-9548351-0-7

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La Catedral de Palma, La Seu



The Cathedral of Palma de Mallorca, popularly known as La Seu, is Spain's second largest cathedral, surpassed only by Seville Cathedral. It has been awarded Historical-Artistic Monument status by the Spanish government, which means that it is protected under the rules of the Ministry of Culture.

The cathedral is a massive construction. It is 121 metres long and 55 meters wide, covering an area of 6,655m². The nave is the second highest in Europe with its 44 metres to the ceiling. Only the cathedral of Beauvais has a higher nave at 48 metres.

La Seu is one of the world's most admired Gothic temples, and a must on the itinerary of any visitor to Mallorca. Set near the Bay of Palma, it towers over the city and it is the first thing you can make out when you approach Palma de Mallorca from the sea side.

With its location on the edge of the Mediterranean it is the only cathedral in the world that mirrors its image in the sea.

This effect was ruined in the urban development that took place over

the years, and La Seu became separated from the sea, but it was brought back in the 1970s with the construction of a salt water lake as part of a nearby park.

Construction of the cathedral was started at the end of the 13th century, and the temple was finished in the middle of the 17th century. The project was started by the king of Aragon, Jaime I, to fulfil a promise he had made to the Virgin Mary when he was saved from a ship wreck on open sea.

La Seu did not stop developing after completion, and it has been renovated many times over the years by some of Spain's most illustrious architects and artists. One of the most outstanding contributions to the cathedral was Antoni Gaudí's 10 year stretch from 1904 onwards, when Bishop Campins contracted him to carry out substantial reforms.

Gaudí ordered the dismantling of two altarpieces that blocked the congregation's view of the Bishop's throne. He located a high altar in front of the throne and positioned a baldachin of stunning design above it.

He moved the choir stand, opened up formerly bricked over windows and added nine stained glass windows, as well as contributing with furniture, lighting, ornamental wrought metal work, ceramic and paintings. However, he left the project unfinished when the bishop died and he fell out with the contractor. But the works he did carry out are amazing and they alone merit a visit to the cathedral.

The contemporary Spanish artist Miquel Barceló was contracted to carry out a mural in the Capilla del Santísimo chapel, which he did with stunning results in the years 2001-2006. The mural covers 300m² and Barceló chose the miracle of the five loaves and two fish as his subject. The mural is one of the main attractions of La Seu.

One of the cathedral's rose windows is the world's largest in a Gothic cathedral, and one of the largest throughout the Christian world. It has a diameter of 13.8 meters and consists of 1,236 pieces of coloured

glass which combine into a beautiful and colourful pattern. It doubles as a sundial which marks hours and seasons.

The rose window has been damaged on several occasions and has had to be restored; last time was during the Civil War when a bomb exploded in the Almudaina Palace close by.

Twice a year, on 2nd February and 11th November, a unique event occurs in the cathedral: a spectacular luminous phenomenon known as 'the vision of the eight'. On those dates, the sun rays beaming through the largest rose window project an image of the rosette onto the wall opposite just below the smaller rose window so that they form the figure of eight, the upper part made from glass, the lower from light.

The numerical symbol of eight is the union of the earthly and the spiritual.

In a document from the year 1306, while the cathedral was under construction, King Jaime II, son of King Jaime I who had ordered the construction of the cathedral, bade the construction of a chapel in which he would be entombed.

From then on, the Chapel of the Trinity, at the end of the cathedral in the presbytery, became a royal mausoleum where the sovereign kings of Mallorca, Jaime II and Jaime III were buried. In around 1950 the Catalan artist Federico Marés sculpted the tombs, and the chapel could



be considered a second temple inside the cathedral.

It is often said that La Seu transmits a magic sensation. The numerous windows (59 large windows and five rose windows) combined with the fact that the cathedral is right next to the sea, create a beautiful visual experience; when the sun is at its highest and beams its light in though the huge space is illuminated in beautiful colours, La Seu really does live up to one of its other nicknames: The Cathedral of the Light.

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Ingvar Kamprad Elmtaryd Algunnaryd

By Vic Davey



In a rare moment of weakness I suggested to Mrs D a trip up to Ikea in Murcia. Yes....I know....but in my defence it was another hot day and the prospect of a yet another afternoon, sitting in near darkness, watching re-runs of "A Place in the Sun" , didn't fill me with joy. And the store has aircon....

So we went....

The drive was uneventful, except for missing a turn off a large roundabout and having to circumnavigate an Industrial Estate... twice. But, we found the Store entrance and managed to secure a parking space under cover.



I'm sure many of you are familiar with the Ikea system. Pick up a trolley and a large, yellow plastic bag.... attach bag to trolley....white arrows on the floor demanding that you follow the set course through multiple room layouts with few prospects of escape.

By the time we reached the Kitchen section, the pots, pans, cutlery and crockery, I had pretty much lost the plot and the will to live. Our large bag, attached to our trolley, contained one solitary item.....a plastic washing up brush.

And there was still another floor to explore.

Fortunately, we emerged into the Cafeteria where Mrs D found a free table while I went in search of sustenance.

The Cafeteria is very popular and, it is said, people come out especially to eat there and not to shop.

The second floor was somewhat more interesting, no rooms to walk through, just an endless array of products and we did end up with a few more items in our bag.

We emerged into the car park and the heat, when she uttered the words which struck fear into my heart and my blood run cold.... "The Condomina Shopping Mall is just across the road....and....since we are here anyway...."

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A Town Called Fines

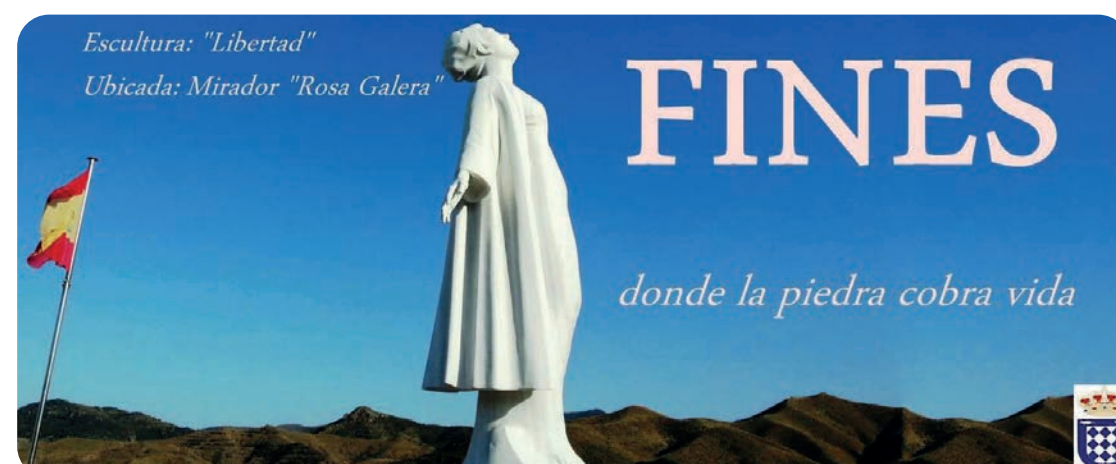
By Tom Fynes

Way out in Woop Woop Land. Way out there, where you can find Albox, Arboleas and Zurgena in their very own Bermuda Triangle, lies a town that bears my surname. A town called Fines.

Fines is a small inland municipality located in the scenic Almanzora Valley of the Almería province, Andalucía, Spain. It has been shaped by agriculture, conflicts of the past, and its world-famous natural resource: Macael marble.

Macael Marble (Mármol de Macael) is a highly prestigious, globally recognized natural stone extracted from the quarries of the Macael municipality, located in the Sierra de los Filabres mountains of Almería, Spain. Often referred to by architects as "white gold," it has been recognized as a Global Heritage Stone Resource due to its historical and cultural significance spanning over 5,000 years.

Blanco Macael (White Macael) is the most legendary and sought-after variety. It is a brilliant, luminous white natural stone that sometimes features subtle, elegant streaks of grey. What sets Macael marble apart is its incredible durability and resistance to the elements. Unlike softer stones, it withstands centuries of foot traffic and outdoor weathering while maintaining its polish, which is why ancient structures made from it still stand perfectly intact today.



But enough of the blurb about the marvelous Macael marble. I was there because of the town's name; Fines. I've visited the town of Fiennes near Calais, a place I believe my Norman ancestors came from. There are many variations of the name Fines; Fynes, Fiennes and Foynes are just three. So, I set out to visit and investigate this town in Almería, located way out in Woop Woop Land, called Fines.

I found that as the French town of Fiennes was possibly a part of my family tree, (which includes the famous English actor Ralph Fiennes,) I discovered Fines was just another spelling of a Latin word. Fines in Almería was derived from the Latin word Finis, meaning end. Which lying as it does, way out in Woop Woop Land, was pretty apt.

Continued on page 34

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..... Continued from page 33

But no matter. I then uncovered a hero of Fines called El Tuzani, written as a character in a book by Gines Perez de Hita. Ginés Pérez de Hita is not only a Spanish literature legend, but also, the founder of the modern-day historical novel. His book, the 1585 bestseller, “Guerras Civiles de Granada” (Civil Wars of Granada) concerns the disagreements of the Moorish families before the conquest of the city by the Catholic Monarchs.

The hero of the book, a Morisco called, El Tuzani, was from the town of Fines, which is situated on the north bank of the Almanzora River. The term “Morisco” means “Little Moor.” It was used to refer to Muslims who converted to Christianity after the Reconquista but were still suspected of secretly practicing Islam. The Moriscos had obtained legal opinions (fatwās) that assured them that it was permissible to practice Islam in secret. El Tuzani was accused of

having helped in the escape of the Tijola Moors and of having killed the Christian who murdered his lover, Clara Malec.

The book has it all. Romance, betrayal, revenge. A few historical liberties taken, as you do. But all in all, it hit the historical sweet spot and became a massive success. It was later turned into a play called “El Tuzani de la Alpujarra o Amor después de la muerte,” or “Love after Death,” a historical comedy of love and tragedy set during the Moorish rebellion.

The play is a tragic historical comedy that dramatizes a civil war driven as much by religious and ethnic differences as by political and economic motivations. Not much comedy for the Moors, who had converted to Christianity so they could hang on to their land & riches.

El Tuzani has given the town of Fines their Leopold Bloom, the hero of James Joyce’s Ulysses. But with more daring-do heroics. Fines takes great pride in its connection to Golden Age Spanish literature. His legendary romance and tragic story are celebrated in local historical circles, notably kept alive through books like, La historia sentimental del morisco Tuzani, vecino de Fines, by local author Ginés Pastor Medina. Ginés Pastor Medina passed away in 2018 at the age of 85.

Born in Macael in 1933, he was a respected lawyer, municipal secretary, and the official chronicler (Cronista Oficial) of Macael. He dedicated a massive portion of his life to researching, preserving, and writing about the local history, the marble industry, and the historical Morisco events of the Almanzora Valley. Following his passing, the local government posthumously awarded him the town’s Gold Medal (Medalla de Oro) in December 2018 to honor his extensive cultural contributions.

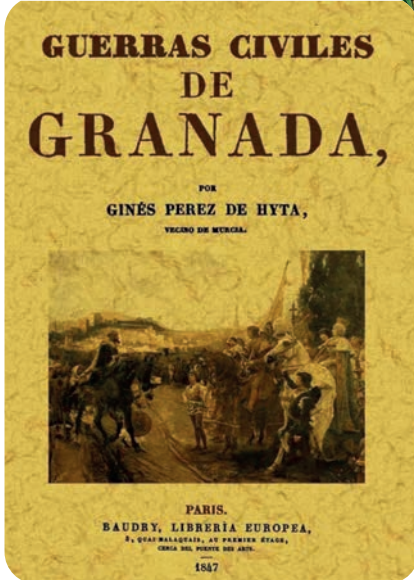
An estimated 300,000 Moriscos were expelled to North Africa.

There they were assimilated after several generations, but still retained some of their Spanish heritage.

And what did the Moors do for us, in the 800 years they were in Spain? During that time, Europe only had 2 universities, while the Moors had 17. Europe had the two giants, The University of Paris (France) and The University of Oxford (England,) where Latin ruled the roost.

And what were the students learning at these great Moor universities? The “17” Moorish Universities in Spain were highly advanced centres of higher learning (madrasas and academies) located in major Islamic cultural hubs such as Córdoba, Seville, Granada, Toledo, Almería, Jaén, and Málaga. Long before Northern Europe formalized its university system, these Andalusian academies had massive libraries and taught advanced mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, alchemy, algebra, chemistry, physics. The list goes on. Pulling in scholars from all across the Christian and Muslim worlds.

Because of the sheer volume of knowledge contained in the libraries of Córdoba and Granada, a scholar from England or France would have to learn Arabic first, if they wanted to study the most advanced mathematics, astronomy, or medicine, available in the known world at that time.



The interest in education spread throughout Europe as these, Arabic Volumes of World Knowledge, were translated into Latin, and hugely impacted the European Renaissance that began in the 1300s.

So, you could say Spain was at one time the centre of all human knowledge, before throwing it all away. And it is still suffering the consequences of expelling the Moors, as a lot of scientific knowledge went with them.

And then we have El Tuzani, a Morisco, who saved the life of a Christian, and then killed him. El Tuzani was both a romantic hero and a villain, which obviously appealed to readers, that made Ginés Pérez de Hita's book a runaway bestseller. And eventually gave Fines its favourite son.



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The Iberian fox is not actually a subspecies of the European red fox (*vulpes vulpes*); the name Iberian is used simply to describe the foxes that live on the Iberian Peninsula.

The fox belongs to the Canidae family, which also includes dogs, wolves, coyotes, dingoes, jackals and African wild dogs.

The Iberian fox is the size of a medium dog with an elongated skull which is almost flat on top and a very pointed muzzle. Its ears are large and triangular. The tail is long and covered in dense fur and it usually has a white point at the end. The fox's fur is thick and soft, its colours varying between golden-red and brownish-red on the upper parts and a white tummy and throat. The tops of its paws and legs are black.

The fox has five fingers on each of its front paws and four on the back paws with non retractable claws. It has only a few sweat glands in the skin and regulates its temperature through its airways and tongue.

The male barks, the female howls.

The Iberian fox can be found all over the Iberian Peninsula but not in the Balearic or Canary Islands.

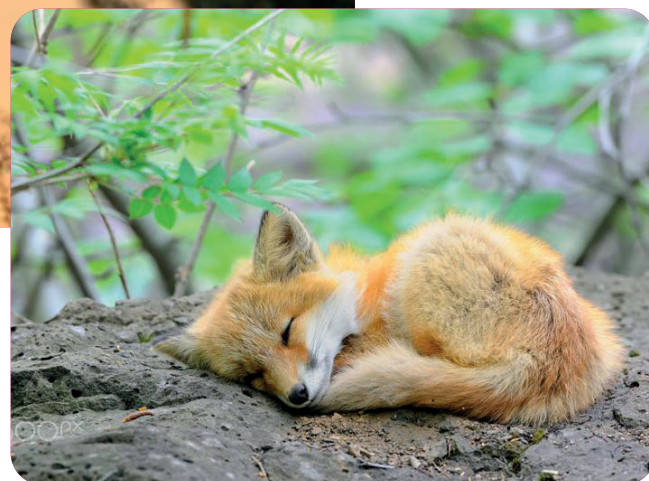
The Iberian Fox

It prefers wooded areas but is also abundantly present in open areas, and even in the vicinity of human settlements with their rubbish containers where it finds its food.

The fox has a very varied diet, partly due to the difference in habitats, and also dependent on the time of year. Whereas the suburban fox obviously feeds on whatever effluent humans have binned, its cousin in the wild lives off rabbits, small rodents, fruits and berries, insects and birds – including farm fowl!

When the fox catches a large animal, he takes it to his den and saves it for hard times.

Vulpes vulpes is a stealthy animal who is mainly active during dusk and night time. During the day he stays hidden amongst shrubs and bushes, in rocky crags or underground in his den.



He is usually a solitary creature, but some do live in permanent couples or in groups of a male and two to three females. However, once the mating season starts in early winter, and until the cubs leave the den, the male stays with his partner and brings her food for the young ones.

The fox may be monogamous or polygamous. Mating takes place in January and February and the cubs are born in April

and May. The litters consist of three to eight babies, or sometimes as many as 12. When the cubs are born they are covered in woolly hairs, and they do not open their eyes until they are between one and two weeks old. When they are about five weeks old they start going outside the den, and at eight weeks, when they weigh a couple of kilos, they start getting weaned off.

At that tender age their fur is still a pale cream colour.

The cubs start leaving home when they are ten weeks old; when they are five months old they usually weigh 3 kilos, and they are sexually mature when they are nine or ten months old.

An average adult fox can weigh up to 7 kilos; the fox is in fact a relatively small animal which is made to look bigger from his thick, generous fur. The life expectancy in the wild is only short, with very few surviving to see their sixth birthday.

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La Mercè

All days in Spain have one or more saints' names attached to them. September 24th belongs to Our Lady of Mercy (Mare de Déu de la Mercè in Catalan), Barcelona's patron saint.

Barcelona's largest annual celebration is held around this date in honour of Mare de Déu de la Mercè, and the city turns into a giant street party with no end of activities, concerts, parades, street theatre and circus, processions etc. etc...

This multievent offers something for everyone, and it attracts between 1.5 and 2 million revellers every year, both from the city itself and from the rest of the world.

Barcelona started celebrating religious and popular fiestas in honour of Our Lady of Mercy in 1868. Believers ascribed several miracles to this Barcelona's patron saint, and thus she was celebrated every year around 24th September.

In 1902 the annual celebrations became official, and a programme of activities was put together by the Town Hall.

The basic premise of the fiesta is the recuperation of the authentic popular traditions, and this is achieved thanks to the collaboration of several organisations and fraternities from all over the city. The most important activities are the parades of baton dancers, gralla players, giants, and dragons, as well as the performances of human towers, fire dancers, and sardana dancers.

Apart from the above-mentioned traditions, La Merced also offers music, dancing, circus, street theatre, and much more. The programme furthermore includes a myriad of free concerts in different locations all over the city, a popular marathon, and a swimming competition across the Port of Barcelona.

The human towers (castellers) constitute one of the most original Catalan folk traditions, and they are closely connected with the fiestas in Catalonia.

The construction of the human towers is achieved by groups of associates climbing onto each other's shoulders to create a tower of several tiers.

This tradition goes back 200 years and was first started in Campo de Tarragona. With time the towers became popular all over Catalonia and they have become a symbol of the Catalan identity.

The castellers are divided into groups of men, women, boys, and girls of all ages who practice together all year round for the public performances. The different groups are distinguishable due to the colour of their T-shirts. The traditional outfit is the coloured T-shirt



with the group's emblem, white trousers, a sash, and a bandana. The towers consist of a base, which can be made up by members of the group, family, and friends, and in theory, any spectator who volunteers. The base is two tiers high.



The 'trunk' of the tower, the next two to three tiers, consists of strong men at the bottom, topped by slimmer, lighter youths. These are topped by the so-called 'top pommel', two to three tiers of children who climb up the backs of those forming the base and the trunk to reach their elevated position.

Thus a castell can have between six and ten tiers.

Continued on page 40

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..... Continued from page 39

Every other year there is a competition in Tarragona in which the various groups compete for the title of the best castell in Catalonia.

Fire dance is a popular Catalan tradition in which a group of people file through the streets, jumping and dancing amongst flames and fireworks to the rhythm of drums. This colourful and noisy tradition is not limited to Catalonia; it is also popular in the autonomies of Valencia and Balearics as well as in Roussillon in France.

It has its roots in the old Devil Dancers, who were first documented in Catalonia in the 12th century. It was not until the 1970s they adopted their present form in which the fireworks play a very important part.

The fire dancers wear fireproof outfits, and they are often disguised as devils, dragons, beasts, or other mythological beings.

Spectators are advised to keep their distance or wear sufficient garments to protect them from burns.

The Sardana is a traditional dance which is danced in Catalonia, Andorra, and Roussillon. Groups of dancers can often be seen on town squares on Sundays or holidays, people of all ages who dance in a circle holding hands.

It is so popular that it has become considered as the national dance by the Catalans, and a symbol of their identity.

It is danced in closed circles comprising any number of couples. The participants (sardanistas) dance with their hands linked and do a series of short and long steps along with the rhythm of the music. During the short steps everybody has their hands down, during the long steps they are raised in the air.

The music that accompanies the Sardana is unique, and it is played by 'La Copla', a band consisting of eleven musicians who play twelve instruments. Four of these are traditional Catalan instruments



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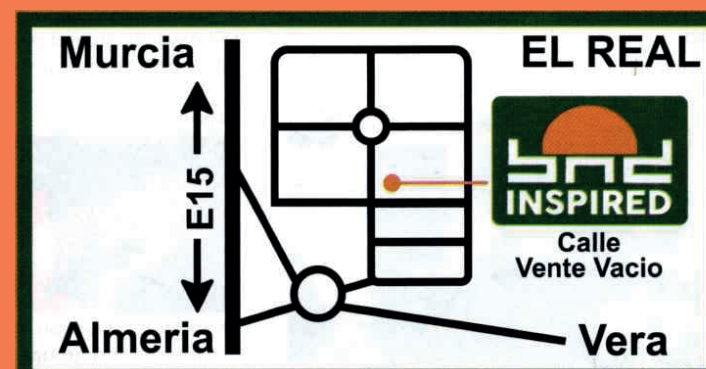


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The River Tagus

The Longest River on the Iberian Peninsula

The River Ebro is Spain's longest river at 930 km. The River Tagus or, Tajo in Spanish and Tejo in Portuguese, is 1,008 km long. However, of this a 145 km stretch is in Portugal and a 47 km stretch constitutes the Spanish-Portuguese border, leaving 'only' 816 km of this magnificent river in Spain.

The river covers an area of 80,600 km², 55,750 of which are on Spanish soil. The source of the River Tagus is Fuente García in the Sierra de Albarracín in Teruel at 1,593 m above sea level. The total amount of water of the river basin is 14,500 hm³. (1 cubic hectometer = 1 billion litres) and at the 4 km wide estuary on the Atlantic, near Lisbon, the flow rate is 444 m³ a second.

On its way through Spain the River Tagus goes through the provinces of Teruel in Aragón, Guadalajara, Cuenca and Toledo in Castilla-La Mancha, Madrid, and Cáceres in Extremadura. Certain stretches of the river go through national parks: Early on in its path, in Guadalajara, there is Parque Nacional del Alto Tajo in Guadalajara, further down, in the province of Cáceres, Parque Nacional de Monfragüe, and shared by Cáceres and Portugal, Parque Nacional del Tajo Internacional. At its mouth in Portugal the river flows through Reserva Nacional del Estuario del Tajo.



The path of the River Tagus runs between several mountain ranges, and this means that the total length of tributary rivers is relatively modest. However, a major contributor is the River Jarama, which is thought to contribute more water to the river than its own spring.



Some of the tributary rivers on the left side flow very low, and even dry out during the summer months, and all the major tributary rivers are on the right.

The water level of the river fluctuates with the amount of snow that thaws in spring and with the rainfall in general. Thus, where it goes through the town of Alcántara in Cáceres, for example, it flows at a speed of 350 m³/s in February and March, as opposed to 11 m³/s in August and September.

The water from the river is widely used for, amongst other things, drinking water, irrigation, and the cooling of nuclear generators.

The River Tagus is also important to us here in southeastern Spain. A large percentage of its water is actually diverted, via the canal Tajo-Segura, to our part of the country, where the rainfall is minimal.

Wildlife is rife along the River Tagus and Iberian wolves and lynxes visit the shores of this great river which crosses the peninsula and gives life to plants, animals and humans alike.

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He Stole My Thunder!

It was a slightly murky morning in 1709 when John Dennis carefully adjusted his periwig, picked up his roll of manuscript and strode purposefully out into the gloom heading for the Theatre Royal.

He was looking for the Manager, John Spindrick. He found him trying to look busy in the added-on wooden shack that served as Mr Spindrick’s office.

‘Ah! Spindrick, glad I’ve found you. I’ve got a play here that I want you to put on.’ He puffed up his chest and proudly held out the manuscript.

Mr Spindrick pushed up his glasses, took the manuscript, unrolled it and passed a calculating eye over it.

‘Good, isn’t it?’ enthused Mr Dennis. ‘It’s called Appius and Virginia. Lots of drama, lots of blood, and they all end up dead.’

‘Yeah, but they are all like that these days.’ He answered in an unenthusiastic voice. He rolled the parchment up and handed it back. ‘Need something different. Something that will catch the punter’s attention.’

‘Ah! I’ve got that too. I’ve invented a new thunder machine. It’s so realistic that you’ll have dogs running to hide and women screaming. One or two of them might even faint.’

Mr Spendrick sniffed and wiped his nose on his sleeve. ‘All right then. We’ll give it a try. Usual terms.’

‘Ah yes, but my thunder machine - you can use it for my play, but it’s my machine. If you want to use it for any other play you’ll have to pay me for it.’



Mr Spendrick sniffed again. ‘Well…….’

Mr Dennis poked Mr Spendrick hard in the chest. ‘It’s my machine. I invented it. If you want to use it, you pay me.’ A silence hung between them. Mr Spendrick realised that the point, and Mr Dennis’s finger, were not negotiable. The play was a turkey, but maybe the thunder machine would save it. He reached out for Mr Dennis’s parchment.

It was a few days later that Mr Dennis’s Play, Appius and Virginia, opened for its first performance. It was the next evening when it closed after its second performance.

Mr Dennis was disappointed to say the least. However, the play might have flopped, but the thunder was a huge success.

Some time later Mr Dennis was once again in the vicinity of the Theatre Royal. It was lashing down with rain so he decided to go in and see whatever was playing.

‘What’s playing tonight?’ He asked the fat man on his left.

‘It’s called Macbeth. It’s by that William Shakespeare. He’s very popular, you know. Done lots of plays, he has.’

At that moment the curtains pulled back to reveal three old hags gathered around a cauldron.

‘When shall we three meet again?’ Hag One inquired in a screeching falsetto. ‘In thunder, lightning or in rain?’

Right on cue one of the props lads activated the thunder. It rumbled out over the auditorium and the audience gasped.

Mr Dennis didn’t gasp. He stood up, grabbed his periwig and threw it towards the stage. In an infuriated baritone he exclaimed ‘That is my thunder, by God. The villains will play my thunder but not my plays!’

He looked around. ‘Spendrick, you owe me! You are stealing my thunder!’

He pushed past the amazed audience, calling out ‘Spendrick’ at the top of his voice.

Mr Spendrick, hearing the commotion, decided to pay a surprise visit to his Aunt in Portmeirion.

I don’t know if Mr Dennis got his money but he did give the English language a fine rousing phrase, and ‘to steal my thunder’ is still in use today.

Though not so much with thunder machines!

By Jos Biggs

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A Scottish Escape

Isn't September wonderful? Even the first week brings some relief from the furnace that was August. Still hot, of course, but without the ferocity of the previous two months. For us, August is a time to migrate as Spain becomes too hot to bear, a time for my husband and me to seek out cooler climes, and this year we chose very carefully, influenced by a family wedding taking place in Newcastle and the triennial gathering of our extended family, all organised to coincide at the end of August. Scotland, cool, wet Scotland beckoned; it would be the perfect place to escape the overwhelming heat and the wildfires that seemed to be happening everywhere. We would fly from Alicante to Newcastle, and hire a car there.

We began to plan our route. Arrangements were made with family and friends for initial stop overs in Newcastle, and after leaving England, Edinburgh was our first port of call. I loved the city, though our hotel was something of a disappointment, given the cost, and prices were certainly high after Spain, but we expected that. The very fact that I was able to walk 10,000 steps exploring the city more than compensated. Throughout May, June and July it had been impossible to go walking after nine in the morning throughout the spring and summer in Almeria.

After two days we bade farewell to the historic city and set off for Pitlochry, the lovely Victorian town where the salmon make their way up stream to their spawning grounds. This was of particular interest to John, a fly fisherman, as was the dam and the fish ladder that was built to assist the



salmon on their epic journey. How it assists them is a step too complex for me to explain, but I'm told it is well documented. Pitlochry is a very pretty village with lots of hostels serving good food. We ate at the Port-na-Craig which has a warm, cosy atmosphere right on the river. I should say at this point that we were enjoying excellent weather, sunny and just pleasantly warm.

Next was Inverness. Here in this genteel, laid-back city we stayed in a guest house run by a delightful woman from Azerbaijan. Over and above the wonderful scenery, I noted that her young ten-year old son was able to cycle to and from school unaccompanied. By now we were both totally relaxed and drinking in the incredible views of

By Aileen Cleave

mountains and lochs all around us as we turned and headed south again for Fort William.

The town itself isn't spectacular, although it is dramatically situated on the shores of Loch Linnhe with a towering Ben Nevis close by. The beautiful Glencoe is a half hour drive away and you can ride the Jacobite Steam Train across the Glenfinnan Viaduct, made famous by the Harry Potter films. We were only staying two nights at each place so our trips were limited but that didn't restrict our enjoyment of the overall ambience, of the undoubted stars of the show, always the incredible mountains, lochs and glens.

Then we travelled south again to Oban, and John, a true shell fish aficionado, was looking forward to trying the wonderfully fresh crabs and gambas the town is famous for. The Shack is little more than a stall with long wooden tables and bench seats. I managed to find a space to sit while John ordered a tray of oysters on a bed of ice for me and a mixture of crab, lobster and prawns for himself.

Standing next to me was a young couple and their two children happily devouring a huge bowl of every kind of shell fish. They were Spanish, from Valencia, travelling in a caravan exploring Scotland and their enjoyment of the freshest crustaceans outside of Galicia was evident.

From Oban we continued south to the Kyles of Bute. When I was a child, my father was in the Royal Navy and stationed on a floating dock in the sea off the shores of Rothesay where the submarines would be sent in to be repaired. It's not there now, the navy having departed and the pub where we holidayed has been closed for many years. But the tiny village of Port Bannatyne is still very pretty, with the only other hostelry bought by the local people and run as a co-operative. It's not just a pub but a hub for all manner of village



activities, including a writing group.

Because it was a significant birthday for both of us, our children had gifted us two nights in the Lake District. We decided against the popular tourist spots such as Windermere and opted instead for Elterwater, a small village with an inn tracing its origins back to the sixteenth century. It was beautifully peaceful apart from the occasional trumpeting of the peacock and his peahens.

And so we came to the final week of our holiday. We had been invited by our dear friend, Kathy, to spend this week with her in Lancashire before heading back to Newcastle for our family gathering and our onward flight home to Spain. The whole month had been a huge success, giving us time to savour the United Kingdom in a way that hadn't been possible in a long time.

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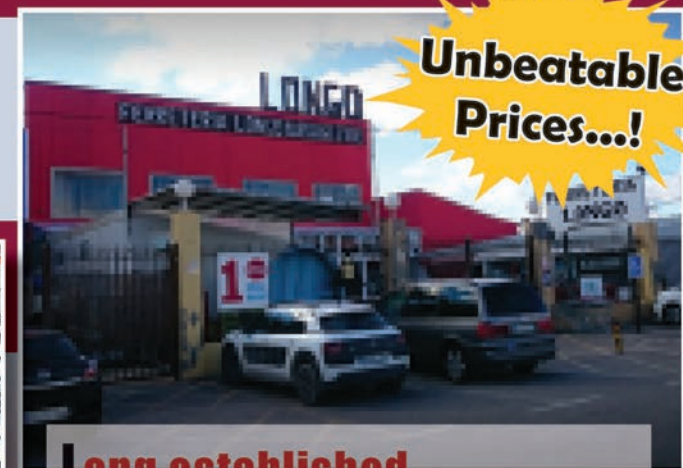
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Every year for nine days, ending the last Sunday of September, Cartagena in Murcia is the venue of spectacular shows and processions in commemoration of the battles of the Second Punic War.

What was the Second Punic War again? You may be asking, seeking back through the mists to long forgotten Latin lessons.

Carthage and Rome fought three major wars with each other over the course of their existence. They are called the Punic Wars because Rome's name for Carthaginians was Poeni, derived from Poenici, a reference to the founding of Carthage by Phoenician settlers.

Hamílcar Barca, strategist from Carthage (Tunisia) arrived in the Iberian Peninsula looking for strategic Mediterranean points. Amongst other coastal and inland places he founded Quart-Hadasht, what is today known as Cartagena.

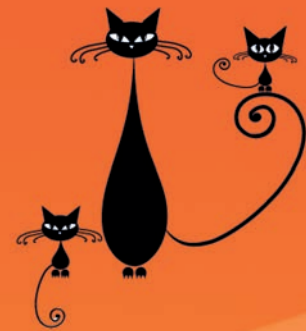
After the death of Hamílcar, Asdrúbal enlarged the city building palaces and temples, surrounded it with high walls that made it almost impregnable, and Hamílcar's son, Hannibal (of elephants over the Alps fame), married a princess of the place. Qart-Hadast became the economic centre, from where direct trading with Carthago (Tunisia) and all of North Africa took place.

However, the Carthaginians managed to encroach on Roman interests on the Spanish peninsula as well, and when Sagunto, a Greek enclave under Roman protection fell into their hands while Hannibal was marching on Rome with a massive Carthaginian army (and some elephants), Rome reacted and sent legions to the Iberian peninsula. The Roman general Publius Cornelius Scipio disembarked in Iberia with the aim of ending the power of the Carthaginians and for this he planned the attack of Qart-Hadast. The attack was to be launched simultaneously from land and sea.

The battle was intense and Qart-Hadast, the Punic capital of Iberia, fell into the hands of Rome. General Publius Cornelius Scipio triumphantly entered the city that was renamed Carthago-nova, New Carthage, during the period of Roman domination (now Cartagena).

It is this battle that is commemorated every year in September in Cartagena.

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Carthaginenses y Romanos Parade Cartagena Fiesta

Saturday
26th Sept **21€**
per person

Main Parade starts at 18:30 with large Feria
and Troop encampments to visit



Shopping Trip Murcia

Thursday 24th September
Thursday 29th October
Thursday 26th November
Sunday 13th December

Morning in IKEA & Thader Centre
Afternoon at Nueva Condomina **15.50€**
per person



Medieval Market CARAVACA

Monday **7th Dec**

17€ per person
Visit the largest
medieval market in the
area. A great day out!



Shopping Trip La Zenia

Thur 17th Sept
Tues 1st Dec **19.50€**
per person



Market Day



Roquetas de Mar

Thur 8th Oct **17.00€**
per person

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Eco-Bodega Cortijo El Cura

45€
per person
Entrance & tasting included

29th September 2026

Come and enjoy a 3 hour guided tour and produce tasting session at this Almerian bodega, in Laujar de Andarax, in the heart of the Alpujarra region.



Come and discover an estate where nature, wine and history are all part of the same experience

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



Sevilla

3 Nights
***422€**
per person

12th ~ 15th October 2026

Staying at:
4* Hotel Doña Maria
Central Sevilla (near Cathedral)



* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Transfer to/from hotel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4



Granada

2 Nights
***238€**
per person

9th ~ 11th November 2026

Staying at:
4* Soho Boutique
Central Old Granada (near Cathedral)



* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Two nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2 + 3



Gibraltar

3 Nights
***263€**
per person

16th ~ 19th November 2026

Staying at:
4* Hotel OH Campo
Spain - 800m from border



* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4



Historic Port of Cartagena

From 19€
per person

20th October '26

An opportunity to visit this historic City and Naval Port - so much to see and enjoy. Visit the museums, the Roman Amphitheatre, stroll the promenade or take a boat trip around the busy harbour.



Why not take the time to relax & enjoy a leisurely lunch.

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



Granada

Shopping Trip

Thursday 5th November

Visit the Nevada Shopping Centre one of the largest in the region & get that Christmas Shopping started

Leaves La Alfoquia 08.30
Leaves Granada 17.00

Other pick-ups include
Albox, Arboleas, Mojácar & Turre

21€
per person



Malaga Christmas Lights

2 Nights
***295€**
per person

9th ~ 11th or 14th ~ 16th December 2026

Staying at:
4* Hotel Soho Boutique Equitativa
Central to lights



* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Two nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2 + 3



Benidorm Christmas

4 Nights
***470€**
per person

23rd ~ 27th December 2026

Staying at:
4* Hotel Ambassador Playa II
Standard room



* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albbox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa. Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Four nights in 4* hotel
Full Board includes wine and water
Gala Meal (25th)

Benidorm Christmas

4 Nights
*482€
per person

FULLY BOOKED



23rd ~ 27th December 2026

Staying at:

4* Hotel Presidente
Room with pool view

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Four nights in 4* hotel
Full Board includes
wine and water
Gala Meal (25th)

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2 people
sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Granada

2 Nights
*238€
per person



15th ~ 17th March 2027

Staying at:

4* Soho Boutique
Central Old Granada (near Cathedral)

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Two nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2 + 3

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2 people
sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Madrid

3 Nights
*502€
per person



10th ~ 13th May 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Soho Boutique Congreso
Prime location in city centre

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4
Visit to Alcalá de Henares

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2 people
sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Úbeda y Baeza

3 Nights
*254€
per person



31st May ~ 3rd June 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Cetina Palacio de
los Salcedo ~ Baeza

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Visit to Úbeda
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2
people sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Lisbon

5 Nights
*605€
per person

LIMITED AVAILABILITY



5th ~ 10th April 2027

Staying
at:

4* Hotel Rio Badajoz (1)
4* Hotel Florida ~ Lisbon (3)
4* NH Luz de Huelva (1)

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Five nights in 4* hotels
Evening Meal - day 1
Breakfast - days 2, 3, 4+5

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2 people
sharing a room
Single sup upon request

Albacete

3 Nights
*351€
per person



19th ~ 22th April 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Sercotel Los Llanos
central location

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Visit to Alcalá de Júcar
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2
people sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Toledo & Aranjuez

3 Nights
*322€
per person



14th ~ 17th June 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel María Cristina
Toledo

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4
Visit to Aranjuez

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



* Price based on 2 people
sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request

Benalmádena

4 Nights
*541€
per person

NEW



12th ~ 16th September 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Alay
central location

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Four nights in 4* hotel
Visit to Castillo de Colomares
Half Board

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albex, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

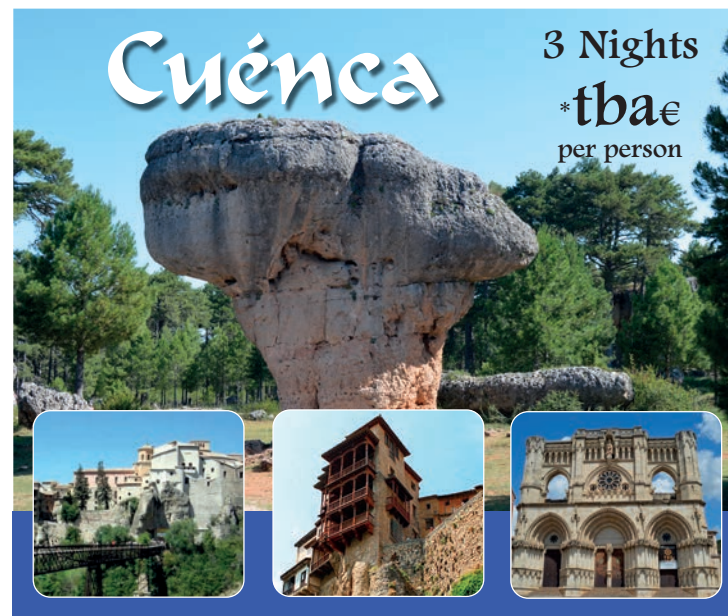


* Price based on 2
people sharing a room
Single supplement
upon request



Segovia & Ávila

3 Nights
*377€
per person



Cuénca

3 Nights
*tba€
per person

20th ~ 23rd September 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Eurostars Acueducto Segovia

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4
Visit city of Ávila

* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



4th ~ 7th October 2027

Staying at:

4* Hotel Torremangana Central Cuénca

Price Includes:

Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast - days 2, 3 + 4
Visit to Ciudad Encantada

* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single supplement upon request

Pick-Ups Possible From:

Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand



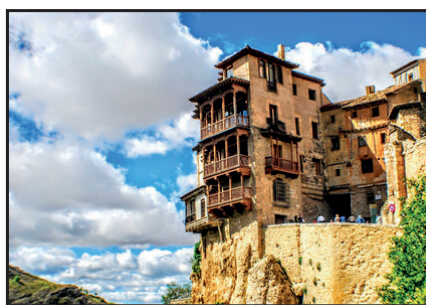
Proposed Mini Breaks 2027



Here are more proposed mini breaks being arranged by Parra Travel for 2027/2028

Sevilla ~ October

Granada ~ November



Malaga (Christmas Lights)

Benidorm ~ Christmas

Calpe

El Escorial & Valley of the Fallen



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Gin from Menorca



Also known as Gin from Mahón, the capital of the island of Menorca, this very fine gin which boasts the Seal of Geographic Origin can trace its roots back to in the 18th century.

At that time, Menorca was under British occupation as agreed in the Treaty of Utrecht, so there were many British soldiers and sailors on the island. This created a strong British influence, and the demand for British products soared.

The Gin from Menorca, produced by craftsmen from Mahón, was originally elaborated on the basis of schnapps obtained from the fermentation of cereals. The schnapps was then distilled and flavoured with juniper berries and other aromatics.

Later on, the schnapps used proceeded from the fermentation of other agricultural products, different from cereals.

Although the British left the island in 1802, the locally produced gin was still in demand.

Karmā Bār

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¡Buen Provecho!



In the 20th century, brands such as Xoriguer started bottling and advertising the product, and soon Gin from Menorca was distributed all over the Balearic Islands. In 1992 it received the Seal of Geographical Origin "Gin de Menorca" granted by the island's government, and in 2010 this was changed to "Gin de Mahón", under which name it is now sold.

The traditional Gin from Mahón is elaborated with ethyl alcohol and juniper berries in copper stills, heated up over the flames of a woodfire. There are only three ingredients: ethyl alcohol, juniper berries and water. As it possesses the Seal of Geographical Origin, it is strictly forbidden to use additives, extracts and artificial aromas.

Gin from Mahón typically has an alcohol content of between 30% and 43%.

The Xoriguer brand has become almost synonymous with Gin from Mahón. There are other brands, but Xoriguer is the one all Spanish gin drinkers know with its characteristic bottle that always has a little handle next to its neck.

Should you be lucky enough to be in Menorca sometime during a local fiesta, you will no doubt have a chance to sample plenty of Gin de Mahón, as the traditional drink on those occasions is what they call 'pomada': the local gin with lemonade – always in a 50-50 mix.

Buen Provecho!

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Whatever Happened to My Appetite?

This is the first time ever I can say that my appetite has been affected by the heat, and I don't like it!!!

However, I must say that it's easy on the finances, and time normally spent in the kitchen can be spent... sitting in front of the fan. How boring!!

I like spending money on food and time on cooking and I feel deprived. But at least we're approaching a cooler season.

In spite of all this, I've managed to do you a few choice recipes, and I hope you'll enjoy them as much as I did.

Read, cook and enjoy!

Spaghetti with Mushrooms

I fancied pasta with mushrooms, but felt a bit fed up with the same old mushrooms in cream sauce for my pasta, so I decided to try a different approach.

It worked a treat, and I think you'll agree that it's truly tasty and satisfying!

If you can't get red snack peppers, just dice about half an ordinary red pepper.

Ingredients for two:

- 160g spaghetti
- 1 chicken or vegetable stock cube
- Olive oil
- ½ onion, sliced
- 300g mushrooms, chopped
- 1 red snack pepper, diced
- Salt and pepper
- Handful spinach, coarsely chopped
- Lots of freshly grated parmesan

Bring 1.5 l salted water to the boil, dissolve the stock cube in it and add the spaghetti. Cook for two minutes, turn off and cover. Leave for 10 minutes before draining, reserving 200 ml of the pasta water.

Heat the oil in a sauté pan and throw in the onion, mushrooms and pepper. Let them fry over a brisk heat until the onions are soft and the mushrooms start to turn golden.

Add reserved pasta water to taste and let it bubble for about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper, turn in the spaghetti and let it heat through.

Turn the heat right down, turn in the spinach, cover and when the spinach starts to wilt, serve in bowls with plenty of parmesan on the side.

Don't you just love simplicity!?

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— FOR REFURBISHMENT —

Dear guests,

Our restaurant will be
closed from **September 14th** until **September 26th**
due to **refurbishment** work.

We will reopen on **September 27th**.



Please make your reservation in time before
we close for the **refurbishment** so we can
focus all our attention on the **refurbishment**.

Thank you for your understanding,
and we look forward to welcoming you back!



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— POR REFORMAS —

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Nuestro restaurante permanecerá
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debido a trabajos de reformas.

Volveremos a abrir el **27 de septiembre**.



Les rogamos que reserven su mesa con tiempo antes
de que cerremos por las **reformas** para que podamos
dedicar toda nuestra atención a las **reformas**.

¡Gracias por su comprensión y esperamos
darles la bienvenida de nuevo!

Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 82

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

Easy

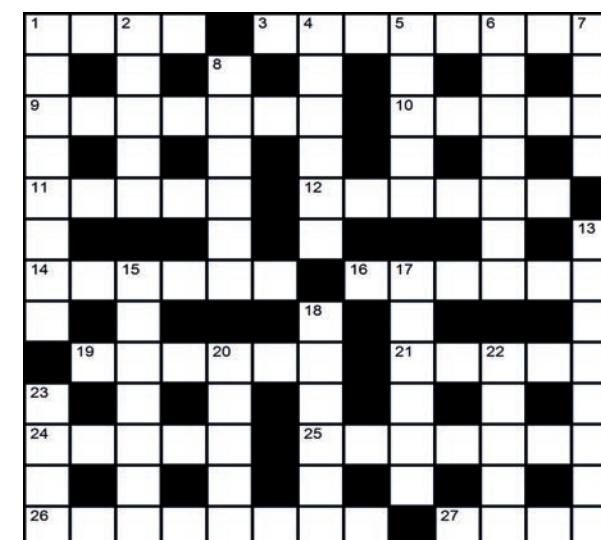
Regular Sudoku

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

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

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

Medium



Across

- 1 Outer covering
- 3 Previously popular people (3,5)
- 9 Violent
- 10 Piece of cake
- 11 Desire
- 12 Floor
- 14 Dyaks short knife
- 16 Fight
- 19 Abandon
- 21 Investment
- 24 Similar
- 25 Vermouth drink
- 26 Quoin
- 27 50's dance

Down

- 1 Printed version (4,4)
- 2 Brazilian dance
- 4 Monet, e.g.
- 5 Operatic bass singer
- 6 Distinguished
- 7 Tallow source
- 8 Collapse (4,2)
- 13 Church living
- 15 Actuality
- 17 Laughable
- 18 Sycophant
- 20 Highly skilled
- 22 Excuse
- 23 Knave

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Vicky & Jim

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Meatballs with Cauliflower

This is just the most amazingly tasty and fresh summer recipe I've met for a long time! And all because I finally managed to overcome my aversion (which had no apparent origin) to dill.

I've just always thought it would be out of place and left it out of any recipe it appeared in.

But finally my curiosity got the better of me, and I decided to include it as prescribed.

I won't go into details about how much I enjoyed it, suffice it to say that now I'm looking for recipes with dill rather than trying to avoid them!!

Ingredients for two:

- 400g mince
- ½ tsp salt, freshly ground pepper
- 1 tbsp oats
- 1 egg
- ½ tbsp dill, chopped
- ½ tbsp parsley, chopped
- 500ml stock

Also:

- 250ml water from the meatballs
- 100g cauliflower, divided into florets
- 100g frozen peas
- ½ tbsp cornflour
- ½ tbsp fresh oregano, chopped
- Drop of lemon juice
- Salt and pepper



50ml cream
1 tbsp dill, chopped

First mix the meat with salt and pepper and stir for a couple of minutes before adding the other ingredients down to the parsley. If the mix seems too dry, add a drop of milk.

Boil water and add stock cube. When it's dissolved, shape meatballs with a large teaspoon and your hand and drop them into the stock as you go. Let them cook for 6-7 minutes after you drop in the last meatball.

When they are done, take them out with a slotted spoon and set aside, and sieve the stock into a bowl.

Pour it back into the pan and add the cauliflower florets and peas. Bring to the boil and let it bubble for a minute or two. Thicken the sauce with a little cornflour dissolved in a drop of water.

Add the oregano and adjust the taste with lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Return the meatballs to the sauce, heat them through and turn in the chopped dill and cream just before serving with boiled potatoes.



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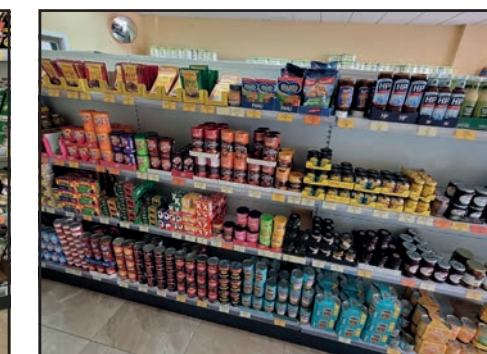


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Prawn and Courgette Pasta

I love treating myself to prawns from time to time – usually on a Sunday, don't ask me why.

Maybe it's because I like a nice glass of chilled white wine on a Sunday, and prawns are the perfect excuse. And seeing as I have to open a bottle anyway for the sauce, it would be a terrible shame to let it go to waste!

I stumbled over this recipe in a German magazine, and it was as fresh and delicious as I imagined when I first read it!

Ingredients for two:

- 200-250g pasta – I used pappardelle
- 1 courgette, finely sliced longways
- 1 clove garlic, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 200g peeled prawns
- 75ml white wine
- 150ml cream
- Salt and pepper
- Juice and grated rind of half a lemon

Cook the pasta as per the instructions on the packet.

In the meanwhile, melt the butter in a frying pan and gently cook the courgette and garlic until they start to soften. Set aside.

Heat the oil in the same pan and add the prawns. Cook for 1-2 minutes until they turn pink. Pour in the white wine and let the



alcohol evaporate, then add the cream and bring to the boil.

Adjust the flavour with salt, pepper and lemon juice, then turn in the vegetables and the drained pasta.

Serve in individual bowls with the lemon rind sprinkled over.



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Why One Water Filter Doesn't Fit All — Test Before You Invest

In Almería, water quality can vary from street to street. Here's why a proper test matters - and how to choose a filter that truly fits your needs.

The problem: There's no universal "one-size-fits-all" water filter. Neighbouring properties can have different supplies, different contaminants, and very different needs. Guesswork leads to poor filter performance, wasted money, and lingering water quality issues.

The solution: Start with data. Our **FREE 24-point water test** assesses what's *actually* in your supply using official Spanish Government criteria, then matches the right filtration solution to your results.

Why test first?

- **Water varies widely:** Source, treatment and local pipework can change quality house by house.
- **Safety & taste:** Some water is potable but tastes unpleasant; others can be highly contaminated.
- **Right tool for the job:** Only a detailed analysis can tell you which filter system, if any, you need for your water supply.

Comprehensive testing matters

- Many companies selling water filtration systems are happy to sell machines either **without testing your water at all**, or only performing a simple conductivity test.

- **A conductivity test:** sends a current through your water and measures how easily it flows; that is converted into a Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) Parts Per Million (ppm) reading. Helpful, but limited - it shows how much is dissolved, not what.

- **Our FREE 24-point test** checks multiple parameters, including many non-conductive contaminants, against **official Spanish Government criteria** to give the full picture.

Not all filters are equal

- Budget units often have limited specs. The most popular online Reverse Osmosis systems are rated only to **750 ppm TDS**.
- In areas where water reaches **1,000+ ppm TDS**, that's inadequate.
- Our **Reverse Osmosis systems** are specified to handle **1,500–2,000 ppm TDS**, making them suitable for more challenging supplies.

Installation that actually works

- **Plumbing reality check:** Spanish homes use many pipe types, sizes and layouts. We confirm condition, access and fittings before recommending any installation.
- **Smart dispensing:** A dedicated drinking-water tap avoids running all kitchen water through a low-flow, short-life cartridge. You get fast normal flow for general tasks - and pure, efficient water for drinking and cooking.

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Look Good - Feel Great

Muscle cramps happen when a muscle involuntarily contracts on its own. Usually, you feel a hard lump at the point of pain — that's the contracted muscle. Cramps usually occur for a reason. If you haven't strained a muscle, you're probably cramping because your muscle is fatigued or overused or your body is dehydrated. Or maybe you're not getting enough electrolytes, such as potassium or magnesium. These minerals help your muscles work more smoothly, and fluids help your body process the minerals.

Most cases of muscle cramps don't indicate a worrisome underlying condition. People who are 65 and older are at greater risk from them. Cramps might be related to alcoholism, hypothyroidism, or diabetes. If the frequency of your cramps bothers you, tell your doctor. Meanwhile, there are several remedies you can try yourself.

Stretching - Relax the cramping muscle. Stop any activity that may have induced the cramp and lightly stretch the muscle, gently holding the stretch. You may even massage the muscle while you stretch or after you finish. Consider applying a heating pad to the area, after stretching. If your calf muscle cramps in the middle of the

night, stand up and slowly put weight on the affected leg to push the heel down and stretch out the muscle.



How to Stop Leg Muscle Cramps

Magnesium - If you regularly have leg cramps that aren't related to a more serious condition, you might try adding more magnesium to your diet. Nuts and seeds are excellent sources of magnesium.

Heat - Many personal trainers, coaches, and physical therapists also recommend using magnesium on the outside of your body in the form of Epsom salts. You can find a great selection online. Try applying this old-school remedy to a wet cloth and pressing it onto a cramped muscle or add some to a hot bath for a soak. In fact, a hot soak provides relief for many, with or without Epsom salts.

Dry heat in the form of a heating pad may even help. Start the pad on the lowest setting and only increase heat if you're not getting any relief at all.

If you have diabetes, a spinal cord injury, or another condition that might prevent you from feeling heat, a heating pad isn't a good option.

Continued on page 68

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..... Continued from page 67

Hydration - Another possible way to stop leg cramps is to hydrate. It might take a little longer to ease your pain, but once you've had water or a sports drink with electrolytes, you could prevent another cramp.

Get moving - Walking around may help ease leg cramps by sending a signal to the muscle that it needs to relax after it contracts. If all else fails, and you continue to have regular muscle cramps, consider getting regular massages to help the muscles relax.

What Causes Leg Cramps?

Some call them a charley horse, others a leg cramp. But no one calls them an enjoyable experience. Leg cramps can be excruciating. They often attack when you're sound asleep, waking you with a violent reaction, worsened only by the shock of their arrival. In some cases, these cramps can be prevented.

Your muscles cramp when they involuntarily contract. This usually feels like a painful knot on your leg muscle and renders it momentarily immobile. Leg cramps are most common in the calf muscle, but they can also happen in the thighs or feet. Normally, leg cramps last just a few moments before the muscle loosens up and the pain dissipates.

Understanding the triggers

There are a variety of things that can lead to leg cramps. But it's also important to note there's often no explanation at all for leg cramps.



Because they often happen at night when our legs are slightly bent and our feet are pointed downward, some have suggested that this tightening triggers a spasm.

If you're trying to prevent these painful occurrences, it's best to minimize the circumstances that can increase their likelihood.

Lifestyle reasons

There are certain activities that make you more prone to leg cramps. These include exercises

that rely heavily on the leg muscles, such as: recreational running, weight training the legs, sports that require a lot of running, such as soccer or basketball.

Some experts say muscle fatigue is the leading cause of leg cramps. The risks are even higher when these muscles are fatigued in hot weather or when you don't stay hydrated. You can prevent activity related leg cramps by drinking plenty of water and taking it easy. Avoid exercising when you're fatigued.

Treating leg cramps

Preventing leg cramps is where it begins, but if you're in the throes of a painful cramp, it helps to know what to do.

When you have a cramp, massage and stretch it gently.

If it's in your calf, flex your foot to attempt to stretch the muscle, or walk around on your heels if the pain isn't unbearable. Generally, the effects of a cramp will disappear in minutes. But if you have ongoing cramps, speak with your doctor.

Keeping Well in Later Life – Vitamins & Minerals

It is said that we should get all our nutrition from the food we eat BUT.... Years ago the majority of our food was organic, animals were grass fed, pesticides/herbicides/ insecticides were not used – or very little, fertilisers were natural.

Veg came from just up the road as did the meat. Veg & fruit were only eaten if they were in season so our diets changed with the seasons. Now food comes from all over the world and is picked before it is ripe, stored in containers to be shipped, then in warehouses for how long we know not before it gets to the shop shelves.

This storage does not allow the nutrients to develop in the veg or fruit. Patrick Holford (Institute of Optimum Nutrition) once tested supermarket oranges for vitamin C and found as low as 1% - we need much more than that and would turn orange if we ate sufficient oranges!!

A man in the USA years ago was eating 5lb of carrots every day, he turned orange, skin, eyes and nails.

Our body is made up of millions of cells, nerve cells, blood cells, muscle cells, fat cells etc. and each cell has a semipermeable membrane a bit like these capsules.

Each cell allows nutrients to pass in and waste to pass out. If the cell membrane dries out then the nutrients & waste cannot pass through. Hydration is vital to the body – more about that later.

This is a list of the vitamins and minerals we need for good health especially as we get older. The ones in green are the fat soluble vitamins and need you to eat some natural fat to facilitate the absorption of them and the ones in blue are water soluble.



- Vitamin A
- B Complex
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D
- Vitamin E
- Omega 3
- Probiotics
- Vitamin K2

- Calcium
- Folate
- Magnesium
- Coenzyme Q10
- Iron
- Selenium
- Zinc

We're going to look at each of these vitamins and minerals individually, how much you need, what foods contain them, what can facilitate their absorption and what can hinder the absorption. We will start next time with Vitamin A, vital for eye health, and work down the list.



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Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 82

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.

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

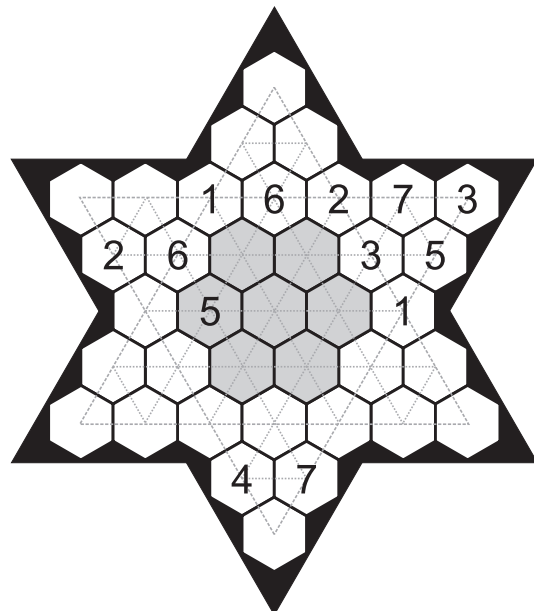
Samurai Sudoku

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

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 grey 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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Golden Rules for Healthy Shining Hair



Regardless of texture, colour or style, there’s one thing nearly everyone wants: hair that looks like it’s been through the hands of a salon professional every week.

But if there simply isn’t time in your ever-increasing list of things to do, and if you’d rather prefer that extra 20 minutes in bed over waiting for the keratin-rich hair mask to work its magic, read on.

Mintel reports that 33% of women who have changed their washing habits in the last 12 months cite worrying about damage as the top reason, so how often should you be shampooing? Well, industry experts argue that less is more.

Over-washing can be damaging for your hair, especially if it is bleached, coloured, has been chemically treated or is naturally very dry or porous. When you wash your hair every day it strips

away the natural oils and proteins that you need to keep your hair and scalp healthy, so try to limit hair washing to three times a week if you can.

Always use protection - Hair can be damaged by both UV and heated tools, like straighteners, tongs and even your trusty hairdryer, so it’s important to give your hair as much protection as possible.

When you dry your hair at home always use a heat protector to condition from the inside out and shield against damage from straighteners and colour-zapping rays. When drying, be sure not to hold the hair dryer too close to your hair, to prevent split, fluffy ends. As a test, blow the hairdryer onto your hand and see how fast you pull away when holding it close to your skin.

A good blow-dry should last at least a couple of days depending on your hair type, and there are several products that will help prolong the life of your style.



You can also bypass hot tools by multitasking your hair style, If you give yourself a fierce blowout on Monday, rock it out on Tuesday and on Wednesday do a fab high ponytail. Making your style last a few days will really help prevent damage.

The perfect at-home blow-out is not as tricky as it sounds and if you invest in a few good tools it’ll make it even easier.

Start by flipping your head upside down, and shake your hair around while you blow-dry. The more you move, the more volume you’ll get. Once it’s about 80 percent dry, flip back up and blow-dry hair in sections to smooth, focusing on polished ends. The last three inches are key: Move your brush and dryer right down to the very end of the strands and take your time. It will make all the difference. Most people come at their heads from the side, which makes hair frizzy and staticky by pushing it all over the place.

Condition the right way is also crucial when it comes to any hair type but particularly thick, curly tresses. For curly, highly textured hair, always deep condition. No two minute conditioners here. Deep conditioning involves using a conditioner that will add moisture and strength (protein) back to hair. You should use heat by either applying conditioner to hair while taking a shower and let it sit while showering or by covering the hair with a plastic cap and applying heat from outside like a hair dryer.

Where you apply it matters, too. Conditioner only needs to go on the mid-lengths and ends of your hair. Try not to put the conditioner on the roots as it will cause your scalp to get greasy faster.

No-one wants a matted mess for a mane, so brushing is always necessary, but don’t tear through your locks mindlessly, being too aggressive will only cause damage, and no-one wants to contend with fluffy, split ends. For perfectly shiny, healthy and untangled



hair, you should be brushing your hair twice a day. Once in the morning and once before going to bed, for about a minute each time.

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Can Better Sleep Extend Your Life?

According to a recent major study by The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), adopting consistent positive sleep behaviours can add up to four years to life expectancy.

Drawing on the world's largest combined dataset of sleep, and health and life insurance records, the research tracked more than 47 million nights of sleep.

They concluded that obtaining 7 hours of sleep per night and maintaining a consistent bedtime within a 1-hour window can reduce mortality risk by 24% and lower hospital admissions by up to 7%.

Meaning that not only sleep duration, but also regularity, are major factors in overall health.

90% of people don't meet optimal sleep patterns, with one in three adults sleeping fewer than seven hours per night. Significantly, those who regularly sleep fewer than six hours each night face a 20% higher risk of premature death compared to individuals achieving 7 - 8 hours.

Chronic sleep loss raises the likelihood of developing heart disease, diabetes, depression, while negatively affecting focus, mood, productivity and appetite regulating hormones.

Better sleep behaviours aren't just about feeling rested, they're fundamental to long-term health and wellbeing.

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Is your local market listed?
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Top tips for getting back behind the wheel

If you haven't driven for a while - whether it's weeks, months or years - it can take some time to regain your confidence behind the wheel. But fear not; you'll quickly get the hang of it again. You may just need to ease yourself back into driving.

Here are some tips if you're returning to the driving seat after a break.

Brush up on theory - If it's been a long time since you did any driving, then be sure to catch up on any changes to the rules.

Some rules change every year, so, try and get yourself up to date with the latest driving rules before you head back out onto the roads.

Make sure your car is ready for the road - Ensure your car is in good condition before you head off, especially if it has been a while since you last drove it. This will not only help you feel more confident behind the wheel, but also help keep you and other road users safe.

Simple, but essential car checks range from making sure your tyres are inflated to the right pressure, to topping up on windscreen wash.

Don't forget the paperwork as well. Make sure you are suitably insured, your car is taxed and has a valid ITV, and your driving licence details are up to date.

Get some practice - If the prospect of heading back onto the roads makes you feel uncomfortable and nervous, then why not spend some time re-acquainting yourself with the basics? You can do that by finding a quiet place to practise manoeuvres such as parallel parking.

Plan for an easy journey - When you feel ready to properly take to the roads, then make life as easy as possible for yourself.

Plan your route - that may mean poring over a map, or simply imagining yourself navigating a well-trodden local route to the shops.

If you don't feel ready for dual carriageways, roundabouts or motorways yet, then choose a route that avoids them. If you have no choice but to take a longer journey, then plan in regular stops so you have time to rest.

Continued on page 78

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..... Continued from page 77

Rushing is likely to add to your stress, so, if possible, allow a little extra time to deal with any hold-ups. Also, if you can, avoid driving in the dark, and in bad weather until you feel more confident.

Don't let other drivers pressure you - Don't be pressured into driving faster than you feel happy with. Simply ignore drivers who drive too closely behind to make you go faster.

Meanwhile, consider others; they could well feel the same as you. If you're courteous and give people space, you'll be calmer and less likely to make poor decisions.

Refamiliarise yourself with your car - Take the time to put your seat and mirrors in the proper positions, get reacquainted with important controls like the lights and wipers, and check the dashboard for potential issues like warning lights or low petrol.

Remove any rubbish from your car, especially if it's going to get in your way or move around noisily while you drive.

Drive defensively - Defensive driving is the name given to a series of simple driving techniques that reduce your risk of being involved in an accident. It can help all drivers, including those feeling a little out of practice. Techniques include:

- Keeping a healthy distance between your car and the vehicle in front, giving you plenty of time to react.
- Reducing your speed if the weather is bad, giving you better control of your car.
- Looking ahead and anticipating hazards further up the road, such as merging lanes or a broken down car.
- Regularly checking your mirrors to watch for vehicles approaching from behind.

Avoid distractions - The last thing you want if you lack confidence behind the wheel is to face a barrage of distractions. Distractions



can cause drivers to make mistakes and potentially lead to accidents. So, turn off your mobile, avoid fiddling with the radio and give the road your full attention.

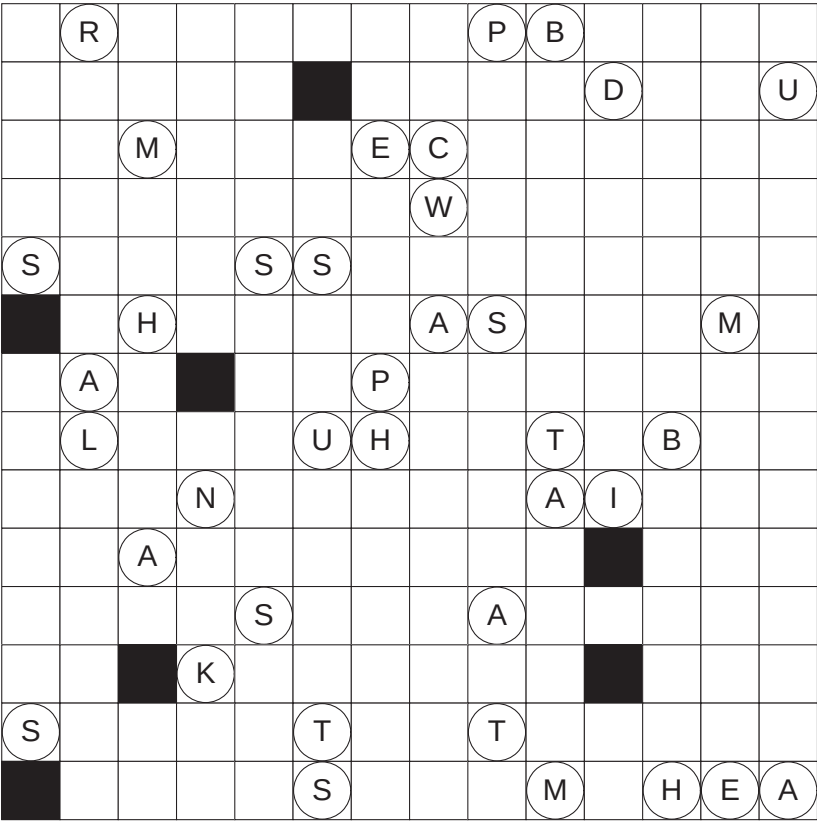
If a passenger is being loud, tell them it's distracting and preventing you from concentrating.

Relax and take your time - If you're not in the right frame of mind to drive, then consider an alternative, such as walking or cycling. You can always try again when you're feeling more relaxed.

If you pace yourself, prepare and practise, then you're likely to get the hang of things again soon.

Puzzle Time

Reverse Word Search



Puzzle solutions on page 82

Each of these circled letters is the first letter of one or more of the words on the given word list.

Your task is to fill in the grid completely using only the given words. No word will repeat itself. Words can be positioned the same as in a regular word search – horizontally, vertically or diagonally, reading frontwards or backwards.

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

Adage	Homonym	Shake
Aerosol	Hoods	Sherry
Allay	Humorist	Soils
Allude	Inputted	Solar
Annul	Keyword	Store
Autumnal	Leakage	Stump
Avows	Mailed	Swell
Awful	Might	Tenet
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Passengers Beware!



Did you know that it is not only the driver of a vehicle who can be fined for misconduct?

Of course, we all know that the driver is responsible for maintaining a safe vehicle and ensuring they drive according to the law, or they risk a fine from the traffic police.

However, we don't really consider how passengers could be at fault and be given a fine. Those travelling inside a vehicle, even if they are not the ones driving it, still have a part to play to keep everyone safe. Except in the case of minors, any passenger is responsible for the payment of the fine that is imposed.

According to Trafico (the DGT) a passenger may do something that could affect driving safety. Therefore, the person behind the wheel may suddenly be distracted and commit a road offence. So, passengers should understand their responsibilities and be aware of the following situations which could potentially result in fines of up to 500€.

Use of the seat belt: The use of this safety feature is indisputable for any of the occupants of the vehicle. It does not matter if it is a front or backseat passenger, each person must wear their seatbelt and keep it fastened throughout the journey. Failure to comply with this rule can lead to fines of up to 200€ and points deducted from the driving licence of the offender.

Distracting the driver: Driver concentration is one of the most important things for road safety and so is driving in calm conditions. Therefore, any action that contributes to the driver becoming distracted, could be fatal for both. An argument between passengers or with the driver is a prime example that can lead to distraction. Inappropriate touching, e.g. kissing, can lead to a fine between 100 to 500€.

Proper posture: It may seem minor, but incorrect posture such as placing your feet on the dashboard or not sitting correctly, carries risks. In the case of collisions or hard braking, poor posture could lead to serious injuries that would not occur in normal circumstances. In these cases, the fines imposed can range from 80 to 100€.

Throwing objects from the vehicle: Throwing any object out of the vehicle when it is in motion, poses a serious risk to other road users, including pedestrians. It could cause collisions and accidents, as the speed of the vehicle is a sufficient variable to generate a serious impact. Trafico can fine up to 500€ and deduct points from the offenders driving licence.

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Amaxophobia

There are many kinds of phobia about, some better known than others. But have you ever heard of amaxophobia? That is the term used for people who have a pathological fear of driving.

Many people who have come to Spain from the UK have refused to drive here because the Spanish drive ‘on the wrong side of the road’. This does not necessarily mean that they have amaxophobia; however, many of the suggestions used to help people who suffer from it can also be helpful for getting reluctant drivers back behind the wheel.

Amaxophobia can be caused by an accident or another traumatic event in a car, and it can also extend to the sufferer being insecure or even scared as a passenger. Another reason can be insecurity and lack of confidence in one’s own driving ability. Trying to force somebody to drive against their will can also provoke amaxophobia.

Some of the symptoms of amaxophobia are sweating, palpitations, anxiety, and trembling. In severe cases the sufferer may even experience nightmares or pass out.

The sufferer may experience the symptoms even without being in a car. The mere thought of getting in, or behind the wheel, can cause them to start, so often he refrains from even thinking of it to avoid the unpleasant reaction.

If an amaxophobia sufferer gets behind the wheel, he may, through nerves, confuse some of the car’s mechanical functions, for example confusing the brake and the accelerator, or not turning on the headlights properly.

This does not mean that he is an incompetent driver, simply that his phobia causes confusion or even panic.



How to get over this unwanted and debilitating phobia?

One simple way is to go to a driving school and tell them about your problem. Many people think that they are the only driving license holders suffering from fear and anxiety at getting behind the wheel, but truth is that it is in fact quite a common phenomenon amongst people who have a driving license. Furthermore, at the driving school you will meet professionals who are trained to help you get over your phobia.

It is also a good idea to share your feelings with your near and dear. Hopefully they will be understanding and supportive, and there is nobody like the ones who know and love you to find the right way of helping you fight your fear.

If all else fails, seek professional advice from a psychologist; they are trained to help people with phobias. They will find out the cause of your problem and give you the right tools to learn to manage your fear.



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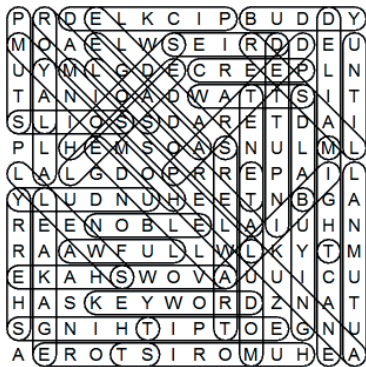
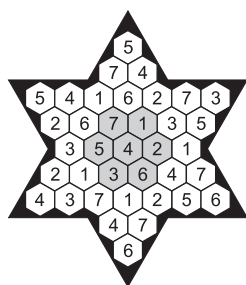
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8	7	5	6	3	2	9	4	1
1	9	3	5	4	8	2	7	6
4	6	2	7	1	9	8	3	5

Puzzle Time Solutions





WE ALSO HAVE GLP



MAXIMUM QUALITY
GREAT SAVINGS



In RaspaOil we rely on a series of premium fuels that guarantee the reduction of consumption and contamination.

Our additive system generates the fuel quality recommended by engine manufacturers.

Our technological action fuel contains a revolutionary additive that we have exclusively that guarantees the reduction of consumption and polluting gases up to 80% and provides the vehicles with safety and long life of the engine and all its components.

PROMOTION

Premium fuel at normal fuel prices.

Our staff will attend you from 06.00 - 22.00. Payments can be made in *cash or on debit/credit card or our own cards.

*After hours, only payments by card can be accepted.

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At RaspaOil Albox, we offer a personalised service focusing on our customers, offering the best service and safety in the fuel refilling industry.

Paraje los Chorlitos, 04814, Albox (Almería)

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Mojácar



La Parata: Detached Villa on One Level. Large Corner Plot. Super Country & Mountain views. Driveway. 2 Beds. 2 Baths. Room for a Pool.

DV1601

350.000€

Mojácar



Las Ventanicas: Just two minutes from the beach, this stunning detached villa boasts sea views, a brand-new swimming pool, stylish open-plan living and 3 double bedrooms—beautifully reformed and ready to enjoy.

DV1615

599.000€

Mojácar



Oasis del Mar I: Super Apartment in one of Mojácar's most desirable communities. 2 Beds. 2 Baths. Large Terrace of 33m2. Communal Pool and Lush Gardens. Excellent Location.

A1553

265.000€

Vera



Valle Del Este: Small Complex. Well Presented Ground Floor Apartment with 3 Beds & 2 Baths. Large communal pool. Private terrace. Lots of storage. Wheelchair access. Upgraded Electrics. New Appliances.

A1544

250.000€

Mojácar



Palacio de la Marina: 3 Bed Property over 3 Spacious Levels. Triple Aspect Living Room. New Kitchen. 2 New Bathrooms. 2 Parking Spaces. Private Storeroom. Swimming Pool. Excellent Sea Views.

A1552

585.000€

Mojácar



Terrazas del Golf: Excellent Golf Property with Far Reaching Views. 2 Beds. 2 Baths. Super Huge Terrace. Allocated Underground Parking. Store Room of 17m2.

A1556

179.950€

Mojácar



Indabella: Excellent Location for Beach and Amenities. Small Complex with Communal Pool. First Floor with a few steps. 2 Beds. 2 Baths. Underground Allocated Parking.

A1557

295.000€

Mojácar



La Parata: First Floor 2 Spacious Bedrooms. 2 Modern Bathrooms. New Plumbing & Electrics. Ceramic Floor Tiles. Open Plan Kitchen. Access to Communal Swimming Pool.

A1562

165.000€

Vera



Central Location: Great Position for all Amenities. 4 Beds. 1.5 Baths. Utility Room. Communal Roof Terrace. Easy Parking. Children's Play areas. 2 x Private Terraces. Pets Allowed.

A1563

140.000€

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