November 2026

Issue 163

Almeria Living

A Great Read - Original, Inspiring, Local

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Welcome to the bumper November 2026 issue of Almería Living - the penultimate of this year!!!

After a very long hot summer it was inevitable that the rain storms would come with some areas suffering bad flooding once again. I do hope that none of you have been badly affected this time around. The weather is certainly becoming more unpredictable!!

Don't miss out on our EARLY BIRD CHRISTMAS POSTAGE OFFER - here at C.A.T. Services we are offering discount rates on postage back to the UK for cards & parcels during November. We all love to receive a card from those special people in our lives so get in early and SAVE. You will also find a large range of cards, wrapping paper and money gift wallets at very reasonable prices and some discounts too!

In this issue .....

There is a great variety of articles and stories for you to enjoy this month. I am always very grateful for the support of our scribes - if you have a story to tell or maybe 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.

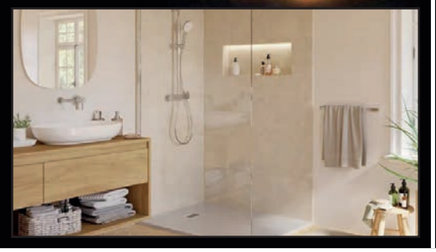
Take care and stay safe. Talk again in December.

Karen (Ed)

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Vehicle Change of Ownership

NON-RESIDENT TAX REMINDER

This is a gentle reminder to all non-residents who own property and assets in Spain that your tax return needs to be submitted before the end of December. Late submission will result in a fine so hesitate no longer.

If you require assistance with this then the team at C.A.T. Services are here to help.

Things to consider



When buying a car from a dealer or garage the transfer of ownership is usually carried out by them and you will be given a 'Justificante' (temporary proof of purchase) that allows you to insure and drive the vehicle without paperwork in your name. The cost of the transfer is usually included in the selling price.

The justificante document is generally valid for a period of three months so if the new 'Permiso de Circulación' (log book) has not been received in that time it will be necessary for the garage/dealer to issue you with another justificante so you can continue to drive the vehicle legally.

If you have not received the paperwork within six months you should ask the garage/dealer to find out the problem.

If you decide to sell a vehicle privately it will be in your interest to include the cost of the transfer of ownership in the selling price and be actively involved in the transfer or get someone to deal with it for you. This way, you will know for certain that the vehicle will no longer be your responsibility.

All too often we encounter issues where people have sold a vehicle in good faith only to find a fine or embargo for non payment of annual road tax has been incurred because the buyer didn't actually go through the proper channels.

Remember that all the time the vehicle is in your name you are responsible for taxes, fines etc. So, if the buyer wants to take matters into their own hands it may be worth considering reporting the sale to Trafico so that once again you are safeguarding yourself.

As a seller it is also a good idea to hold on to the 'Compra-Venta' (purchase contract) or garage receipt – written in Spanish. We have come across several situations recently where the seller has no formal proof that they sold the vehicle and because the transfer of ownership has not been completed correctly they have received fines or embargos, which they have had no choice but to pay!

If you are going to buy a second-hand vehicle, either privately or through a garage, you might want to consider getting an 'Informe' from Trafico. This confirms who the legal owner is and if there are any outstanding debts or embargos attached to the vehicle. If you register ownership of the vehicle in Trafico you also take on any debts!

When the sale is done privately it is necessary to present all the relevant documents relating to seller, buyer and vehicle, by appointment, at the buyers local Trafico office. For those living in this area it is a trek down to Almería. For this reason many people prefer to get the assistance of a gestor or business that can take care of the transfer for them.

If you would like any help or advice with any of the above you can call or visit the office of C.A.T. Services in La Alfoquía.

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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 October we journeyed to Jaén and now our next of Spain's provincial Capitals takes us north west to .....



The province of León lies in north-western Spain in the autonomous region of Castilla y León. It borders the regions of Asturias and Cantabria to the north, the province of Palencia to the east, Zamora and Valladolid to the south, and to the west Orense and Lugo in Galicia.

León is a mountainous province, and in fact more than 50% of the area is at above 1,000 metres' altitude. The highest point in León is Peña Ubiña at 2,417 MASL, situated in the Macizo de Ubiña in the extreme north of the province.

The province consists of two mountain ranges, Cordillera Cantábrica and Macizo Galaico Leonés, and, in the central and southeastern part of the province, a tableland called La Meseta, which is at a height of between 700 and 1,000 metres.

The climate in León is relatively cool, and it is normally only between mid-July and mid-August that the temperature rises to or just above 30ºC. The rainfall in the north averages 1,500 mm/m2 annually, but in the south, on La Meseta, it rarely exceeds 500 mm/m2. The rain falls almost exclusively in autumn and spring.

The province of León covers an area of 15 581 km² has a population of 450,910, some 125,000 of whom live in the capital of the same name.

The name León is thought to stem from the Latin 'legion'. The city was founded in its present position by a legion of Roman soldiers in the year 71 BC. In fact, even though the official adjective to describe people and things from León is 'leonés' and ´leonesa', the name 'legionense' (referring to the legion) is widely accepted.

The symbol of the city was originally a cross, but over time it has changed, and today a lion is depicted on the city' coat of arms.

The Romans dominated León for about four hundred years, and there are still Roman remains in the city. However, the Romans were ousted, and first the Kingdom of the Suebi and then the Visigoths took over. There is very little architectural evidence from this period, and it is thought that the city was partly depopulated.

León fell into Muslim hands in 712, but it was soon conquered by Alfonso I. It sunk into oblivion for many years until it was repopulated by King Ordoño II of the Kingdom of Asturias, who turned it into his capital.

This was the start of the Kingdom of León, and of a period of great prosperity for the city, evidence of which is still very much in place today in the shape of a great richness of architectural pearls from the era.



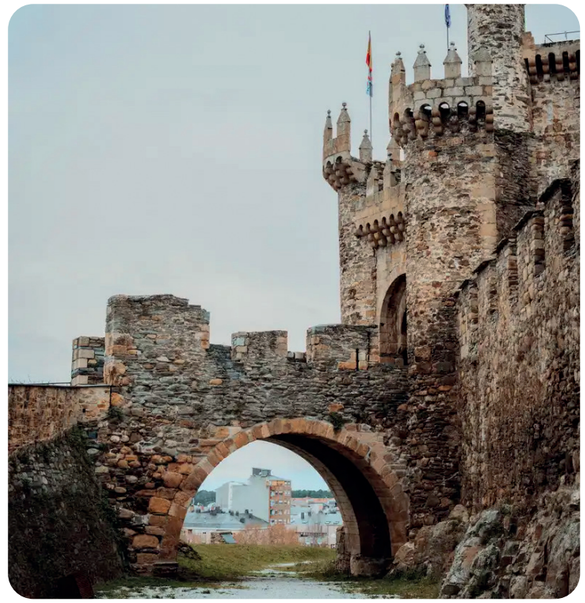
Some of the greatest examples of this are the Cathedral, Catedral de Santa María de Regla and Panteón de los Reyes, where most of the kings of the Kingdom of León were laid to rest. The arched ceiling of the Pantheon has been called 'the Sistine Chapel of the Romanic Art.'

Other sights of the city are the colourful Museum of Contemporary Art of Castilla y León, the old Town Hall and the former San Marcos Convent and Hospital. The Casa Botines, which was designed by Gaudí and built in 1891-92, was constructed as a residential building with a warehouse. It is a fascinating building with many interesting details on the façade.

León's economy has a wide base distributed between all three sectors. However, the primary sector has diminished over the last few years with the growing city imposing upon the land otherwise available for agriculture and livestock.

Industry has grown over the last 20 years due to the improved infrastructures leading to the city, and León has a budding, potentially important technological sector.

The tertiary sector, in the nature of the city being a capital, is mainly based on retail trade and services, but tourism is a growing factor due to the city's rich architectural heritage, and León receives more than 600,000 tourists annually.





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Las Médulas



One of Spain's most unique landscapes can be found in the Bierzo region in León. Red cliffs surging between green oak forests and chestnut plantations look like the ruins of a mysterious city that has been left and devoured by the jungle.

The natural monument known as Las Médulas is in fact the beautiful open wound left after years of intensive mining by the Romans in their quest for gold.

For more than two centuries they moved the earth to get to the precious metal, leaving an almost lunar landscape.

The area is full of bluffs, grottos, and giant caves which gives the visitor the sensation of being in a supernatural space.

It is set around the River Sil valley, and the origin of its name is not known for certain, although the majority of historians seem to think that Las Médulas refers to the haystacks that traditionally dotted the valley. However, others tie the name to the Latin word "metalla" (metal), and it has also been tied to the name of mount Medulio, where Asturian and Cantabrian warriors resisted the Roman siege and ended up killing themselves rather than be defeated.

It has been included on the UNESCO list of World Heritage since 1997, and it is one of Spain's most visited natural monuments.

Las Médulas was declared a Natural Monument already in 1931, and in 1996 Asset of Cultural Interest due to, amongst other characteristics, its archeologic interest. The monument is key testimony to how the Romans explored these mines, but it is also an opportunity to find out how the earth reacts to centuries of intense mining.

When it was included on the UNESCO list of World Heritage in 1997, it was the first European landscape to be given this distinction.

The nomination was not without controversy, however. When it was discussed in UNESCO, Thailand, Finland and Germany were opposed to the nomination on the grounds that the landscape is a monument to man's destructive activities.

The Romans soon realised the gold that could be found in the mountains was easily accessible, so they explored Las Médulas as an open mine, using the "ruina montium" method, i.e. breaking down the mountains to get to the gold. This was what created the landscape we see today.

The way they did it was by digging canals in the high part of the mountains, into which flowed the water from rivers and melted snow, cutting into the surface and breaking it up. The remnants of the rock material would fall into basins where the earth was separated from the gold.

Because of this, the landscape today does not only consist of scarred mountain tops, but also lakes and lagoons that are the product of this movement of water – through the more than 400 km of constructed canals, bridges, aqueducts, tracks and roads… an enormous feat of engineering, considered one of the most complex of its time in order to obtain gold for Rome, where it was used, mainly, for striking coins.

The Roman writer, Pliny the Elder, worked as an administrator in Las Médulas when he was young, and he documented the figures involved in the exploitation: 60,000 men extracted 1.6 milion kilos of gold every year.

Las Médulas is open for visitors, and there are marked routes that are a good way of seeing the monument. Most of them take in the most famous lookout points and caves.

A visit to the monument should be preceded by a trip to one of the vantage points (miradores) from where you have an exceptional view of this Natural and Cultural Space which you are about to visit.

Continued on page 10 .....





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The vantage points of Reirigo, Las Pedrices and Chao de Maseiros are all in the epicentre of the best panoramas. From there, the generosity of nature with its wealth of nuances of green highlighting the orange and red pinnacles and bluffs can best be appreciated. In the best light of the day, the red and orange rock offset by the green surroundings turn into a nature's light and colour show.

Some visitors consider the Reirigo vantage point the best of Las Médulas. It is difficult to reach and is accessed via a path which is not recommended for children or anyone who is not used to difficult or very difficult mountain trekking.

If you think about the fact that the Reirigo is at 979 metres' height it goes without saying that the views are spectacular – but the best thing is to leave it to experienced trekkers who usually choose the so-called Reirigo Route (also known as la Fuente la Perra).

It starts in the town of Las Médulas and leads to the vantage point and its amazing views. It is well worth making the steep climb (most steep at the beginning) up there where the stunning landscape unfolds before you. A little further on, a narrow path leads to the old mine galleries in this part of Las Médulas.

The Las Pedrices vantage point is obligatory in spring and autumn.

You can get to it by following the Las Valiñas track which starts near the Visitors' Centre in the town of Las Médulas. It is a circular trail, and it leads through the plantations where the centuries old chestnut trees perform a spectacular colour transformation show in spring and autumn.

When you approach the end of the track there is a sign showing the way to the Las Pedrices vantage point from where you can enjoy the views of the Las Médulas countryside and town as well as a panoramic view of the Carucedo lake far away.

From the Chao de Maseiros vantage point, you can really appreciate the grandeur of Las Médulas in unison with the imprints left by the exploitation of gold.

It is a low difficulty trail that permits the visitor to enjoy the natural beauty on an easy and comfortable walk which is ideal for the whole family.

The Chao de Maseiros is situated one kilometre from the Las Médulas town and you get to it following a track which starts next to the church and runs along the Somido lake which was used for separating the gold from the rock.

The view from the vantage point extends to Carucedo lake and the town of the same name as well as the Campaña reservoir.



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Look Good - Feel Great

Top Tips to avoid the flu!

Let's look at the top 10 tips for natural ways you can support your immune system to prevent a cold and the flu!

1. Wash Your Hands Frequently and Thoroughly

This is the number one way to prevent the flu and other respiratory infections. You must scrub your hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds in order to kill viruses. Twenty seconds is about how long it takes to sing the ABC's one time through. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth without first washing your hands.



2. Repair Your Gut

Your gut is your gateway to health, as nearly 80% of your immune system is located in your gut. Make sure your gut is in tip-top shape.

3. Reduce Sugar and Alcohol Consumption

With the abundance of holiday treats out this time of year, sugar cravings can be a real bear. However, consuming too much sugar can suppress your immune system and make it more difficult for your body to fight off infections, including the flu virus.

It also leaves you open to gut infections such as Candida and SIBO, which suppress your immune system and cause leaky gut. And even moderate alcohol consumption suppresses your central nervous system, and therefore your immune system.

4. Reduce Your Stress

Stress is known to suppress your immune system. Consider meditation, yoga, or acupuncture.

5. Get 7-9 Hours of Sleep Every Night

Your body relies on sleep to recuperate from daily exposure to toxins. Chronic sleep deprivation can significantly reduce immune function.

6. Take an Immune Booster

Give your immune system an added boost with a supplement containing immunoglobulins and protein. This supplement is a purified form of colostrum, which is the first milk after birth designed to bolster the immune system.

The immunoglobulins in colostrum will boost your IgA antibodies – which are your body's first line of defense.

These IgA antibodies are produced by immune cells in your gut and can deactivate and even eliminate harmful pathogens and toxins, such as those that come with seasonal sickness and bacterial imbalances. This means immune boost will strengthen, not heighten your immune system, which is key for anyone with autoimmunity.

Continued on page 12 .....

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Although it is sourced from dairy, it is free of casein (the protein in dairy that most people are sensitive to), and contains such minimal dairy that it will not cause a reaction for the average person.

7. Supplement with Glutathione and Turmeric

Antioxidants are very important for your immune function. Glutathione is the chief antioxidant in your body, responsible for enhancing your immune system and helping your liver with detoxification. Curcumin is the orange pigment in turmeric and a potent free radical scavenger that improves joint health and cardiovascular function.

8. Optimise Vitamin D

Vitamin D is a powerful immune system modulator, meaning it is key to fighting off infections and regulating autoimmunity. Optimal levels range from 50 to 70 ng/mL, so recommend taking 5,000 IU of a high-quality vitamin D supplement per day and working with a physician to regularly monitor your levels.

You will also want to be sure that your vitamin D supplement is paired with vitamin K2 to ensure that it is safely absorbed and doesn't lead to artery calcifications.

9. Drink Bone Broth

You probably remember your mother or grandmother giving you chicken soup when you were sick, and how it always seemed to help you feel better! It's not just folklore–bone broth is actually extremely beneficial for your immune system. In fact, a study published in the journal Chest showed that eating chicken soup during a respiratory infection reduced upper respiratory symptoms, as well as the number of white blood cells (the immune cells responsible for cold and flu symptoms). These benefits are thought to be from bone broth's ability to reduce inflammation, thanks to amino acids such as proline and glycine.

You can make your own bone broth saving your turkey bones and vegetable scraps, and simply boiling them for about 8 hours (a slow-cooker comes in handy here). Or, if you want the benefits of bone broth without the hassle, you can supplement with collagen or gelatin, both of which act to optimize your immune system and support a healthy gut lining to defend your body against invading pathogens.

10. Get Plenty of Exercise

Exercise can boost your immune system by increasing your circulation. Increased circulation allows antibodies to travel throughout your bloodstream faster, making it easier for your immune system to fight off an illness.

Exercise can also enhance your immune system by relieving stress and slowing the release of stress hormones in the body.

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6 Easy Remedies for Dry Winter Skin



It's no secret that harsh winter temperatures can wreak havoc on your skin so here are some suggestions for morning and evening routines.

Hydrate Your Skin In The Morning

1. Don't take super-hot (or long) showers.

Nothing sounds better than a steaming hot shower on a cold day, but hot water is actually the enemy of dry winter skin.

And keep it short, all you need is about 10 minutes. To make your shower even more moisturising, swap parching suds for a cleansing oil with fatty, acid-rich soybean oil to fortify and protect skin's moisture barrier.

2. Use a thicker moisturiser.

Once you've used your towel to pat-dry, apply your moisturiser. If you don't already, try a face and body balm during the winter. The thicker texture seals moisturising ingredients into dry, cracked, flaking skin, making them adhere for long-term, intense healing. Try using balms and salves with silicone, petrolatum, lanolin, and natural oils.

3. Switch to hydrating makeup.

There's nothing more frustrating than seeing your makeup flake off midday. During cold months, replace drying powder makeup with creamy formulas that contain hydrators such as glycerin and vitamin E.

Moisturise Your Skin Overnight

1. Wash your face once a day.

In the humid, sticky summer weather, you can wash your face twice a day. But in the winter, switch to one wash at night so you don't dry out your skin.

You can also try swapping face soap with a cleansing oil, which isn't so harsh.

2. Moisturise (again).

Just like you did in the morning, it's important to lather up before you snooze.

3. Humidify. Humidify. Humidify.

Don't go to sleep without one. The heat that keeps you warm in your home is also very dry, and because the windows are closed, it stays trapped inside. Use a humidifier to add moisture back into the air. Investing in a humidifier also clears your sinuses, so it's a double whammy against dry winter skin.

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Keeping Well in Later Life – Vitamins & Minerals - Vitamin B

By Joy Picot

This time we are going to look at the B vitamins. The B vitamins should always be taken as a complex, not individually. If you have been told you are deficient in one of them you should take a full complex plus extra of the one in which you are deficient.

Vitamin B complex includes eight essential B vitamins: B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), B5 (pantothenic acid), B6 (pyridoxine), B7 (biotin), B9 (folate), and B12 (cobalamin). These are water-soluble nutrients crucial for energy production, cell growth, and overall metabolic function. Each vitamin has unique roles:

• **B1 (Thiamine):** Supports nervous system health and helps convert food into energy. Found in meats, wheat germ, beans, and sunflower seeds.

• **B2 (Riboflavin):** Acts as an antioxidant and aids in energy metabolism. Present in meats, dairy, almonds, and fortified cereals.

• **B3 (Niacin):** Supports digestive health, skin, and nerve function. Found in chicken, tuna, and lentils.

• **B5 (Pantothenic Acid):** Involved in energy production, hormone synthesis, and fat metabolism. Sources include liver, fish, yogurt, and avocado.

• **B6 (Pyridoxine):** Important for brain development, neurotransmitter production, and immune function. Found in chickpeas, salmon, and potatoes.





• **B7 (Biotin):** Helps produce fatty acids and glucose, supporting energy supply. Present in yeast, eggs, salmon, cheese, and liver.

• **B9 (Folate/Folic Acid):** Essential for DNA synthesis, red blood cell formation, and foetal development. Found in leafy greens, legumes, and fortified foods.

• **B12 (Cobalamin):** Supports nerve function, red blood cell production, and DNA synthesis. Primarily found in animal products like meat, fish, and dairy.

B complex vitamins are often recommended for individuals who may not get sufficient amounts from diet alone, such as vegans, pregnant women, or people with certain medical conditions. They work synergistically to maintain energy levels, support brain function, and promote healthy skin, hair, and immune response.

General overview of what they do:

- Aids use of protein, fats and sugars as energy
- Balances blood sugar, stress hormones, cholesterol
- Essential for brain function and nerves
- Essential for digestion and anti-inflammatory process
- Essential for energy production
- Helps regulate body acidity
- Needed for hair, nails and eyes
- Needed to repair and maintain skin

Deficiency Signs:

Anaemia	Anxiety or tension
Bleeding or tender gums	Burning feet or tender heels
Burning or gritty eyes	Cataracts
Constipation	Cracked lips
Depression	Diarrhoea
Dull or oily hair	Eczema or dermatitis
Eye pain	Headaches or migraines
Insomnia	Lack of energy
Nausea or vomiting	Poor appetite
Poor concentration	Poor memory
Prematurely grey hair	Prickly legs
Rapid heartbeat	Sore tongues
Split nails	Stomach pains
Tender muscles or cramps	Tingling hands
Water retention	

I can relate to quite a few of those and I'm sure you can too. With the deficiency signs of all the vitamins and minerals you may have only a few of them, you don't need to have all of them to be deficient!

Food sources:

Watercress	Brussel sprouts	Salmon
Squash	Beans	Turkey
Courgette	Broccoli	Lentils
Lamb	Pumpkin	Celery
Asparagus	Mackerel	Strawberries
Mushrooms	Milk	Avocado
Peas	Bamboo shoots	Bananas
Lettuce	Tuna	Onions
Peppers	Cabbage	Oysters
Cauliflower	Tomatoes	Sardines
Cottage cheese	Grapefruit	Eggs
Spinach	Sweetcorn	Shrimp
Nuts	Cherries Chicken	Herrings

How much do we need?

B vitamins should only ever be taken as a complex. Taking one of them in isolation can make another B vitamin go into deficiency. If



it can be established that you are deficient in a particular one, then that can be taken alongside the complex. Make sure you check how much of the B vitamin is in the complex and adjust the individual dose accordingly. Most complex supplements are correctly balanced.

Things that aid absorption	Things that hinder/prevent absorption
• Other B vitamins	• Antibiotics
• Magnesium	• Tea
• Manganese	• Coffee
• Selenium	• Stress
• Chromium	• Birth control pill
• Biotin	• Alcohol
• Folic acid	• Cooking, heat
	• Food refining / processing
	• Smoking

We hear a lot about vitamin B12 and I know a few people who have had to have B12 injections. Deficiency of B12 after 50 may contribute to dementia. Essential for brain function, keeps blood and nerve cells healthy, maintains health of red blood cells.

Deficiency signs: tiredness and anaemia.

Food sources: clams, beef liver, trout, cheese, beef sirloin.

How much: 2.4mcg per day, this will be in your B complex, just check the amount.

Out of Hours Farmacia Time-Table - Nov / Dec

HUERCAL-OVERA

Farmacia Giménez Hernandez - Avda Guillermo Reyna 24 – 950 135 427
05/11, 13/11, 16/11, 24/11, 02/12, 05/12 - 06/12

Farmacia Rocio Sanchez Lopez - Avda Guillermo Reyna 16 – 950 470 040
04/11, 07/11 - 08/11, 12/11, 20/11, 23/11, 01/12

Farmacia Jose Soto Caparros - Doctor Jimenez Diaz 26 – 950 470 131
06/11, 09/11, 17/11, 25/11, 28/11 – 29/11, 03/12

Farmacia Rocio Bergillos - Ctra Nacional 340, 86 local 2 – 950 470 082
02/11, 10/11, 18/11, 21/11 - 22/11, 26/11, 04/12, 07/12

Farmacia Ambrosio Bernal Asensio - Plaza Constitucion 5 – 950 470 014
03/11, 11/11, 14/11 – 15/11, 19/11, 27/11, 30/11

ALBOX

Farmacia Llano de Los Olleres
Ctra Albox-Chirivel – 950 434 170
02/11, 24/11 – 30/11

Farmacia Felix Luis Miron Lopez
Plaza Garcia Haro 1 – 950 430 037
03/11 – 09/11, 01/12 – 07/12

Farmacia Paredes
Plaza del Pueblo – 950 121 079
10/11 – 16/11

Farmacia Esteban Granero
Plaza San Francisco 24 – 950 120 234
17/11 - 23/11

Information supplied by Junta de Andalucía - Almería Living are not responsible for any inaccuracies

Out of Hours Farmacia Time-Table - Nov / Dec

MOJACAR

Farmacia Eduardo Valero González - Avda del Mediterráneo 411 – 950 472 661
14/11, 30/11

Farmacia Juan José Crespo Haro - Avda del Mediterráneo 231 – 950 472 016
08/11, 16/11, 24/11, 02/12

Farmacia Eugenio Puerto Lopez - Avda del Mediterráneo 237 – 950 576 267
03/11 – 07/11, 10/11 – 13/11, 18/11 – 21/11, 23/11, 26/11 - 30/11, 01/12, 04/12 – 05/12

Farmacia Miguel Abellán Berruezo - Calle Piedra Villazar 2 – 950 475 282
02/11, 09/11, 17/11, 25/11, 03/12

Farmacia Javier Abellán Berruezo - Calle Silos s/n, Mojácar Pueblo – 950 069 036
03/11, 11/11, 19/11, 27/11, 06/12

GARRUCHA

Farmacia Luisa Moldenhauer Carillo - Calle Mayor 144 – 683 338 946
06/11, 10/11, 18/11, 22/11, 26/11, 04/12

Farmacia Juan Gea Cintas - Calle Mayor s/n – 950 132 279
04/11, 12/11, 20/11, 28/11, 05/12

VERA

Farmacia José Carmelo Jorge
Calle Juan Anglada 14 – 950 393 819
16/11 – 22/11

Farmacia Miguel Angel Jorge Belmonte
Calle Mayor 69 – 950 393 343
23/11 – 29/11

Farmacia Noelia Ruiz Bonachela
Calle Mayor 100 – 950 390 410
02/11 – 08/11, 30/11, 01/12 - 06/12

Farmacia Juan de la Cruz Belmonte
Calle Alfredo Almunia 18 – 950 390 136
09/11 – 15/11, 07/12

TURRE

Farmacia Blanca Rubio Moldenhauer
Calle Las Tiendas 1 – 950 479 012
07/11, 15/11, 23/11, 01/12, 07/12

Information supplied by Junta de Andalucía - Almería Living are not responsible for any inaccuracies

Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 91

Easy

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

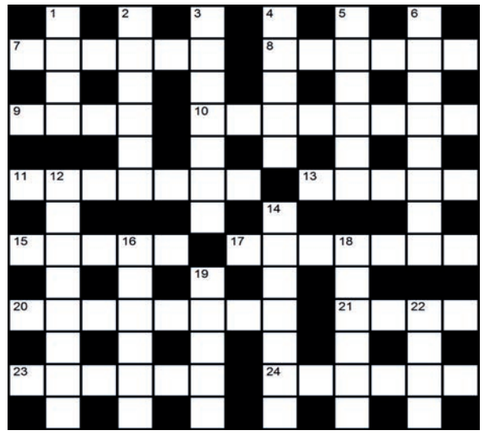
Regular Sudoku

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

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

Medium

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



Across
7 Commendation
8 University teacher
9 Neuter
10 Make less complicated
11 Male child from a spouse's former union
13 Furious
15 Change, chemically
17 Sordid
20 Arrange
21 Competent
23 Warmed up
24 Fanatic

Down
1 Journey
2 Neaten
3 Court meeting
4 Heartthrob
5 Eyepiece
6 Wedding 'snow'
12 Conjectural ideas
14 Compress
16 Proceeds without much effort
18 2009 Blockbuster Sci-fi film with blue creatures
19 Varieties
22 Crackpot





Migraines & Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT)

Migraine is one of the most prevalent and disabling neurological disorders worldwide, affecting more than 1 billion individuals globally.

The condition affects three times as many women as men, and peaks between ages 25 and 55.

Migraine is characterised by recurrent episodes of moderate-to-severe unilateral headache, typically accompanied by nausea, and light and sound sensitivity.

Common phases

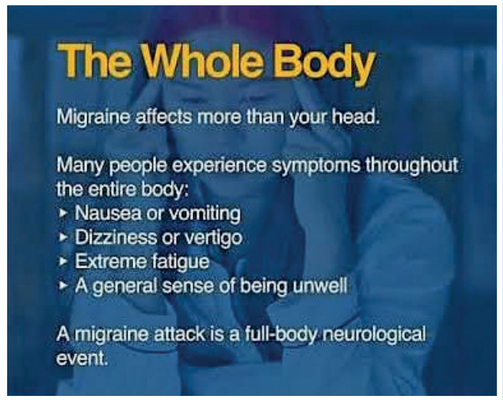
- **Early signs**: Hours or days before pain starts (e.g., mood changes, yawning, fatigue, food cravings)
- **Aura**: Temporary visual or neurological disturbances
- **Attack Phase**: The main headache, lasting anywhere from 4 hours to 3 days.
- **Postdrome**: A "migraine hangover" of exhaustion, brain fog, or irritability after the pain stops

The underlying causes are complex, involving changes in neurochemistry and vascular structures, for which oral medication is the standard treatment approach.

However, based on emerging evidence that dysfunction within the muscles of the neck and upper spine can contribute to migraine generation and perpetuation, a recent study published in the Journal of Osteopathic Medicine has concluded that OMT, which targets these areas of the spine, is associated with a significant reduction in migraine frequency.

If you're a migraine sufferer, why not find out how Osteopathy could help you?



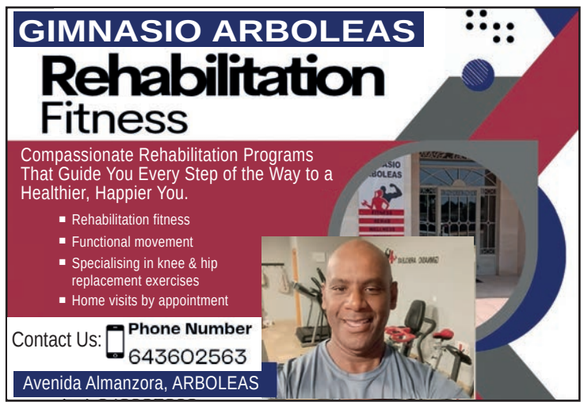


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Online booking available



Kim Clark Benefits Consultancy

Do you suffer from mobility problems, breathlessness/pain or falls/stumbles?
Do you need help washing/dressing or supervision?

You could be entitled to extra income by claiming UK ***sickness/disability benefits while living in Spain***

For advice or to book a consultation call 950 169 729 or 663 297 568 or visit www.ukbenefitsinspain.com



Viajes Parra Travel

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Medieval Market CARAVACA

Monday 7th Dec

From 17€ per person

Visit the largest medieval market in the area.
A great day out!



Shopping Trip Murcia



Thursday 26th November

Sunday 13th December

Morning in IKEA & Thader Centre
Afternoon at Nueva Condomina

From 15.50€ per person

Shopping Trip La Zenia



Tuesday 1st December

Shop 'til you drop!
Located between Cartagena & Alicante
With more than 120 outlets to visit

From 19.50€ per person

Individuals or Groups

Are you part of an organisation that is planning a trip in the future - we can help you too.

Parra Travel is a legal, fully operational Travel Agency.

We look forward to hearing from you soon

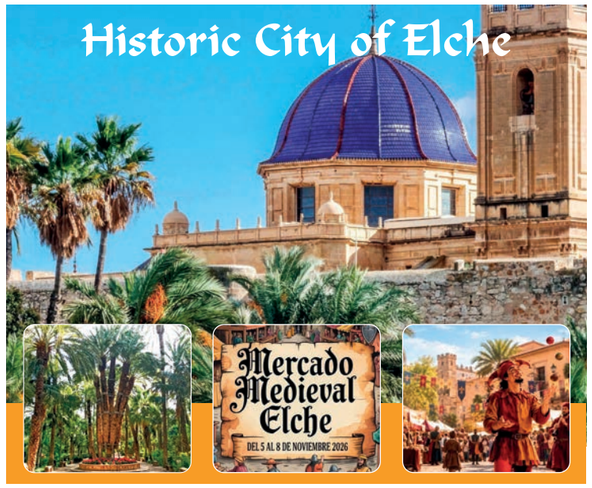
IT'S CARNIVAL TIME Águilas



13th February

FROM 16.00€ per person

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Reservations also available in Total Entertainment in Albox & Turre
950 63 43 88 627 635 514 info@viajesparratravel.com



From 20€ per person

7th November '26

An opportunity to visit this historic City and the extensive Palm Grove, a World Heritage site, that is home to the multi-stem imperial palm tree and many thousands more.

The Medieval Market will also be in full swing so a chance to soak up the atmosphere of times gone by.

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa *Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand*

Viajes Parra Travel



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

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

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel



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

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

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel



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

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

Viajes Parra Travel



1 Night *145€ per person based on 2 people sharing

25th ~ 26th January 2027

Staying at:
4* Hotel Levante, Balneario de Archena, Murcia

Optional Extras:
Access to the Balnea Thermal Circuit
Massage Treatments
Lunch ~ day 2

Price Includes:
Access to the Thermal Spa Pools & Jacuzzis ~ 2 days
One night in 4* hotel
Lunch ~ day 1
Evening Meal ~ day 1
Breakfast ~ day 2

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel



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

* 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



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

* Price based on 2 people sharing a room
Single sup 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



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

* 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



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 Heneres

* 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

On the UNESCO World Heritage Trail

Spain's Rich & Varied Contributions to an Inspired List

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites are places of importance to cultural or natural heritage as described in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, established in 1972. Spain accepted the convention on May 4, 1982, making its historical sites eligible for inclusion on the list.

Sites in Spain were first inscribed on the list at the 8th Session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1984. At that session, five sites were added: the "Mosque of Córdoba"; "The Alhambra and the Generalife, Granada"; "Burgos Cathedral"; "Monastery and Site of the Escorial, Madrid"; and "Park Güell, Palau Güell and Casa Milà, in Barcelona".

Five more sites were added in 1985, and another four in 1986. Apart from 1984, 1985, and 1986 (Spain's first three years as a member), 2000 saw the most new sites inscribed, with five that year.

As of October 2026, Spain has a total of 50 sites inscribed on the list, fifth only to Germany (55), France (56), China (61) and Italy (62).

Of Spain's 50 sites, 44 are cultural, 4 are natural, and 2 are mixed (meeting both cultural and natural criteria). Three sites are located in the Balearic Islands and four are in the Canary Islands.



The Pirineos - Monte Perdido World Heritage Site is shared with France, while the Prehistoric Rock-Art Sites in the Côa Valley and Siega Verde site is shared with Portugal. Besides that, Almadén is inscribed alongside Idrija in Slovenia. Of the 17 autonomous communities of Spain, Castile and León has the most sites, with six exclusive and three shared sites.

In addition to sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, member states can maintain a list of tentative sites that they may consider for nomination. Nominations for the World Heritage List are only accepted if the site was previously listed on the tentative list. As of 2026, Spain recorded 35 sites on its tentative list.

Spain has established an agreement with UNESCO known as the Spanish Funds-in-Trust. The agreement was signed on April 18, 2002 between Francisco Villar, Spanish Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, and the Director-General of UNESCO, Kōichirō Matsuura. The fund provides 600,000€ annually to a chosen program.

Programs include helping other member states, particularly in Latin America, with projects such as nominations processes and assessing tentative sites. Spain served as the chair of the World Heritage Committee in 2008 and 2009, and in 2009 hosted the 33rd Session of the Committee in Seville, Andalucía.

Spain's World Heritage Sites

Alhambra, Generalife and Albayzín, Granada
Antequera Dolmens Site (2016)



Burgos Cathedral
Cultural Landscape of the Sierra de Tramuntana (2011)
Heritage of Mercury, Almadén and Idrija (2012)
Historic Centre of Cordoba
Monastery and Site of the Escorial, Madrid
Works of Antoni Gaudí
Cave of Altamira and Paleolithic Cave Art of Northern Spain
Monuments of Oviedo and the Kingdom of the Asturias
Old Town of Ávila with its Extra-Muros Churches



Old Town of Segovia and its Aqueduct
Santiago de Compostela (Old Town)
Garajonay National Park
Historic City of Toledo
Mudejar Architecture of Aragon
Old Town of Cáceres

Continued on page 24 .....



..... Continued from page 23

Cathedral, Alcázar and Archivo de Indias in Seville
Old City of Salamanca
Poblet Monastery
Archaeological Ensemble of Mérida
Route of Santiago de Compostela
Royal Monastery of Santa María de Guadalupe
Doñana National Park
Historic Walled Town of Cuenca
La Lonja de la Seda de Valencia
Las Médulas
Palau de la Música Catalana and Hospital de Sant Pau, Barcelona
Pyrénées - Mont Perdu
San Millán Yuso and Suso Monasteries
Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin on the Iberian Peninsula
University and Historic Precinct of Alcalá de Henares
Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture
San Cristóbal de La Laguna
Archaeological Ensemble of Tárraco
Archaeological Site of Atapuerca
Catalan Romanesque Churches of the Vall de Boí
Palmeral of Elche



Prehistoric Rock Art Site in the Côa Valley and Siega Verde (2010)
Roman Walls of Lugo
Aranjuez Cultural Landscape
Renaissance Monumental Ensembles of Úbeda and Baeza
Vizcaya Bridge
Teide National Park



Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians & other Regions of Europe
Tower of Hercules



Caliphate City of Medina Azahara
Risco Caido and the Sacred Mountains of Gran Canaria Cultural Landscape
Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro, a landscape of Arts and Sciences
Talayotic Menorca

Over the coming months we will revisit some that have featured in the Almería Living over the years and also visit many of the lesser known sites.

Parra Travel offer many trips throughout Spain and these include a number of the listed places so why not join us and discover some of the fantastic culture Spain has to be proud of.



31st May ~ 3rd June 2027

Staying at:
4* Hotel Cetina Palacio de los Salcedo ~ Baeza

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

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Visit to Ubeda
Breakfast ~ days 2, 3 + 4

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel



14th ~ 17th June 2027

Staying at:
4* Hotel María Cristina Toledo

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

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

Viajes Parra Travel



12th ~ 16th September 2027

Staying at:
4* Hotel Alay
central location

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

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

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel



20th ~ 23rd September 2027

Staying at:
4* Hotel Eurostars Acueducto Segovia

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

Price Includes:
Coach travel
Three nights in 4* hotel
Breakfast ~ days 2, 3 + 4
Visit city of Avila

Pick-Ups Possible From:
Vera Consum, Mojácar, Turre, Albox, Arboleas, La Alfoquia, Hotel Overa
Pickup points and timings will vary depending on demand

Viajes Parra Travel

Santiago de Compostela/Lugo







Why not join us on another adventure in Spain!

4th ~ 9th October 2027

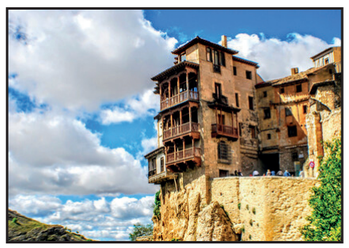
1 night in Ávila

3 nights in Lugo & visit to Santiago de Compostela

1 night in Ávila

Proposed Mini Breaks 2027/28





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

Sevilla ~ October

Granada ~ November

Malaga (Christmas Lights)

Benidorm ~ Christmas

Calpe

Cuenca

El Escorial & Valley of the Fallen







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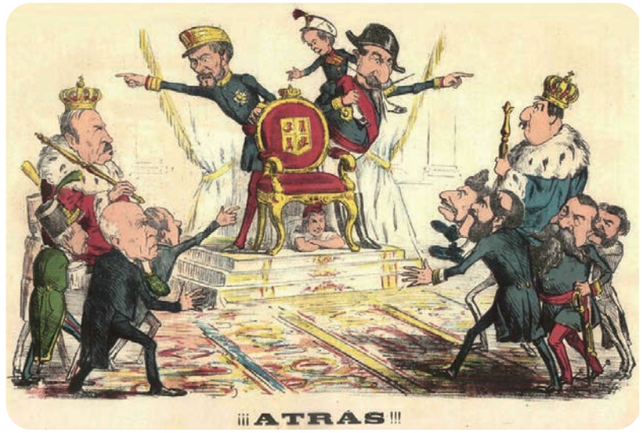
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HOMES & GARDENS

A Brief History of Spain....part 15

By Mike Woolnough



The year is 1868 and the country had finally had enough of Queen Isabella (aka "that woman") and she had to go. The coup was led by a nice liberal general by the name of Juan Prim. He wanted Spain to keep on modernising and to prevent the Carlistas from getting any more influence. Unlike many leaders of military coups, Prim did not want power for himself. He wanted a democratic monarchy similar to that in Britain. He looked around for someone who could take on the role of democratic King of Spain. It was not an easy task, Prim was once heard to say that, "looking for a democratic king in Europe was like looking for an atheist in heaven!" However, his search was not in vain. In 1870 he decided that a young Italian Prince by the name of Amadeo fitted the bill. He did not have a very propitious start. On the day that Amadeo arrived in Madrid, Prim was assassinated!

Poor Amadeo was immediately confronted with the various warring factions, one lot trying to drag Spain forwards, the others resisting with all their (considerable) might. After less than three years Amadeo had had enough, politely told the powers that be where to stick the throne and toddled off back to Savoy.

The liberals decided that they would manage without a king. At long last, all the reforms they had dreamed about would come to fruition. The trouble was, they all had lots of bright ideas, but they were all different! No one could actually agree about anything. On top of everything, there was a Carlista rebellion in the north and there were more rumblings of unrest in the south.

They then did decide on three things. The situation was out of control; they needed to return to a monarchy; they did not want Isabella back. Their fourth and final decision was to invite her eldest son to sit on the throne. (You may recall Isabella was well known for her many affairs, rumour has it that her husband was not Alfonso's father, but we won't hold that against him!)

The First Republic lasted less than two years. Alfonso XII was now king, he was 17 years old and prior to becoming king was a student at Sandhurst Military Academy. Despite not having had any training for the role he became a much-admired monarch. He possessed great natural tact and a sound judgment ripened by the trials of exile.

Continued on page 28 .....

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..... *Continued from page 27*



Benevolent and sympathetic in disposition, he won the affection of his people by fearlessly visiting districts ravaged by cholera or devastated by an earthquake in 1885. During his short reign, peace was established both at home and abroad, finances were well regulated, and the various administrative services were placed on a basis that afterwards enabled Spain to pass through the disastrous war with the United States without the threat of a revolution. (But we are getting ahead of ourselves.)

Just when things started looking up, Alfonso contracted TB and died just short of his 28th birthday. His wife was pregnant at the time and the boy, Alfonso XIII became king the moment the umbilical cord was cut. Now, most babies at this stage are cuddled by their mum, then wrapped up warm and placed in a cot. Not so with this one, he was placed, naked, on a silver tray and taken to the Prime Minister! Five days later, this time wrapped in a golden fleece he was taken in a solemn procession to his baptism. He was baptised in water brought especially from the River Jordan. His mother acted as Regent until he was 16. Unfortunately, she did not make a very good job of it! In 1898 she managed to get Spain embroiled in a war with the US and as result, Spain lost all of its remaining colonies, except for a few in North Africa.

(Those of you who had the stamina to read other things I have written for this magazine may recall that a number of writers were so incensed at the loss of the colonies that they were moved to form a loose alliance known as the Group of 98 as a form of protest. Many of these are commemorated in the names of roads in Llanos del Peral.)

Alfonso came to the throne in his own right on 17th May 1902; an event which was marked by several days of celebrations around the country. Three years later he began the search for a bride.

Whilst staying in Britain with King Edward VII he was introduced to the King's niece, Victoria Eugenie. He fell for her and the feeling was reciprocated. But the course of true love, etc….there were obstacles – Victoria was a protestant, but agreed to convert. The other obstacle was the possibility that she was a carrier of haemophilia. In the end, they decided to risk it! They were married in Madrid on 31 May 1906, amongst the guests were the future King George V and Queen Mary. The celebrations were marred somewhat by the efforts of a Catalan anarchist who dropped a bomb from an upstairs window as the procession returned to the palace. It killed or injured many people, including some of the guests.

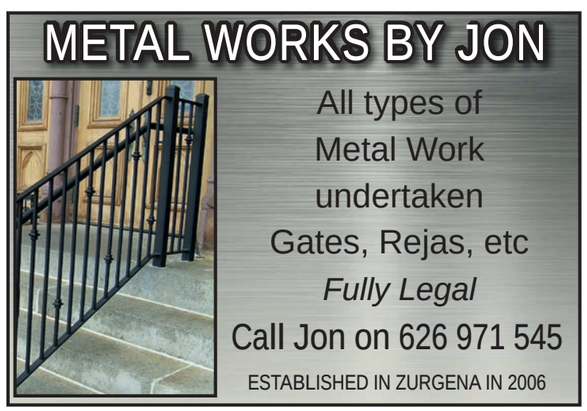
Their first son, Alfonso was born on the 10th of May in the following year. It was then discovered that she was a carrier and the baby had inherited the condition. Neither of the daughters were carriers but the second son, Gonzalo, did inherit it. The King never forgave his wife for passing it on to his sons and distanced himself from her. He had numerous affairs, fathering five illegitimate children in the process. By all accounts, he had already fathered a sixth before he got married.

Because Alfonso had family connections on both sides in the Great War he managed to keep Spain neutral. He assisted POWs on both sides and acted as a communications hub between the two sets of belligerents, allowing prisoners to send and receive mail. In 1918 he became seriously ill as a result of the flu pandemic. Because Spain was not subject to reporting restrictions his and the fate of many other Spaniards was widely reported whereas restrictions in other countries played down the number of people suffering from flu. This created the impression that Spain was much more widely affected than other countries. The pandemic has thus acquired, quite wrongly, the name "Spanish Flu"!

Alfonso was not all good though. He slowly took more power away from Parliament in order to rule directly. In 1921 an army of Rif tribesmen massacred a Spanish battalion in Morocco (one of the few overseas colonies). The blame was placed fairly and squarely on Alfonso. Once again an army general decided he'd had enough. Miguel Primo de Rivera led a coup and took over, although he allowed Alfonso to remain as a figurehead. As military dictators go Rivera was quite good, he built roads and did what all good (and bad) dictators do – he got the trains to run on time! But that was not enough and eventually, Rivera lost the support of the other generals and in 1930 was forced to resign. In the elections that followed the country decided they had had enough of useless generals and incompetent kings and effectively paved the way for the Second Republic.

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







Empty Chairs at Empty Tables

By Aileen Cleave



Lorna supposed it was time; she was after all 88. Still, she felt so young, so capable of looking after herself. True, her walking wasn't so hot, but that was mainly her balance. And her memory wasn't brilliant, but then it never had been. She had always been absent-minded, a bit distracted, and it had never impacted on her life too much. The incident with the gas hob had been just a series of unfortunate events. Especially the last event when it was unfortunately discovered! Not a day goes by when she doesn't send up a prayer of thanks that the jets didn't blow out allowing a buildup of gas. When the sun was shining through the kitchen window, it was impossible to see if the jets were lit, especially when on very low.

As she and her daughter walked into the reception hall of Peaceful Pastures, she had to admit it was quite impressive, and no sign at all of telltale odours of Dettol masking any underlying smell indicative of elderly residents. No, electronic Diptyque candles suffused the air with wafts of newly washed linen. The late afternoon sun shone through the tall casement windows, turning the mahogany staircase into a thing of beauty.

"Mrs Fitzpatrick, we are expecting you." A smartly dressed woman came hurrying towards her, hand outstretched. "It's so nice to meet you."

It didn't escape Lorna's attention that after a warm welcome, the woman's entire attention went to her daughter. Lorna made a mental note. This woman would have to learn that she wasn't so easily sidestepped.

Initial pleasantries completed, the next two hours passed in a whirlwind of information and discovery. Lorna was taken first to her own room, or rather, her suite. A large, light room where her king-size bed was already installed, as were her desk, her bookcase and her favourite armchair from her sitting room at home. Home! She quickly dismissed the cloud of nostalgia threatening to descend. This was her home now. From there they went to the dining room, again large and well appointed, and then to what their guide rather coyly called the drawing room.

"This is where residents meet up before dinner to enjoy a glass of wine or a cocktail, if Alfred is on duty". This was getting better. Obviously, she wasn't expected to give up all her vices. You would approve of this, Edward, she silently told her absent husband. There were four tables with chairs for playing cards or doing jigsaws (God forbid!) and to her immense relief, no television.

"There is a separate TV room". She was informed.

With the tour completed, Felicity suggested they go back to her room where she could unpack and settle in.



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Settle in! How was she supposed to do that? If only Edward were here, but he wasn't and hadn't been for three years now, and oh! how she missed him!

"You are going to be very comfortable here, Mum, it's a lovely place." "You're right," Lorna answered, "but can I afford it?"

"Of course you can. You don't spend anything really, and you've saved quite a bit more since Dad died."

Lorna was silently thinking she had better not live too long or there would be no inheritance left for her children, or more likely her grandchildren to enjoy. That was something Edward had been very particular about, inheritance.

Over the next few weeks, Lorna did indeed settle in. An outgoing person, when it suited her, she soon made friends. She joined a quiz team and made up a fourth at duplicate bridge in the drawing room on Wednesdays. She walked every day after breakfast round the expensive grounds. She could not claim to be actively happy - probably never again without Edward - but she was contented.

It was about six weeks into her residency; she had enjoyed a game of bridge and was ready for a glass of wine before dinner. Entering the drawing room, she was immediately aware of something different.

She turned to her friend at her side.

"What is it?" she asked. "What is different?"

Her friend returned her look with raised eyebrows. "Empty chairs at empty tables, you know ".

"No, I don't know. What does that mean, apart from a line from a West End musical?".

"Sadly, two long term residents, Tom and Nigel, whom you won't have met because they've been in the hospital since you came here, they died this week. It happens, I'm afraid, with depressing frequency."

Lorna felt disconcerted. Of course it happens, it happens to everyone in time. Indeed, it was the end game, it was why they were here, waiting in some degree of luxury for the inevitable. Lorna revised her estimate of the funds she had left. Whatever they were, they would be enough. The important thing now was to appreciate and enjoy the time she had left.

"Ah Alfred, would you make me a margarita please, and…." turning to her friend for assent "one for my friend".

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Does It Matter if You're Black or White? Storks in Spain



There are two species of stork in Spain, the white stork and the black stork.

The white stork has white plumage with black wing tips and its beak is red. It lives in marshy areas, humid meadows and zones with surface water in open terrain.

It is a migratory bird which flies to its winter quarters in eastern Africa via either the Straits of Gibraltar or the Bosporus.

The stork breeds in Spain in summer and constructs its nest in high places, on roof tops, towers, chimneys and trees, always open to the sky.

It lays 3 – 5 eggs and the incubation period is approximately 33 days. The chicks stay in the nest for 8 – 9 weeks. For the first four weeks, one of the parents is constantly guarding the nest, both take turns. After that only one parent is needed to bring up the little ones.



The white stork eats small mammals, insects and worms; frogs, crustaceans, lizards and fish are also acceptable although not the staple diet. When the stork first returns from his winter quarters, he almost exclusively eats worms (about 90% of his diet) after spending the winter subsiding on grass hoppers.

His cousin, the black stork, is another bird altogether, and not nearly as generally popular. His size and shape are similar to the white stork's, but his plumage is a lustrous black. His underside is white.

His lesser popularity is mainly due to the fact that he is not nearly as visible as the white stork. The black stork thrives in areas far away from human habitats, either in dense oak or pine forests or in deforested areas on high ledges.

These two habitats are very different but do share one condition: They must be close to areas of abundant water, be it rivers, lakes or an artificial water reservoir.

The black stork also spends the winter period in Africa. In late winter, the couples return to Spain to the same nest as they used the previous year. Before mating they perform long nuptial flights.

The nest is constructed using sticks and it is delicately lined with moss and grass. The black stork lays 3 – 5 white eggs.

The incubation period is a week longer than that of the white stork, and both birds take turns to brood. They also share the feeding of the chicks, who stay in the nest for 9 – 10 weeks.

Once the young ones have left the nest, the storks gather in large numbers in chosen areas which they use for roosting until they move down south again.

The black stork's diet consists of fish, water snakes, frogs, water rats and insects, as well as a limited amount of vegetable matter.

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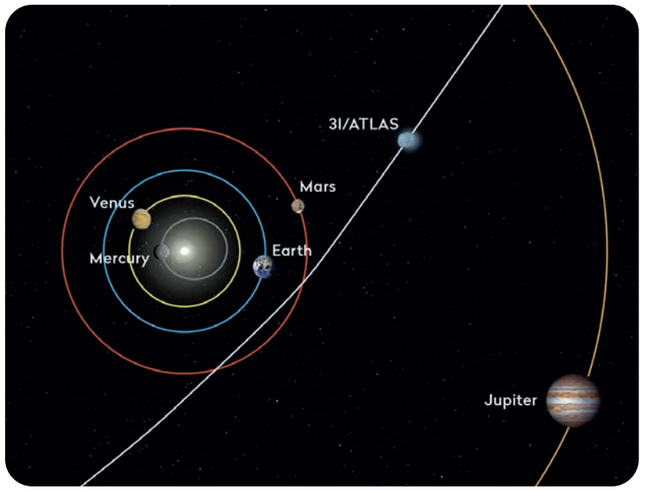


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Rendezvous with 3I/ATLAS

By Tom Fynes

The ATLAS survey telescope in Chile first flagged a fast-moving interstellar interloper, coming in hot on 1st July 2025. It was confirmed to be only the third such Interstellar interloper, after 'Oumuamua and 2I/Borisov. Avi Loeb, a well-known Harvard astrophysicist, was already labelling it a possible alien mothership. The interwebs exploded. This was guff for the TikTokers & Influencers. A possible alien invasion was on the cards.



3I/Atlas was indeed very strange. It had unusual brightness for a comet. Its approach into our solar system took it along the planetary plane. An approach that any visiting alien spacecraft would use as it would take in a lot of the Solar System and then it could use the planets as a slingshot to continue on its journey. Out and then beyond our Solar System.

Avi Loeb suggested that 3I/Atlas might be an artifact with active intelligence, and that its trajectories could indicate it was surveying key planets in the inner Solar System. Scary stuff indeed. He'd also suggested the same for 'Oumuamua,' so he had previous, in relation to fast moving Interstellar objects, arriving in our Solar System.

Interstellar objects come from another star system, (Yep out there, where Captain Tiberius Kirk said, "To boldly go where no person has gone before") yes, that place. It enters our Solar System, swings around the Sun once, and then escapes back into interstellar space, and boldly goes back to where no man has gone, just yet. Let's be clear about one thing, it is a special piece of rock, even if it's not an Avi Loeb alien mothership.

In Arthur C. Clarke's novel Rendezvous with Rama, a huge object enters the Solar System, and it turns out to be an alien spacecraft, so the Avi Loeb alien mothership comparison was a way of saying: "this looks like the kind of thing that in science fiction might hide a technological origin." The parallel was mostly rhetorical and speculative, not evidence-based, and mainstream astronomy still identified 3I/ATLAS as an interstellar comet on a hyperbolic trajectory that never threatened Earth.

Comet 3I/ATLAS is estimated to be between 10 billion and 12 billion years old. Just try and grasp that number. 10/12 billion years old. This makes it nearly as old as the universe itself, which is roughly 13.8 billion years old, and about three times the age of our solar system, (around 4.6 billion years old.) That is a staggering age to contemplate. A comet vastly older than our own Sun, comes wandering through our solar system. It is something to get excited about and gives our scientists a rare chance to study ancient material from another star system.

Early on, all the interwebs speculation made it sound mysterious or even alien-like, but later observations showed it was a natural comet. Scientists were especially interested because interstellar comets can reveal how material forms in other star systems. Because the comet's trajectory was so neatly aligned with our planetary plane, it raised eyebrows in the physics community. A natural object perfectly mimicking a planetary plane is exactly how a Sci-Fi writer might imagine an alien probe entering a solar system to survey its planets.

Scientists at SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) actually pointed the Allen Telescope Array at 3I/ATLAS for seven hours to listen for artificial radio signals. While they confirmed it was definitely a natural icy comet, the sheer uniqueness of its path made it well worth checking out. When the James Webb Space Telescope and the ALMA array in Chile analysed the comet's tail, they found signatures that looked nothing like our local comets:

3I/ATLAS contained roughly 30 times more deuterium (heavy hydrogen) than the comets born in our own solar system. This tells scientists it formed in an environment far colder than anything our Sun could have produced.

It has an incredibly low amount of carbon-13. Because galaxies naturally accumulate carbon-13 over time as stars live and die, this lack of heavy carbon acts like a time stamp, proving the comet formed in the very early, unpolluted days of the Milky Way.

Continued on page 38 .....

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..... Continued from page 37

3I/Atlas was unusually rich with Carbon Dioxide. The James Webb Space Telescope detected methane actively venting from the comet. This was a massive discovery, as methane has never been directly detected on an interstellar comet before. It confirms that the comet has been kept in a pristine, deep-freeze state since the dawn of the galaxy.

Observations from the Very Large Telescope in Chile revealed something else. As the comet got closer to the Sun and began to heat up, it started venting atomic nickel vapour along with cyanide gas. The dust particles aren't reflecting light normally. Instead, the polarisation matches what we see on dark, mysterious objects at the very edge of our own solar system. This tells us the comet's surface is coated in a mixture of highly reflective ice and intensely dark, pristine interstellar soot.



In August 2025, as it was waking up under the Sun's heat, the Hubble Space Telescope captured a massive, sudden dust plume violently erupting from the Sun-facing side of the nucleus. The comet was basically out-gassing so rapidly that it threw off a massive shield of dust, creating a brief but giant spike in brightness before settling back down.

3I/ATLAS entered our solar system from deep space at a blistering speed of roughly 61 km/s (137,000 mph) relative to the Sun. Because it was already travelling far above the Sun's escape velocity, it followed a hyperbolic trajectory, meaning it was never gravitationally bound to or captured by the Sun or any planet. It was always going to leave us.

3I/ATLAS has officially left the inner solar system, passing its closest mark to the Sun and Mars late last year. It is currently speeding away toward the outer edges of our system. Destination unknown. So, from the panic and excitement of an invasion of aliens from an alien mothership to the vast disappointment, when it was revealed 3I/Atlas was not stopping and was moving on.

This also follows the story line in Arthur C Clarke's book, Rendezvous with Rama. Rama didn't come to conquer Earth, nor did it come to stop and have a cup of tea. It turns out our solar system was just a convenient pit stop, a celestial gas station, and they passed on by, without ever acknowledging our existence.

And this really annoyed humanity. How dare these aliens arrive in our Solar System and not even stop to say hello, or have a cup of tea or a coffee with the leaders of Earth. The cheek of these aliens. Who do they think they are! Arthur C Clarke's ultimate point in his book Rendezvous with Rama is, humanity is not the centre of the universe. Deal with it.

If and when that alien mothership does arrive and the aliens land on the Whitehouse lawn, let's hope they don't treat us like the crazy monkeys with Nukes we are. And we might even trade with them. Give them all our treasures, and in return accept their alien tech version of infected blankets and shiny beads and alien smallpox, that we surely will be offered. They say, history not only repeats, it also rhymes.

Red Cloud the native American Indian Chief will be smiling, wherever he is now, as we now become the indigenous natives of our planet, suffering a big dose of Karma. Red Cloud did leave us with one of the saddest statements, of the result of a technology superior race, clashing with the local indigenous natives.

Red Cloud said, "They broke every promise they ever made, except one. They promised to take our land."





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Tom Tom the Piper's Son!

By Jos Biggs

Tom, Tom the Piper´s son

Stole a pig and away did run

The pig was eat

And Tom was beat

And he went howling down the street.



It was that time when the daylight is fading but the darkness of the night has not yet managed to swallow it up.

Tom was heading homewards through the outskirts of the village. His way took him past Alderman Plessy´s yard in which Alderman Plessy kept a fine herd of pigs.

He dawdled past, thinking how fine they would taste on a plate, preferably his plate when a single stray piglet caught his eye.

It must have found, or made, a hole in the fence, squeezed out into the world beyond and was wondering what to do next.

Tom was a quick lad, both physically and mentally. In a trice he had caught the piglet, stuffed most of it inside his jacket and high-tailed it home at his best possible speed.

He shot into his kitchen still with a tight hold on the squealing piglet.

Time stood still as did Tom´s mother and father. Even the piglet stopped wriggling and squealing.

´Tom, where did get tha...´His mother began.

`Is that one of Alderman Plessy´s? His father interrupted.

Tom nodded dumbly and breathlessly. 'It had escaped into the road. So, I...er´

´Must have run off and got lost. ´Spect a dog got it.´ Tom´s father speculated.

´What are we going to do with it?' Tom´s mother queried anxiously. ´We could take it back and say we found it.´

Her husband shot her a pitying glance. `What? Waste a perfectly good piglet like that? We´re going to eat it, of course.´

´Bit late to get it cooked now. We´ll have it midday tomorrow.´ He added.

Lunch next day was one of the best meals Tom could remember in all his life. Whatever was left over from the piglet was spoken for with broth or brawn. Of Tom´s crime there was no evidence.

Tom´s Mum got up to clear the plates. Tom sat back in his chair, full to the brim and very pleased with himself.

Tom´s Dad, however, pushed back his chair, stood up and unfastened his belt. He walked round the table, grabbed Tom by his collar and whacked the unsuspecting lad with his belt.

´Hey Dad! What are you doing? Dad, Dad, stop.´

´Shouldn´t have stolen it!´

Whack.

`You shouldn´t have eaten it.´ Tom hollered.

For a second his father released his grip, shocked by this impertinence.

Tom took advantage, slid from his father´s grasp, tumbled headlong out of the door and made his best speed down the street.

As he rounded the corner he nearly bumped headlong into his friend Jack Horner.

´Hey what´s up?' Jack shouted.

´Me Dad´s after me. What about you?´

`Me Mum´s after me.´

Figuring that they were relatively safe now the boys slowed to a walk.

´Tell me Jack, why´ve you got a plum on your thumb?´

Jack looked at his thumb, sucked off the plum and ate it.

´So Tom, what did you do with that piglet I saw you with yesterday?'

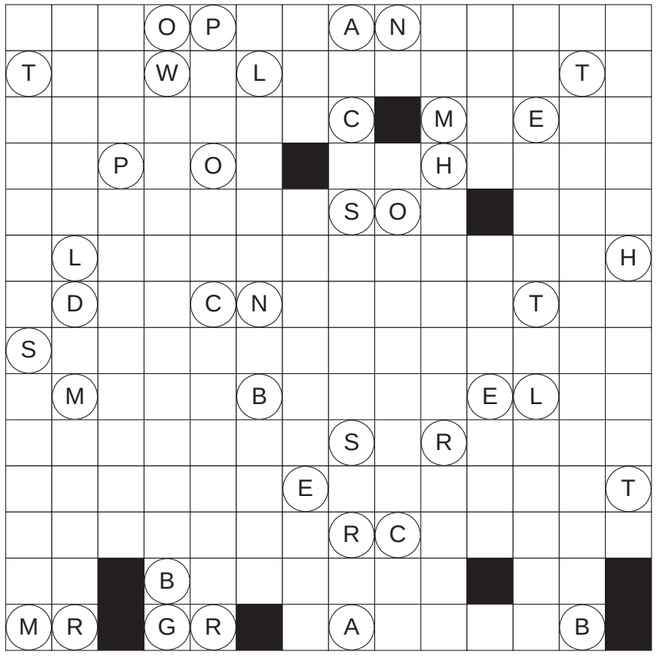
´We ate it.´



Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 91

Reverse Word Search



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

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

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

Ancestry	Holder	Pours
Angular	Hotheads	Raise
Atones	Limbs	Razing
Banjo	Liner	Redeems
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Wild Horses of Andalucía



The Majada del Arce mountain is situated on the border between the provinces of Granada and Málaga. The vegetation consists of some clutches of grassland and small bushes which are used to the cold.

At 1,800 metres above the sea it has scenic views to the plains of Alhama de Granada to the north and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.

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

This little herd of horses is the only flock of wild horses in Andalucía.

It was spring 2016 when reports came in from mountaineers of the existence of 8 horses living near the Maroma peak at 2,006 MASL. They were skinny and in a bad way, but seemed domesticated as they approached the mountaineers in their search for food.

It looked as if the horses had been abandoned there by their owner. More reports and complaints followed from passers-by, and the charity 'Refugio del Burrito', which cares for abandoned and mistreated donkeys, got involved in trying to help the horses together with Seprona from Granada.

It was to become an operation that involved several trips up and down the mountain.

On the first trip, in the summer of 2016, they found eight horses: five mares, two stallions and a colt. And of course, the first thing they did was to check their microchips. However, these had been removed. But thanks to the several grassing areas around on the mountain, the horses were by then in fairly good condition.

Sadly, though, one of them had a broken leg and had to be put down on recommendation by the vet.

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

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

The Guardia Civil did investigate into who could be the owner who had abandoned the horses, but without the microchips it was practically impossible to find him, let alone proving that it was he who had abandoned them.

The Guardia did have their suspicions, but of course when they approached the suspect he denied having ever owned or abandoned the horses.

So, under these circumstances it was decided to follow the recommendations of the 'Refugio del Burrito', and the horses were left where they were.

It is probably the only place in Andalucía that would be suitable for horses living in the wild, all other abandoned horses that have been found have suffered from lack of food, water and shelter from the heat.

The horses are being monitored by the forest service which alerts the 'Refugio del Burrito' if there are any problems that need medical or other attention, but so far, the horses have fended well for themselves.

Today, many years after they were first discovered, the herd has grown from the seven original horses to at least ten. You can find their regular paths all over the natural park 'Las Sierras de Tejeda, Almijara y Alhama' where they travel between small forests and grassland areas to feed.

They started off as domesticated animals, but they are no longer tame; they have become a herd of wild horses, the only one in Andalucía.





Cork Oak

A very special tree



Scientific name: Quercus Suber

The precious and versatile vegetable tissue known as cork is the outer bark of the cork oak tree.

The cork oak is an evergreen oak tree native to southwest Europe and northwest Africa. It can grow to 20 metres in height although this is not typical. Leaves are 4-7cms in length and the acorns are 2-3cm long in a deep cup fringed with elongated scales.

The tree has a thick, rugged, corky, insulating bark that most likely evolved as a protection against forest fires. The bark can be easily stripped off the tree once the tree is about 25 years old. This causes no harm to the tree, which soon reproduces the bark and can in fact be harvested again after about 9-12 years. The tree lives for about 200 years and may be harvested up to 12 times in its lifetime. Harvesting usually takes place late spring to early summer.

Cork's natural properties make it eminently suitable for its principle use worldwide: as a bottle-stopper. It is very light, yet impermeable to liquids and gases, elastic and compressible, an excellent insulator, fireproof, and resistant to abrasion. Above all, it is completely natural, renewable, and recyclable.

• The first stripping produces cork that is too hard to be easily handled. It's used in products like flooring and insulation.

• 9 to 12 years later a second harvest produces better material, but still not good enough for cork bottle-stoppers.

• Only the third and subsequent harvests produce cork with an even structure good enough to be used for wine closures.

It is illegal to fell a cork oak tree in Portugal with the exception of old and unproductive trees.

The tree is widely cultivated in Spain, Portugal, Algeria, Morocco, France, Italy and Tunisia. The forests cover nearly 30,000 sq km and Portugal accounts for 50% of the world cork harvest. In total the western Mediterranean produces about 300,000 tonnes of cork each year. Over 15 billion cork stoppers a year are sold worldwide for wine-bottle closures, now accounting for almost 70 per cent of the cork market.

They're a vital source of income for thousands of people and they support one of the world's highest levels of forest biodiversity, including endemic plants and endangered species such as the Iberian Lynx, the Iberian Imperial Eagle, and the Barbary Deer.

Cork oak landscapes also provide crucial ecological services. The trees help conserve soil by protecting against wind erosion and increasing the rate at which rainwater is absorbed. Water erosion is also less in areas below upland forests that intercept rainfall, while reservoirs linked to irrigation and hydroelectric installations are protected from eroded soil.

Cork oak landscapes store carbon, reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, especially in the early years of their life when they grow fast. In Spain, the Andalucían forests store more than 150 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, of which cork oak trees store nearly 11 per cent. Cork oak trees store carbon in order to regenerate their bark, and a harvested cork oak tree absorbs up to five times more than one that isn't.

Unfortunately, the use of alternative wine stoppers (plastic and screwtop) could reduce the value of cork oak areas, leading to their conversion or abandonment, and possibly the complete loss of one of the finest examples of a system which perfectly balances the needs of both humans and nature.

In order to address these issues before it is too late, WWF (World Wildlife Fund) started a major programme to conserve cork oak landscapes. It involves promoting products from sustainably managed cork oak forests and promoting restoration. Read more about the cork oak and the WWF projects at www.panda.org











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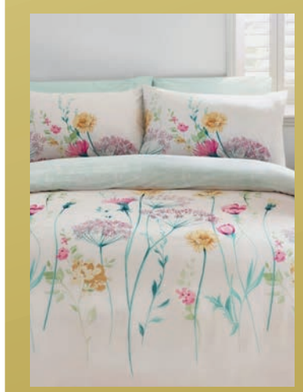
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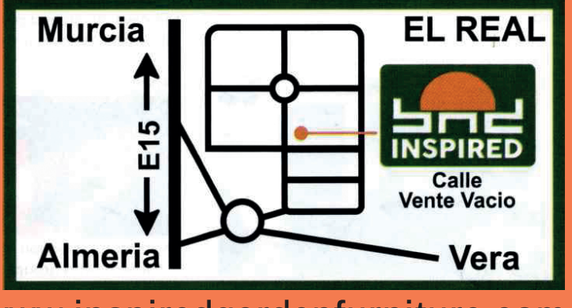












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GOING GREEN

Hope springs eternal

By Jason Lowther



At the time of writing, we were three days into the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the 1992 United Nations' Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), which was hosted in Yerevan, Armenia and ended on the day before Halloween. I'm crossing fingers, toes (and eyes) that the outcome is less horror show and more a thing of beauty for the world's plant and animal species.

I may have written before that I'm an optimist. One has to be when confronted with the scale of the challenges that we face. We have to believe that we can act for the good and start to reverse the declines of the last century or so.

Every two years, signatories to CBD hold a meeting. Running from 19 to 30 October 2026, COP17 is more than another international summit. It is the first major global stocktake of progress towards the ambitious Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM Framework).

This was a landmark agreement adopted in 2022 (spread over a couple of years due to the pandemic, hence the Chinese and Canadian 'hosting') that was heralded as the means by which we would halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. The question hanging over the conference is simple but uncomfortable: is the world doing enough to save nature?

A quick look at the media ahead of the COP doesn't quite channel optimism with the UK's Guardian noting that "Governments have never met a single UN target on nature since the biodiversity convention was created in Rio in 1992, and there has been a big push to make sure that the next years until the 2030 deadline are different".

Unlike climate conferences, biodiversity summits often struggle to capture the public's attention. The thing is though, biodiversity loss is increasingly recognised as a crisis every bit as serious as climate change. Along with environmental pollution, the three are seen as the big-ticket items that must be addressed, and quickly, to ensure any sort of sustainable future.

Species are disappearing at unprecedented rates, ecosystems are under pressure from land conversion, pollution and overexploitation, and the degradation of nature is threatening food security, water supplies and economic stability. So, you could say that COP17 has arrived at a crucial moment. With only four years remaining until the 2030 deadline established under the KM Framework, governments are now expected to demonstrate not merely commitments but measurable progress.

One of the central purposes of the COP is to assess how far countries have progressed collectively towards implementation of the KM Framework's 23 targets, including the famous "30x30" goal. That goal aims to protect 30 per cent of the world's land and marine areas by 2030.

There are some encouraging signs that, on land at least, this target might be met, with around 25-28% terrestrial protected areas, depending what you read. The EU is pushing its member states, including Spain, towards that ultimate objective, and the EU Environment Agency reports that 26.4% is protected under either national or EU protective designations.

The tricky bit is offshore, with less than 10% protected (12.1% in the EU). Again, the EU, and particularly in the Med, is making some progress, but it is slow, some would say too slow.

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..... *Continued from page 49*



The tone of discussions so far suggests that negotiators appreciate the scale of the challenge. Reports presented ahead of the conference indicate that while some progress has been recorded, implementation remains uneven and many targets remain significantly off track. It is also the case that there's a definite gap between declaring an area to be protected, and it actually being protected. That means that often a lie on a map does not confer the actual protection that species and habitat need, and that interferences, disturbances or harms are not fully enforced or compensated for. In that respect the real significance of COP17 might be seen in the shift from commitment to delivery.

When governments adopted the KM Framework in Montreal in 2022, the agreement was widely celebrated as a breakthrough comparable to the Paris Agreement for nature. The framework established 23 targets addressing protected areas, ecosystem restoration, invasive species, pollution, sustainable consumption and biodiversity finance. Now, four years later, the representatives of governments in Yerevan are asking a more difficult question: are these commitments translating into action? As above, the answer appears mixed. Many countries have revised or updated their national biodiversity strategies, demonstrating a willingness to align domestic policies with international objectives. However, implementation on the ground remains inconsistent. Financial constraints, competing development priorities and governance challenges continue to keep progress at a rate that is slower than anticipated.

Yet there is also reason for cautious optimism. Biodiversity now occupies a more prominent place on the international agenda than at any point in recent history. Governments are measuring progress, businesses are increasingly accounting for nature-related risks, and conservation has become linked to wider debates about climate resilience, food security and economic sustainability. COP17 may ultimately be remembered not for any dramatic new headline grabbing commitments but for something that for me is potentially more important: forcing the international community to confront whether it is genuinely implementing the promises it has already made.

So far, there's been nothing specific from the Spanish delegation at COP17. That's not altogether surprising though, as Spain is participating through the European Union's common negotiating position. That is focussing on implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, on making sure that biodiversity finance and ecosystem restoration measures are scaled up, and that there are strengthened means to make states accountable towards these targets. It is not usual for individual EU member states to break with the common position. Spain itself though has been on the front foot when it comes to the EU's key nature legislation, the Nature Restoration Law (NRL). As its name suggests, the NRL is all about taking positive and effective steps to not just halt the loss of and harm to the natural environment, but to also remediate them. All member states were required to submit their action plans by September this year. Spain is one of only eight of them to actually have done so to date, which suggests a sense of priority amongst its European partners.

In the conference halls of Yerevan, the world's biodiversity agenda is being tested against reality. We are only four years out from 2030. The outcomes that emerge from this COP will help determine whether humanity can still reverse the accelerating loss of nature, or whether the decade's most ambitious environmental promises will join a long list of previous goals that proved far easier to announce than to actually achieve. As I said, I'm an optimist. This time were going to get it done, surely. Aren't we?







Unknown Spain: Rello de Soria



Depopulation of Spanish villages is a sad fact of the 21st century, and many medieval gems are left to slowly fall into ruin, unnoticed by our busy modern world.

The small village of Rello in Soria, Castilla y León, is one of these. It is an absolute treasure trove of Medieval architecture where the visitor feels like he has gone on a time travel and has been transported 500 years back in time.

The village covers an area of 24.39 km2 and it is completely surrounded by a city wall in various degrees of disrepair or, in places, in very good repair indeed. The population in 2020 counted 15 souls, a population density of 0.62 per km2.



The village, which boasts its own mayor, is set in a beautiful natural space called Altos de Barahona at a height of 1069 MASL, on top of a rock with a sheer drop overlooking the river Escalote. It is preserved as an asset of cultural interest, both due to its great historic-artistic wealth and to the way it merges with the surrounding countryside.

The part of the city wall that overlooks the Escalote gorge has spectacular views and is well worth a visit. A walk around the whole precinct offers a rich variety of towers, battlements, gatehouses and rectangular cannon embrasures. The wall boasts three large stone gates, and on the south side of the village the wall stretches down towards the river and ends in a Albarrana tower which was used for collecting water when the village was under siege.

Near the castle, which is in a bad state of repair after being almost destroyed by lightning, is the coat of arms of the past Lord of Rello, Lorenzo Suárez de Mendoza, Count of Coruña.

Not far from the entrance to the village, in a small square near the castle, there is a tall post, known as a ‘rollo’, which you will find in many towns and villages of medieval origin. This post indicated the administrative status of the town, whether it was under royal, council, ecclesiastical or monastic jurisdiction. The unique thing about the rollo of Rello is that it is the only one in Spain made from metal. They are usually constructed from brick or stone, but the ’Rollo de Rello’ is an old piece of 15th or 16th century artillery, in fact the forerunner of the cannon, which was stood on end and embedded to constitute the town rollo.

The pleasure of strolling through the streets, visiting the castle and the defence wall and looking out over the countryside takes many a visitor to this village, which will sadly, but most probably, soon have a population of 0.

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Gone....but not forgotten

By Vic Davey



Some time ago I wrote an article about missing persons, people who disappear altogether and are never seen again or return years later. Recently, I came across a news item which piqued my interest. It outlined a new search and investigation into the disappearance of Amelia Earhart, back in 1937.

She was a Pioneering Aviator who, with her Navigator Fred Noonan, was attempting a flight around the World. They had reached Papua New Guinea and were heading for tiny Howland Island, around an 18 hour flight. A Coastguard vessel was standing by to guide them in, but they never arrived. Neither she nor Noonan were ever found.

The last report from Amelia indicated they were low on fuel and having problems locating Howland. It is possible they crashed into the sea or tried to land on another remote island but, some 1,200 miles away.

Satellite images appear to show an object which looks like aeroplane wreckage close to an uninhabited island. I say uninhabited, but it does have an infestation of large, carnivorous Coconut Crabs! Not somewhere I would choose to go poking around even in the name of research!

I will follow any future progress although, I believe, any trace after 90 years is pretty unlikely, especially if said crustaceans have anything to do with it....

Another famous and similar disappearance was the bandleader Glenn Miller, although a little closer to home. I'm sure most of you will know his music and will have seen the movie starring James Stewart.

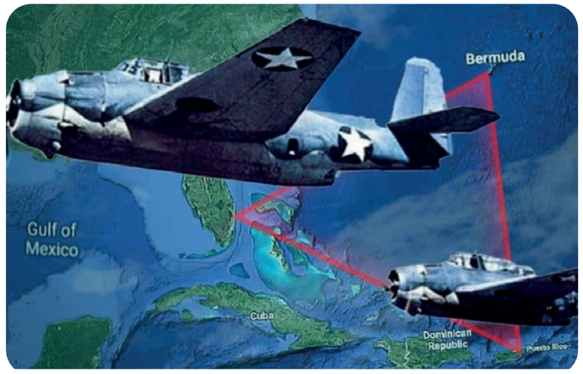
Miller took off on the 15th December 1944 from an RAF airfield in England bound for an airfield near Versailles in France. He was booked to perform for the Allied troops, in a newly liberated Paris, in a broadcasted Christmas Day concert. But his small, single engined military plane didn't arrive.

Visibility was poor and the likelihood is there was engine failure and they crashed into the English Channel. Searches were carried out and although no trace was found, there were some conspiracy theories, one being that it was struck by bombs jettisoned from Allied aircraft returning from a mission. Unlikely? Maybe, but we will never know.

One of the most bizarre events concerning missing aircraft occured just a year after Miller went missing. A US training "Flight 19" of 5 torpedo bombers with a mix of 27 crew and marines took off from Fort Lauderdale in Florida for practice bombing in the Bahamas. Radio messages went to and fro which indicated their navigation equipment was awry and they did not know their position.

Then radio communication was lost and all the aircraft disappeared.

A search plane was sent, but that too went missing.



Nothing of the planes has been found, no wreckage, liferafts, parachutes etc. despite 200 planes scouring the area for 5 days. They have disappeared completely, literally off the radar.

Like the Miller story, theories continue, leading to the now famous Bermuda Triangle mysteries, plus a Steven Spielberg film and a Scooby Doo movie!

I find it amazing that these events from so long ago, still hold a fascination for people...but then....I am one of them!





In Flanders Fields

By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago,
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved; and now we lie
In Flanders fields!

Take up our quarrel with the foe
To you, from failing hands, we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



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Dillon's Day Out

By Felicity Radcliffe

DS Kevin Wright turned away from the projector screen and grimly surveyed his operational unit. It was time to crank up the pre-dawn energy levels. The team's bleary eyes were understandable, but not acceptable. On a job like this, total focus was imperative. He dropped his heavy folder onto the table with a crash and strode to the front of the stage. The officers sat up hastily.

'Before we deploy, I want to say one last thing. Our target is a highly dangerous criminal. For years he has brought misery and death to our streets. We have failed to apprehend him several times, but today, thanks to reliable intelligence, we have our best ever chance of nailing him. However, we'll only succeed if each one of you gives it one hundred percent. For the next few hours, nothing else matters. He'll do anything to evade capture, but I'm confident you're better than he is. Prove me right.'

As the team filed out of the briefing room, Kevin intercepted DC Tom Ridley, a recent transferee from Greater Manchester Police, who was far too cocky for his taste.

'You clear about what you need to do, Tom?'

'Of course, Sarge. We ran these operations every day at GMP. I know how to work the Big Red Key. It's not rocket science.'

'Fair enough, but I need to warn you about something.'

'What's that?'

'PD Dillon.'

'A police dog?'

Kevin smiled at Tom's incredulity. 'As it says in the advertisements, this is no ordinary police dog. Ever watched Game of Thrones?'



'Sure. My wife loves that show.'

'Seen those huge, snarling direwolves, with their massive fangs?

'Yeah. I have.'

'They're toy poodles, compared with Dillon. If that dog is off the lead, do not get out of your car. Not if you want to finish this operation with all your limbs intact.'

'You serious, Sarge?'

'Deadly. Dillon's a legend around here, but not always in a good way. He's very effective, but he doesn't discriminate between criminals and police officers. You have been warned.'

***

The dark fenland horizon was backlit by the neon glow of the oncoming dawn. As vivid pink streaks lightened the sky, a solitary drone picked out, far below, a convoy of toy cars gliding down a long, straight road, elevated above the treacle-black soil of the endless fields. A lone farmhouse stood sentinel over the bleak landscape. As the vehicles neared the house, they gradually slowed down, then stopped. The drone shifted position and hovered over the house, waiting.

Figures emerged silently from the vehicles. Some spread out around the building, whilst others gathered at the front door, where DC Ridley was wrestling his unwieldy burden into position. Nearby a small dog looked on, wagging its tail excitedly. Then DS Wright whispered a single word:

'Go!'

Instantly the place erupted. With a single burst of kinetic energy, DC Ridley swung his battering ram backwards, then let the forward momentum of the Big Red Key do its job on the front door. The hinges exploded upon impact, the wood splintered into a pile of useless shards and the officers leapt over them, shouting wildly. Meanwhile the small dog, tail still wagging, eagerly began executing the task for which it had been trained.

Continued on page 58 .....



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..... Continued from page 56

In the back bedroom, an officer clasped cold handcuffs around the sleep-warm wrists of an outraged, struggling woman. Through the window, he spotted a lone figure running away across the fields, then smiled to himself as a massive white maelstrom of fur, teeth and claws gave chase. High above, the drone captured the relentless trajectory of PD Dillon as he rapidly closed in on his quarry, took off from yards away, locked his jaws onto the man's arm and used his combined weight and speed to bring him down. His target fought back aggressively, trying to plunge the fingers of his free hand into the dog's eyes, but it was no use. By the time Dillon's breathless handler arrived on the scene, the drug dealer was subdued and compliant.

Meanwhile, back in the house, PD Maisie stood, motionless, beside the largest ever drugs haul in the county. Trained to highlight the presence of narcotics by not moving a muscle, her wagging tail was temporarily stilled, until her handler presented her with a tennis ball, the ultimate reward for a happy spaniel who embodied the phrase: 'work hard, play hard'.

***

That evening, PD Dillon lay sprawled on the sofa next to his handler, PC Rick Marshall, who tickled him affectionately behind the ears.

'It's a good job Mummy's out tonight, Dillon, or you'd never get away with this. Still, you caught a villain today, so I reckon you deserve it. Beer?'

Dillon slowly lifted his huge head, one side of which was still streaked with dried blood where the drug dealer had gone for his eyes. He pricked up his ears and his tail thumped rhythmically against the sofa cushions.

'Thought so. Here you go.' Rick guided his pint glass towards Dillon's muzzle. Eagerly the dog pushed his snout inside and lapped the dregs of Rick's beer. When he had finished, he withdrew his glistening wet nose and looked expectantly at his handler.

'You know what comes next, don't you, boy?' Rick shoved his fist inside a crackling plastic bag and withdrew what looked like a gnarled, discoloured toenail. 'Time for a nice pork scratching.'

Dillon's huge jaws made short work of the pub snack. Afterwards, he flopped down on Rick's lap with a contented sigh.

'This is our secret, right? We can't have the criminal fraternity finding out you're a lapdog. You must continue putting them behind bars, and you can only do that if they're scared of you. So let's keep it to ourselves.'

Lost in his doggy dream world, the legend that was PD Dillon responded with a slight twitch of the leg.

***

Author's Note

This story is a work of fiction, as are the characters in it.

Except PD Dillon. Sadly he's no longer with us, but while he was alive, he was a legend.

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Pets Corner

Dakota - Brand New and Exciting!

Oh my, am I enjoying this cooler weather! I must admit that I found the summer heat somewhat tiresome! Not so much because it was hot, which is of course quite uncomfortable in itself, but because it stopped mum from doing stuff outdoors, except from at first light of dawn and late evenings.

Although we played some sniffing games indoors, and I slept lots and lots, it was still a bit boring in the long run, and even evenings were too hot for any real running.

And then, just as it started getting a bit cooler, mum only went and got an infection in her Achilles tendon so she could hardly walk! I couldn't believe it!

For the first week or so, she just sat with her foot up and there was no chance for a walk. I quickly accepted this, I could tell she wasn't just being lazy and neglectful, and I lay and slept next to her wherever she sat and just waited for her to get better.

She left the gate open a few times and said why didn't I just take myself out for a good run, but I didn't want to leave her in case something happened, and although it's great fun to run far and wide when we're out walking, it's no fun when she isn't around. So I stayed put.

I also somehow don't have the same endless capacity for and desire to run as I used to. I can't explain it; I still love a good rabbit chase and can easily run for an hour when we're out, albeit with a couple of breaks where I walk with mum. But the all-consuming desire to move just for the sake of it has worn off. Mum says it's my age, and maybe she's right.

Not that I'm old, mind, I'm only three and a half, but I'm also no



longer a puppy or an adolescent with the perpetual physical need for movement.

Continued on page 60 .....

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..... *Continued from page 59*

So, if I'm physically mature, ought I not be mentally mature as well, you may ask. No way! One has nothing to do with the other.

In my head, I don't feel at all mature! I still love playing, mucking about with mum or Pimpernel, trying to get away with cheating when we're training and in general seeing how far I can go before the hammer falls.

But there are also times where I enjoy being good at training, showing off what I know and feel that complete bonding with mum, hanging on her every word and gesture, waiting for the next command. Is that being mature?

Well, training isn't everything, and it's definitely not what defines me and mum, but it is an important part of our life. And here's some exciting news!

During the summer break from training in August, Mistress Diana, mum of my holiday chums and one of my trainers at the training centre, left the centre. Me and mum were devastated, 'coz she's always been the one who trusted me the most, challenged me the most, and gave me the opportunity to show what I'm made of and



what I can do, given the chance.

Okay, sometimes I forgot myself and had a little go at another dog just because the opportunity was there (you know, why did you do it? Because I could!). But where the others, and mum too, to be fair, stopped trusting me for at least the rest of the lesson, Mistress Diana would just go on as if nothing had happened and give me another opportunity.



Not that she was a pushover! She'd just place herself in a strategically important place and then carry on as before.

Well, anyway, we were truly upset about it. But then, lo and behold, she started up on her own a month later, and me and mum immediately joined! We didn't abandon the other club, after all we've been going there for three years, but are now combining the two. Mum stipulating that three classes a week is maximum, although we could go every night Monday to Friday. So it's usually two classes with Mistress Diana and one with the old club.

Training with Mistress Diana takes place in a public park where lots of dogs go for walks and runs, and it's sooo exciting! The number one rule is loose leads, number two is that to relax and have fun is more important than to carry out the exercises perfectly and correctly. We even get to bring our favourite toys and play in class!

This tends to turn my attention towards mum and what we're doing, rather than being constantly on the lookout for which other dogs may be approaching, and what they are doing, and whether I need to intervene.

So I'm well chuffed with my new and exciting life, and apparently it's set to get even more exciting: Mum is planning to adopt a kitten!! She says I have to learn to play more gently with him than I do with Pimpernel, and she has told Pimpernel that he has to be open-minded and not jealous, and if we don't do as we're told, she'll have to decide whether to give us up for adoption or let Han Solo go back to his foster mum.

So guess who's gonna be on her best behaviour!!!

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What's Your Pet's Carbon Footprint?



'Carbon footprint' is one of the many terms born in this millennium. It is a reflexion of our times and shows awareness of our impact on the environment and the results of our choices and actions.

But whilst endeavouring to calculate and hopefully reduce your own carbon footprint – have you ever wondered about your pet's?

When talking about domestic pets, the general rule is, the bigger the animal, the bigger the carbon pawprint.

The main factor when making this calculation is the food. Partly the amount of food the animal eats – obviously the larger the animal, the more it eats – but also the components of the feed.

Cat food has a higher protein content than dog food. In most processed animal food, the protein is vegetable rather than animal protein, and it mainly comes from soybeans. Apart from soybean proteins, dog food contains cereals such as corn and wheat, and these emit more CO_2 than soybeans. So, kilo per kilo, dog food has a larger carbon footprint than cat food.

However, as opposed to our own choice of meat, you needn't fret over carbon footprint when deciding which feed to choose for your pet, chicken, pork, or beef (or turkey or lamb…). Because dog and cat food is made from the parts of the animals that are not considered fit for human consumption, no cow or chicken or whatever is raised specifically to be used for pet food. In other words, giving Fido or Felix beef does not enlarge their carbon pawprint anymore than feeding them chicken does.

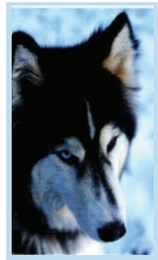
Apart from the food, there are other factors that influence your pet's carbon pawprint. Ordinary cat litter is not biodegradable, neither are your bog standard dog poo bags. Dogs may influence you to use your car when you wouldn't otherwise, for example to take him out for a walk on the beach or in the countryside, or to training or play date. All these factors play a part.

So we can generally say that, between the two, cats have a smaller carbon pawprint than dogs.

But what about other pets?

The greatest sinner amongst the most popular pets is the pet snake – at least the larger variety. It's not their feed – they eat once or twice a month. They don't have to make a carbon footprint heavy journey to get here as most snakes are bred nationally these days. No, it's the energy it takes to keep his terrarium nice and warm. A 500 watt bulb to heat up his terrarium will emit 112 kg of CO_2 every year, far more than any dog or cat.

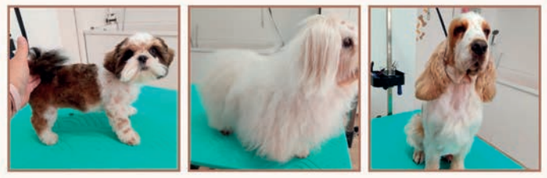
On the other end of the spectre are hamsters and canaries and those kinds of little pets. They only eat seeds, cereals and the like, and they have a negligible carbon footprint.



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Cocido Maragato from León



Research for this month's Buen Provecho led me to realize that the Leoneses have some interesting varieties on traditional Spanish food.

Thus, their morcilla (black pudding) is made from only blood and onion, and as you can imagine, its consistency is somewhat liquid and best eaten with a spoon …

They also include Spanish tortilla in their traditional kitchen – but it's stewed! You make a normal tortilla, set it aside and make a sauce from onion, garlic, chili, paprika, white wine and grated tomatoes.

Put the tortilla in a frying pan, pour over the liquidized sauce making sure the tortilla is completely covered, and let it stew for fifteen minutes. And your traditional, stewed tortilla from León is made!

It has to be served with great care, though, as the stewing process makes it quite soft and likely to fall apart.

Cocido is known all over Spain, and most regions have their own with their name attached, and the ingredients vary slightly from region to region.

It is a traditional stew/soup, where you cook a variety of meats together with chickpeas and serve it in three steps: First the soup, then the chickpeas and finally the meats.

Not so in León.

Their Cocido Maragato does follow the traditional pattern of cooking, however, it's eaten from back to front! First you have the meat, then the chickpeas and finally the soup. And as a complete deviation from all other cocidos, there are even places where they have meatballs in the soup.

First you boil morcilla, beef bone and a pigs' ear and trotter for an hour.

In another pan, boil a potato and some white cabbage together with pork ribs, chorizo and a chicken leg for half an hour.

Sieve and mix the resultant stocks and add salt to taste.

The meatballs are made from the meat from the boiled morcilla and chorizo, mixed with egg, breadcrumb, parsley and garlic, and they are cooked directly in the stock.

Once they are done, you warm up all your ingredients: Pig's ribs, ear and trotter and chicken leg. Cooked chickpeas (you can cook them in advance or use from a can), together with the potato and cabbage. And keep the soup with the meatballs hot. Some recipes include noodles cooked in the stock.

Serve the meats first, and then the chickpeas with cabbage and potato. And if you are still able to eat more, finish off with a bowl of soup with meatballs!

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Cooking with Nina



Torn Between Two Loves

Well, not really torn – who says you can't love two or more at the same time?

This month my loves are Italian food and Danish food. I still love all the world's other foods, but they have been put on the back burner in November.

I must admit that my forays into Italian food so far have been more or less limited to the two big Ps – Pasta and Pizza. But if I ever go any further, I shall make sure to share with you.

This month, I'm treating you to two quite exciting Italian (pasta) recipes, and two traditional Danish ones.

Read, cook and enjoy!

Cabbage and Mince Layers

I looove cabbage!!

Since time immemorial, poverty and squalor in crime novels have been represented by the smell of cabbage in the stairwells of apartment buildings, and every time I read it, I think – Yummm!!

The only reason I don't often share cabbage recipes with you is that cabbage is not very photogenic!

However, in this recipe it is hidden under a layer of crisp breadcrumb, so I decided to include it.

I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I did!

Ingredients for two:

- 300g minced pork
- Salt and pepper
- ½ onion, grated
- ¼ tsp ground allspice
- 1 egg
- Milk, if needed
- 2 + 3 tbsp breadcrumbs
- 500g white cabbage, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp butter

First, thoroughly mix the mince with salt and pepper in a bowl, then add the onion, allspice, egg and breadcrumbs. Mix thoroughly again, and if the mix seems dry, add as much milk as is necessary to make the mix smooth though not wet.

Leave it to rest in the fridge for 20 minutes.

In the meantime, boil the cabbage in a large pan with plenty of salted water for about 20 minutes until tender. Drain well.

When the mince is well rested, butter an oven proof dish and extend half the mixture over the bottom. Put half the drained cabbage on top, and repeat.

Sprinkle 3 tbsp of breadcrumbs over the top, and distribute little dots of butter all over.

Cook in the oven at 180ºC for about an hour until the mince is cooked through and the top turning golden.

Serve with potatoes done in the way that suits you!

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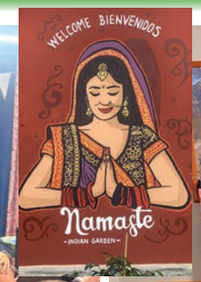
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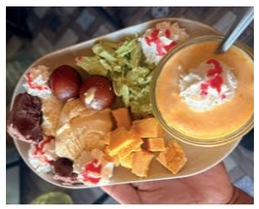
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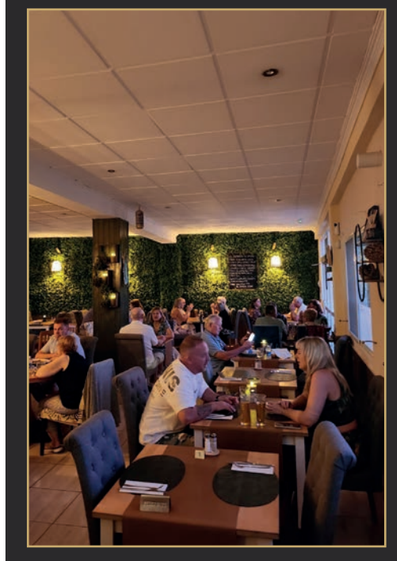
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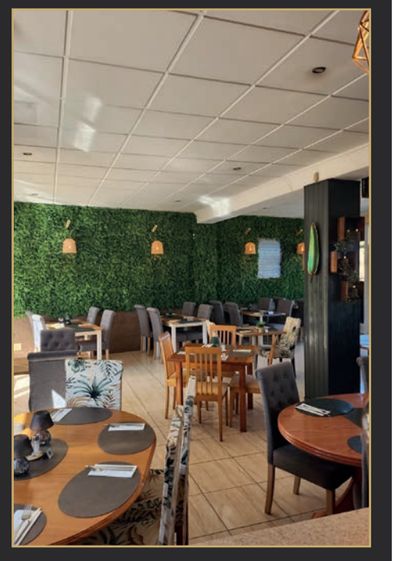
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Goulash from Funen

Denmark consists of a large peninsula, Jutland, and about 400 named islands, 72 of which are inhabited.

I grew up on the island of Funen, the third largest, before moving to Copenhagen when I left home.

This goulash recipe, which uses pork belly rather than stewing steak, is from Funen, and to me (great lover of pork belly), it's superior to a traditional goulash.

Ingredients for four (it freezes very well):

- 500g pork belly, cubed
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 level tbsp dried thyme
- 300ml water
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1+1 tbsp butter
- 125g shallots, cut in halves or quarters lengthwise
- 1 tart apple, cut into wedges

Heat the olive oil in a heavy based sauté pan, throw in the pork belly and brown it on all sides. Add the onion and fry for a couple of minutes, then season with thyme and salt and pepper.

Add the tomato purée, stir well, then the water. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat, cover and let it bubble for half an hour.

Heat 1 tbsp butter in a frying pan. When the bubbling starts to subside, throw in the apple wedges and fry them over a good heat, turning them when they are golden and frying for another few minutes.

Set aside and clean out the pan. Now add the sugar to the pan, and when it's melted, add the butter and stir well. Turn in the shallots and cook them over medium heat until they are caramelized.

Add apples and shallots to the goulash and cook for another 5 minutes.

Serve with rice or mash; I chose mash, and it was dee-lish!!



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Gnocchignese



The ingredients to this meat sauce are much the same as those you use for a Bolgnese sauce, hence the name I gave it.

However, the vegetables are coarser cut and the sauce cooked for a shorter time, and I made it with gnocchi, of which I'm a great fan, instead of spaghetti. So, all in all, it has a bit more bite than spaghetti Bolognese.

And it was very nice, indeed!!

Ingredients for two:

- 250g gnocchi
- 200g minced beef
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 stick celery, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- ½ tin chopped tomatoes
- Handful chopped basil
- 50-100ml water
- 1 stock cube
- Dried herbs
- 75g grated cheddar and mozzarella
- Olive oil, salt and pepper

Heat the olive oil in a frying pan, add the meat and let it fry until it separates and resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Add the chopped vegetables and fry on for another 5 minutes. Add the tomato purée, mix, then stir in the chopped tomatoes, 50 ml water and the stock cube. Also, throw in the dried herbs (choose your favourites).

Let the sauce bubble for 15-20 minutes. Adjust the seasoning and add the gnocchi together with 50 ml water. Stir well and pour the sauce and gnocchi in a greased, ovenproof dish.

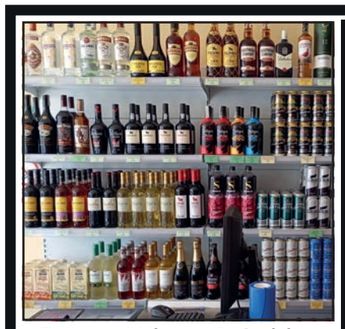
Sprinkle the cheese over the top and cook your gnocchignese in the oven at 200ºC until the cheese is melted and golden, some 20 minutes.

Serve with salad.





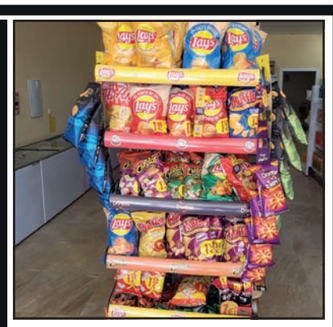



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Spaghetti with Salsiccia

I've often, recently, seen recipes that use the Italian salsiccia sausage.

You may remember me mentioning my passion for sausages, so imagine my delight when I discovered that the Italian cuisine held a sausage treasure that had hitherto been unbeknownst to me!!

And the fact that it was mainly used broken up in pasta sauces, at least in the recipes I saw, definitely added points in its favour.

So here is my first attempt with salsiccia – I found a recipe, adjusted it to fit my fridge and storage cupboard and got on with it. And loooved the result!!

Ingredients for two:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 250 g salsiccia, skin removed
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 75 ml red wine
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 100 ml beef stock
- ½ tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- Salt and pepper

Heat up the oil in a sauté pan. Throw in the salsiccia together with the onion and cook over a medium to high heat, slowly breaking up the sausage as it cooks, and when it has crumbled and is turning brown, add the garlic and cook until fragrant.

Pour in the wine and let it bubble fiercely until the alcohol has evaporated. Add the tomato purée, stir, then the stock and the



chopped basil.

When it boils, turn down the heat, lid loosely and let it bubble for 20-25 minutes, adding more stock if necessary.

Serve with a pasta of your choice. My choice was spaghetti – of course!!



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How To Eat Healthy Winter Food For Weight Loss

Winter is time spent curled up on the couch, being warm in bed, seasonal parties, and lots more. It is also a time for enjoying delicious food and invariably packing on a few extra pounds.

It is hard to resist the temptation of comfort food in the colder months. However, it is not just you. There is a science behind these cravings.

The fat in your body keeps you warm in cold weather, and so you have an increased need to eat fatty foods. Additionally, you tend to stay in and exercise less during these months, so you burn fewer calories and munch a lot more than you should.

The cold weather is a time to pay attention to your diet. Eating the right foods keeps your body warm and all those pesky winter ailments away.

Stay fit and toned by sticking to healthy food options and making smart substitutions to your usual comfort food.

Eat your vegetables - Leafy green veggies like broccoli, spinach, cabbage, etc. are rich in fibre and antioxidants. Eating them in the winter keeps your digestive system healthy. They also provide you with energy, keeping you active, and your weight in check.

Add veggies to your plate instead of the empty carbs and starches in your cold-weather diet.

Try spices or experiment with cooking to make green veggies taste yummy. Winter greens combined with root vegetables give you plenty of variety in your diet and different vitamins, nutrients, and minerals.

Munch on carrots - Rich in nutrients and low in calories, carrots are a delicious and healthy food for those trying to watch their weight. Carrots contain high levels of water and fibre, which keeps hunger at bay and aids in proper digestion.

When you feel like munching on something as you get cosy under the blanket, choose a few slices of carrot with a low-fat dip instead of a bag of crisps.

Eat whole grains - Whole grains are good for your health at any time. But they are especially beneficial in the winter because they keep your body warm and increase your metabolism.

Plan to have a bowl of oatmeal for breakfast for both the health benefits and to keep laziness at bay.

Add flavouring like cinnamon or citrus fruits to it. Add barley, brown rice, and quinoa to your diet to increase your overall intake of healthy whole grains.





Get nuts - Are you feeling between-meal hunger pangs? Grab a handful of your favourite nuts to snack the healthy way. For more warmth and better taste, roast them a bit first. Nuts make you feel fuller, helping you avoid tucking into unhealthy options. They are also cold-weather favourites, particularly the still-warm roasted varieties.

Walnuts, almonds, peanuts, cashews – all kinds are healthy, giving you plenty of variety. However, don't overdo because a handful of nuts is chock full of calories but better than a bag of crisps.

Winter is the time when you are likely to indulge in unhealthy snacking. Be smart and keep the right kind of snacks within reach.

Load your kitchen shelves and the car with protein-rich snacks like unsalted almonds, fresh seasonal fruits, and vegetables. Also, eat plenty of oranges and apples to keep your immune system healthy.

Kale is an excellent option as the antioxidants in it help detox your body naturally.

In cold weather, the human body goes back to its natural state, needing more sleep and slows down its metabolism. Aim to go to bed early instead of staying under the covers late when the sun is shining bright and warm outside.

Getting enough sleep and soaking in the sunlight has a positive effect on your mood and keeps winter blues away. All of this suppresses unhealthy midnight food cravings and the tendency to overeat. So head out and take a long walk in the sun to get some exercise and healthy exposure outdoors.

Work on a goal - An excellent way to stay healthy and keep your mood sweet is to work on a target. Try working towards a smaller butt or a naturally slim waist.

Whatever inspires you to keep your day to day eating in check because there are many ways to achieve healthy weight loss in the winter.

Staying skinny through the winter doesn't mean you have to give up eating everything that looks delicious. Instead, choose healthier food and plan to make the best of both worlds by eating sensibly and adding an exercise plan to your daily routine to maintain a healthy balance.

Remember winter foods can be fun and healthy. With the right choices, you will feel enthused about being slim and full of energy.

The Limescale You Can't See Is the Expensive Kind

Hard water is quietly working on your pipes, boiler and appliances long before limescale shows on the tap.

You know the visible signs: a chalky residue on the shower screen, a furred kettle, cloudy glasses, crusty taps. The costly part is what you cannot see.

Official Spanish data (SINAC) shows how hard Levante water gets. In Albox, every supply network tops 500 mg/l of calcium carbonate, reaching 693. In Vera, readings run from 33 to 1,394 depending on the network. Above 300 is classed as very hard.

Don't put unseen limescale out of mind

Limescale is dissolved limestone, and hot water leaves it behind. It furs up your pipes, narrowing them and cutting water pressure. It coats the heating element in your water heater, so it has to work harder to do the same job.

Washing machines and dishwashers clog up, use more salt and detergent to cope, and can wear out sooner than they should.

How a softener works

Inside a softener are resin beads. As water flows through, the beads catch the limescale minerals and swap them for sodium, so little is left to form scale. When the beads are full, they are rinsed clean and used again.

Our Kinetico softeners are twin-tank: while one tank cleans itself, the other keeps working, so soft water never stops. They are non-electric, powered by your own water flow, only clean themselves when needed (saving salt and water), and carry a 10-year warranty. The Premier Compact fits a kitchen cupboard and suits homes up to three bathrooms; the larger Premier Plus suits four or more.

What you will notice

Less white crust to scrub. Towels and clothes that feel softer. Skin and hair that feel less dry and tight after a shower, partly because soap lathers and rinses away more easily.

A softener protects your home, not your drinking water. For that, a reverse osmosis filter on its own tap can remove up to 99% of contaminants.

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Jason's Meat Free Recipe: Bolognese-ish sauce



Following on from the, vaguely, Italian theme of last month, I've gone for a firm favourite of mine, and one that is mainly a store cupboard recipe with some veg.

As the clocks go back and the evenings are drawing in, there's something comforting about a good Spag Bol, but the sauce can be served with any pasta, stuffed into cannelloni tubes or used as the base for a lasagne. It even goes well on a baked potato.

I've used lentils here as the main protein, as it's what I had to hand, but you could use veggie mince instead, or a combo of the two as I've done in the past.

The basis is a good sofrito; the onion, carrot and celery holy trinity that works so well at carrying flavours, so anything else veg wise that you add is optional. I like mushrooms in it, and I'm still working my way through the courgettes, so I added both here. You don't need to, or alternatively you could add some finely chopped red pepper.

I stir in a teaspoon of Marmite as well, which, to me, gives it a bit of depth of flavour. If their successful marketing campaign is anything to go by, I may have lost some of you at this point!

You'll need (for 2)

2 tbsp Olive oil

2 dried bay leaves

1 medium onion, finely diced

1 carrot, peeled and fine diced

1 stick of celery, destringed and finely diced

1-2 cloves of garlic finely chopped

5 good-sized mushrooms, wiped and finely diced

250g cooked green/brown whole lentils from a tin/jar

1 400g tin of chopped tomatoes (or a small, 500ml, carton of passata)

1 tbsp tomato puree

1 tsp dried oregano

(optional) glug of red wine

(optional) teaspoon of marmite

Salt and black pepper to taste

Gently warm the oil in a deep saucepan, with a lid, then add the bay leaves, onion, carrot and celery, a pinch of salt and a little black pepper.

On a low heat, with the lid on, let this sweat down a bit for five or six minutes, stirring occasionally to stop it from catching. Once you're happy it's softening up, add the oregano and mushrooms. I added the courgette at this point, so if you're using it, or the pepper, then now's the time to throw it in.

Turn the heat up a little, add the wine if you're using it, and keep it all moving for a minute or so.

Then stir in the lentils, and once they're combined add the tomatoes, tomato puree and marmite, if using. Bring it up to steaming and then drop the heat very low and allow to simmer for 5-10 minutes stirring occasionally.

It's ready to pair with whatever you want. I prefer to make it a few hours ahead and let it sit, as the flavours seem to develop a bit more. Here, I topped it off with a bit of shredded basil. Enjoy!







Trades & Services

How to light a wood burner



Lighting a log burner isn't the same as lighting a conventional fireplace. The confined space of the stove can make it a bit tricky, but with our handy tips you will have a cosy fire going in no time.

Firstly, make sure that you are properly prepared and have all the correct materials close at hand. You should never leave the room until the fire has taken, and your wood burner's door is firmly shut.

What you need to light a wood burner

Firelighters

This is your secret weapon. Made from wood by-product, natural firelighters catch alight easily, are odourless and don't contain any nasty chemicals. If you don't have firelighters then pieces of newspaper torn into strips will catch alight easily, but you may need quite a few strips as paper burns quickly.

Kindling

Kindling consists of small pieces of wood that burn easily. It is used to increase the heat of the fire before adding the main fuel. Kindling should be extremely dry, and it is easier to work with if it is in short evenly-shaped lengths, a bit like over-sized matches.

Kiln dried logs

This will be the main fuel for your fire and you should make sure that you only use high quality wood that has been properly dried and cured. Wood with too much moisture in it will be difficult to light and will generate a lot of black smoke and soot that will quickly cover the glass of your beautiful new wood burner with a sticky black residue. It is therefore best to avoid wood from your garden or those cheap netted bundles for sale at the local petrol station. High quality wood is easier to light, burns hotter, and results in less mess to clean up afterwards.

Matches or a lighter

Of course you need a spark to light your fire. You can use a lighter, but to us nothing beats the sound and smell of a freshly struck match.

When lighting a wood burner you should not use petrol or any other combustible liquid as these are very difficult to control indoors and could cause the fire to spread to surrounding areas.

Five steps to building the perfect fire

1. When lighting a fire, air is your friend. Every wood burner has air vents which should be opened completely before you start. They can then be adjusted once the fire has taken.

2. Build a small pyramid-shaped structure in the middle of the stove using the kindling and a couple of firelighters. Make sure that there is space between the items so that air can get in to feed the fire as it gets going.

3. Light the firelighters with a match and then as the kindling takes hold, partially close the door of the stove leaving a gap of about an inch to let in maximum air. You should not leave the room while the door is open.

4. Once the kindling is burning strongly you can add two or three larger logs, being careful not to smother the fire.

5. You can now shut and secure the door of the wood burner. Once the logs are properly alight, you can adjust the air vents to half open or less so that your wood burns for longer. You may need to open them again if the fire dies down, or when adding new logs.



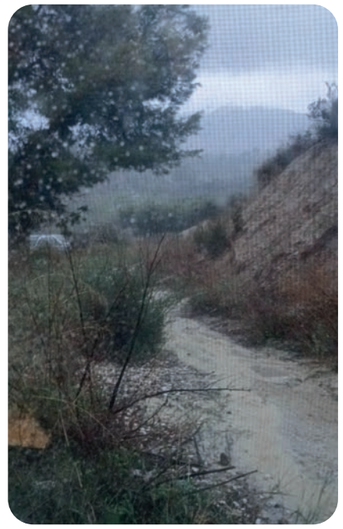
OLIVE TREE FARM DIARY

The rains came and found us quickly here in October at Olive Tree Farm, and when it comes down the way it did, well... it certainly gives us a lot of running around to do!

For example, the rapidly-saturated garden made for loose fencing poles for our tortoise enclosure, meaning Missy and Sulcy, our giant Sulcata tortoises, have been easily able to break down their barricade and explore the whole garden.

Not necessarily a bad thing, as the plan is to allow them free access to the garden in the near future, but we had hoped certain cactus species would be a little more established before some greedy mouths came along!

Ben has specifically designed the garden in such a way that nibbling animals will benefit from the variety, so at least we don't have to worry about any tummy aches, but it is important that we prioritise their safety in other ways to ensure they don't get stuck anywhere — a job that is still in progress! — so it's a hearty load of repair work out of the way to keep them contained once more, and maybe a little more of a speed-up on the garden safety.



The rain also wreaked havoc on our pathway up to the farm, and the track up to the cortijo. Luckily, we always have the rakes close to hand to get things straightened out before the earth dries like concrete and becomes a much more difficult task. This does of course mean picking the fixer-up days wisely, as you don't want your hard labour destroyed by another biblical downpour.

Aside from us lunatics running around in the mayhem and soggy grounds, the animals have fared through it all quite nicely. The damp, slick ground on the farm is now beautifully pliable for snuffling noses and curious bills as the soil is drilled and turned in the hunt for elusive roots and bugs.

The ducks have had baths wherever they could find a puddle deep enough for their pleasure as they gather among themselves and whisper only as Muscovy ducks can do, and the damp air has inspired our duckling throng to go through a change of feathers, giving us small clues into how their feathers are going to colour up and pattern out. It's fascinating to watch them grow up – just as it is to watch human children change with time, except this process happens over the span of a few months instead of years.



I think we're going to have a flock of beauties on our hands with this lot!

The water also did wonders for the trees up on the farm, as the rain also brought in a cooler breeze, and colder nights, which have spurned on the changeover in our olives from the juvenile green into mature purple-black fruits.

In other news, something new has arrived and made Olive Tree Farm its home alongside us and, refreshingly, this one was not brought by rain.

We have been given a quaker parrot, known here in Spain as the cotorra argentina, and it arrived in a small cage in which it had been raised. This means that he hadn't flown in a few years, if at all, so Ben grabbed one of our biggest cages that had narrow enough bars so he didn't escape and wind up food for predators, and put together natural wood for him to climb and use to sharpen his beak. It is tall and wide enough that he has finally been able to stretch his wings, which gives us positive hope that we can set him up a more natural environment within the aviary area of the garden (which, if you haven't guessed by now, we shall be extending further!)



We love to see the positive change in animals after they're brought to us here, whether farm or exotic, because there is no better guidance for us when working with animals to see the behaviour we want to see – which is a relaxed animal, doing what it does best, and totally at ease.

As always, it feels like each month brings us new surprises and challenges, and the kids are already asking what's next!

Thank you for reading. I hope you enjoyed the news of the month, and join us again in the next for all our farm-life updates!



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

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Which Way Is Round?



From vinyl records and bathroom sinks to the curious conventions that govern our world.

There are some questions that, once they enter (my) your head, refuse to leave. They aren't particularly important, won't change the course of human history and are unlikely to feature in any scientific paper. Nevertheless, they nag away until you either find an answer or become sufficiently distracted by something else. One such question concerns the humble vinyl record. Why does a turntable rotate clockwise? And, while we're at it, is there any connection between that and the direction water spins as it disappears down a plughole?

It's a perfectly reasonable question. Both involve circular motion and we've all heard the theory that water drains in opposite directions depending on which hemisphere you happen to occupy. Perhaps the Earth is exerting some subtle influence on our domestic appliances. Perhaps there's a grand, unifying principle at work.

Or perhaps I've simply got too much time on my hands.

The first discovery is that the turntable isn't obliged to rotate clockwise. It could just as easily spin in the opposite direction, as those who have tried to reveal hidden messages in Black Sabbath and AC/DC albums have discovered. There's no law of physics insisting that your favourite record must rotate one way rather than the other. The direction is a design choice, not a commandment handed down by Newton. But that raises another question. Where did the convention come from? Why do we describe one direction as clockwise and the other as anticlockwise? Surely clocks must have something to do with it, although this does rather invite the next question: why do clocks turn the way they do? And so, armed with an innocent enquiry about a record player, we find ourselves wandering into the history of timekeeping, the movement of the Sun and the extraordinary human capacity to turn a practical decision into something we barely question.

Let's start with the clock.

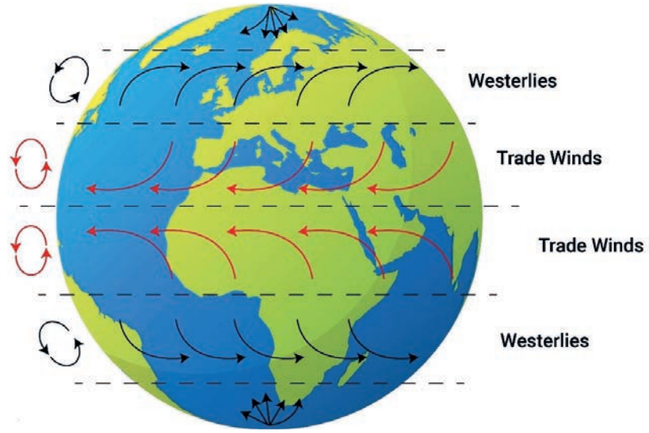
Long before anyone was worried about being late for a meeting, people were watching the Sun. Its daily journey across the sky provided a rough but useful indication of the time, while sundials turned that observation into something more practical. As the Sun moved across the sky, the shadow cast by the sundial's pointer moved around its markings. In the Northern Hemisphere, where many of the timekeeping traditions that influenced European clocks developed, that shadow generally travels in what we now call a clockwise direction. When mechanical clocks came along, reproducing a familiar pattern made sense. People already understood the movement of a sundial's shadow, so why invent something new? The hands of the clock followed the established direction, and the convention gradually became embedded in everyday life.

It's a persuasive explanation, although the precise historical chain of events isn't entirely certain. History doesn't always provide us with a conveniently signed document explaining why somebody made a decision. Sometimes a convention simply emerges, catches on and survives because it kind of makes sense.

Had the tradition of mechanical clock making developed under different circumstances, we might conceivably be looking at anticlockwise clocks today. The Sun would still rise in the east and set in the west, but the movement of shadows around a horizontal sundial would appear reversed when viewed from the opposite hemisphere. Imagine explaining that to someone who has spent their entire life tightening screws clockwise and turning the hands of a clock in the same direction. It would be like announcing that tomorrow, left and right were changing places. Nothing fundamental would have happened to the universe, but Twitter would have a meltdown.

The interesting thing is that clockwise and anticlockwise aren't properties of the universe quite as we tend to imagine. They're descriptions that depend on our viewpoint.

Look down at a rotating wheel and it may appear to turn clockwise. Move around to the other side and the same physical rotation appears anticlockwise. The wheel hasn't changed its behaviour; we've changed our perspective. Engineering, of course, depends on shared conventions. Threads, motors, gears and rotating machinery are designed according to established standards, making equipment predictable and interchangeable. If every manufacturer decided to invent a new definition of clockwise, industrial production would become an elaborate exercise in shouting. Yet none of this explains the behaviour of water in a sink. For that, we need to turn to something rather more fundamental: the rotation of the Earth itself.



The Coriolis effect is a genuine physical phenomenon arising from that rotation. It helps explain why large weather systems tend to rotate in different directions in the two hemispheres. Hurricanes in the Northern Hemisphere generally rotate anticlockwise, while their counterparts in the Southern Hemisphere generally rotate clockwise. This is where the familiar bathroom myth originates. If the Earth can influence the rotation of enormous weather systems, surely it must exert some influence on the water swirling around a plughole? Well, yes, in principle. But the effect is so minute at the scale of an ordinary household sink that it is overwhelmed. The water may already be moving slightly when you open the plug. The shape of the basin, the position of the drain and the way the water entered the sink can all influence the direction in which it swirls. Even when the water appears perfectly still, tiny movements may remain.

Consequently, the same sink can drain clockwise one day and anticlockwise the next. You can demonstrate this yourself by introducing a little rotation into the water before pulling the plug. There is no need to book a flight to Australia to conduct the experiment, although it would make an exceptional excuse for a holiday. Under carefully controlled laboratory conditions, the Coriolis effect can influence the direction of a draining vortex. Researchers have demonstrated this by allowing water to settle for long periods and minimising disturbances. But your average bathroom is hardly a scientific laboratory, particularly if someone has just finished reading the paper...

Toilets are even less mysterious. Their internal design deliberately directs the incoming water, often creating an intended swirling motion. The plumbing, rather than the planet, is doing most of the work. So the idea that the hemisphere determines the direction of your sink is a modern myth. The Earth is rotating, but your plughole has other things to worry about.

There's another curious detail worth considering. Our brains are remarkably good at spotting patterns. Sometimes those patterns reveal genuine connections. At other times, we join the dots ourselves and then congratulate nature on having produced a particularly elegant picture. Here, we've taken three things involving rotation — a clock, a record player and a sink — and assumed there must be a common explanation. In reality, one follows a historical convention, another follows the design of its mechanism and the third is governed primarily by local physical conditions.

The universe is rather less concerned with our neuroses than we are.

We have decimalised currencies, replaced analogue equipment with digital alternatives and watched technologies become obsolete almost overnight. What once seemed indispensable becomes an amusing relic in a museum, alongside the fax machine and the Sinclair C5. But the direction a record spins has remained largely unremarkable, because there has been little reason to change it.

Perhaps that's the real lesson of the spinning record and the bathroom sink. We live in a world governed by physical laws, but we also inhabit a world shaped by habits and assumptions. The trick is knowing which is which.

We can measure the Earth's rotation, calculate the Coriolis effect and explain why hurricanes behave as they do. We can build a turntable that spins in either direction. We can even construct an anticlockwise clock and watch perfectly sensible people struggle to read it. What we cannot do is persuade the universe that our preferred conventions are anything more than useful agreements.

So next time you put a record on the turntable, watch it spin for a moment. Then, perhaps, turn on the tap and pull the plug. Observe the water carefully. It can go either way, and neither result tells you anything particularly useful about the Earth's rotation. It might remind you that some of the things we regard as perfectly natural are merely familiar.

And if you find yourself wondering whether clockwise is the right direction, remember that it's only a matter of perspective.

As for the record, just put the needle down gently.

We don't want to upset the laws of physics. They have enough trouble with the rest of us.





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At the Third stroke... The speaking clock! Digame, ¿que hora es?



Some time ago, I wrote about a chap called Mr. Strowger, inventor of the automatic telephone exchange. He set the way to enable us to call other phone users, without having to go through the operator, politely asking to be "connected" please. So, I thought I would write about the speaking clock to really excite you.

Up until the mid '30s, different areas of the U.K. had their own independently run telephone networks. This mismatch and incompatibility, lead the government to bring everything together under the control of the G.P.O. (general post office). In fact, up until relatively recently, Kingston-Upon-Hull still run a separate independently owned network. Guess it didn't matter as nobody could understand how they spoke anyway.

The cost of rolling out the telephone network was costly and the G.P.O entered into a massive advertising campaign to sell the service. One idea to show off this new technology was to provide an accurate speaking clock time service. The G.P.O research laboratory at Dollis Hill, North London, set about creating the speaking clock machine. The result was a masterpiece of electro-mechanical, opto-electronics. Basically, the machine had 4 glass discs, about the size of a 7" single record. These discs contained recordings of words, in a similar way as audio was recorded into the edge of cinema film, sort of black and clear troughs of transparency. As the information was chemically etched and sealed in glass, it would never deteriorate. The discs were linked on a geared shaft, rotated by a highly accurate speed motor. 2 discs had spoken minutes recorded, odds and evens. The other 2 discs had hours and other words. A set of special lamps, lenses and photo cells read the audio from the discs. The signals were fed into powerful valve amplifiers. The position of the photo cells determined which words were read at what time and in what order. Every 30 seconds, the cells moved to different parts of each disc via an intricate mechanical cam system. So, every 30 seconds a complete sentence would be reproduced by playing parts of each disc one after the other. "At the 3rd stroke, it will be 10, 23 precisely". 80 odd different words had to be stored. The speed of the main motor controlling all the actions was locked to a central signal, governed by the Greenwich Observatory. The accuracy was about 10th of a second!

The first recorded voice used was that of a Miss Cain. She had won the competition (15,000 entries) set by the G.P.O. She became known as the girl with the golden voice. The recording of the phrases was done in one take and took a couple of hours. The machine went into service in High Holborn Exchange in 1936. In fact, 2 machines were fitted. Should one fail, the other took over automatically and were both synchronised together. With the associated electronics, it fitted into the space of a large front room. Dialling 8,4,6, (T.I.M.) connected you to a distribution system, feeding you the signal of the speaking clock. Initially the service could only be heard around the London area. A few years later, the same system was installed in a Liverpool exchange. This meant you could now accurately tell when your car wheels were nicked. With the creation of Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD, no, not a nasty transmitted disease), whereby you could call any phone user without operator intervention, the number for the speaking clock became 1,2,3.

The public's need for accurate time telling took the G.P.O a bit by surprise. In the first year of service, over 20 million people called the speaking clock. The revenue as a result was about £85,000. Between 1936 to '49, Nationwide, 400 million calls were made and 40,000 subscribers called between 8 am to zero hour on Armistice Day. During the war years, the speaking clock system was made ready to broadcast recorded public information messages and instruction to the nation should it have been needed.

Throughout the following decades, different voices were used. Sponsors such as Accurist came on board. Machines used magnetically stored speech and ultimately became a solid-state computer-controlled system the size of a desktop PC.

Writing about this made me remember how your telephone bill was calculated. In the old electro-mechanical Strowger exchanges, every subscriber (landline user) had their own Fee Meter. This was a device that read fee meter pulses that were superimposed on your line, when a call was connected, in such a way that you could not hear them. The meter did, however. The number of pulses per minute depended on time of day and number called. At the end of each month, a photo was taken of your meter and the units compared with that of the last photo. A lady would punch the numbers into a comptometer and a bill to pay would follow. How quaint!

Seth, Zeta Services. On the end of the phone, 09.30, precisely.

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THERE IS ALWAYS A SOLUTION AT REVOLUTION

Puzzle Time

Puzzle solutions on page 91

14	10	21	■	21	24	21	■	24	24	8	■	14	24	1
11	7	24	■	10	4	1	■	9	7	1	■	12	1	18
5	1	21	■	21	24	18	■	9	1	7	■	26	14	24
24	8	14	24	■	5	11	21	■	■	4	10	18	24	14
■	■	■	1	17	18	10	7	■	7	1	19	■	■	■
■	7	10	14	13	■	■	10	7	11	24	5	18	14	■
2	24	9	18	14	■	1	12	11	2 D	■	■	7	26	24
11	17	24	■	18	26	23	■	25	24	19	■	24	8	6
21	26	14	■	■	23	24	5	24	■	1	19	1	6	24
■	7	24	21 P	26	8	14	24	■	■	5	10	2	14	■
■	■	■	1	5	13	■	24	4	1	2	24 E	■	■	■
14	5	11	21	24	■	■	2	11	2	■	14	8	26	18
5	26	5	■	4	1	18	■	17	1	12	■	10	5	24
11	8	6	■	24	23	10	■	1	23	10	■	10	2	24
21	8	13	■	5	24	19	■	7	24	2	■	12	10	12

Codeword

Each square in the grid is numbered 1 through to 26, and each number corresponds to one (and only one) letter in the alphabet.

Your goal is to completely fill in the crossword grid by gradually uncovering the letter that belongs to each number.

Note that not all letters of the alphabet may be used in any given puzzle. If a number isn't used in the puzzle, it is greyed out in the solution grid.

We have given you 3 letters to start you off.

Good luck!

Solution Grid:

1	2 D	3 N/A	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 N/A	16 N/A	17	18	19	20 N/A	21 P
22 N/A	23	24 E	25	26		

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Translations



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Thursday
Cuevas del Almanzora, Olula Del Río

Friday
Garrucha, Turre, Zurgena

Saturday
Águilas, Arboleas, Vera

Sunday
Fines, Villaricos



Some of The World's Most Valuable Toy Cars

Everyone knows rare cars are worth a fortune, but that actually holds true for rare toy cars as well - some sell for the same amount as a supercar!

There are lots of great car collections in the world, often with individual vehicles worth millions of dollars. However, there is also a very lucrative market for a very different type of car collection; toy cars.

These tiny recreations can often sell for tens of thousands of dollars at auction. Some are antique toys that are valuable because of their rarity, while others are modern "toys" that have been crafted from expensive materials specifically with collectors in mind.

As with any collectibles, toy cars are always more valuable if you have managed to keep them in mint condition, and if you still have the original box then you can add another zero to the end of that estimate!

Dinky No.505 Flat Truck - $15,000

Dinky was the name brand of a vast range of die-cast metal toy cars and vehicles produced by Meccano Ltd, a company better known for its metal model-building kits.



Continued on page 86 .....



..... Continued from page 85

The company was launched in 1934 and is still making replicas of some of their best-loved original models.

One of the rarest Dinky toys, a maroon No.505 Foden Flat Truck complete with chains from 1952, eventually sold at a toy auction in the UK in 2009.

The toy was in almost perfect condition and even came with its original box.

Matchbox No.30 Brown 1961 Magirus Deutz Crane - $13,000

Another British toy company, Lesney Products, launched their range of toy cars in 1953 under the name Matchbox – because the toys were sold in boxes that looked similar to those in which matches were sold.

One of the rarest Matchbox vehicles ever created was the No.30 Brown 1961 Magirus Deutz Crane with a brown body and a red crane.

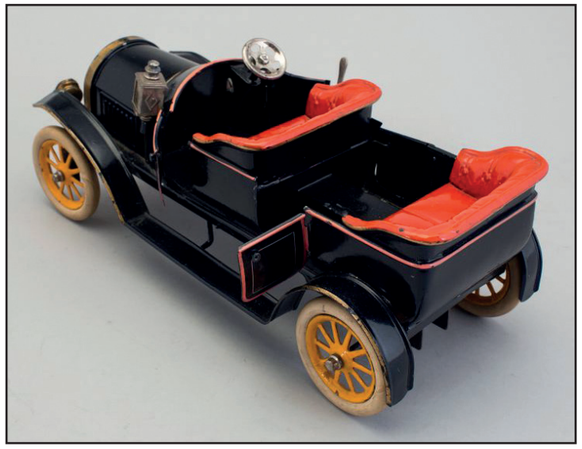
This combination of colours only featured on a few models, and one such toy was bought for $13,000 in 2004 by Jim Gallegos, the owner of one of the biggest Matchbox collections in the world.

Hot Wheels Enamel White 1968 Camaro - $100,000

In 1968, American toy manufacturers finally got in on the act, and Mattel created their range of miniature die-cast model cars called Hot Wheels. These are still made and sold today, and rare models have become highly sought-after items among the collector community.

One of the most expensive toy cars in existence is a Hot Wheels 1968 Camaro, which is thought to be worth around $100,000.

This model is an anomaly, as the white enamel paint was supposed



to be an undercoat, but in this case, the proper colour was never added.

Bing Tinplate Tourer - $17,700

The Bing toy company predates most modern vehicles starting in 1863 in the German city of Nuremberg making metal tableware from copper and pewter. In the 1880s, Bing started to diversify, and the company made its first toy trains.

As time went on, they expanded into making toy versions of other types of vehicles, including cars like the Bing tinplate four-seat Tourer which sold at auction for $17,700.

Amazingly, this car could have sold for a higher price, but its decades-old clockwork mechanism was no longer working properly.

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The Benefits of Car Sourcing: A Smarter Way to Buy

Car sourcing has emerged as a smarter, stress-free alternative to traditional car shopping. Rather than spending countless hours browsing dealerships and websites, more buyers are turning to sourcing specialists who do the legwork for them. This personalized approach offers a host of benefits, especially for those seeking value, convenience, and peace of mind.

1. Expert Guidance

Car sourcing services are typically run by automotive professionals with extensive industry knowledge. They understand market trends, vehicle values, and dealer tactics, giving you an edge when it comes to finding the best deal. Whether you're after a specific make and model or just want the best car for your budget, a sourcing expert can help you make an informed decision.

2. Time-Saving Convenience

Searching for the right car can be overwhelming. Car sourcing removes that burden by handling everything from vehicle research and price comparisons to arranging inspections and negotiating with sellers. It's an ideal solution for busy individuals who value their time and want a hassle-free experience.

3. Access to Better Deals

Thanks to established networks and trade connections, car sourcing professionals often have access to vehicles not yet advertised to the public. This means buyers can tap into a wider selection of high-quality options, often at better prices than those found at retail dealerships.

4. Quality and Transparency

Reputable car sourcing services prioritize customer satisfaction. They vet every vehicle thoroughly, ensuring it meets high standards of quality, mileage, and service history. This level of transparency gives buyers greater confidence and reduces the risk of hidden issues down the line.

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Unlike traditional dealerships that push in-stock inventory, car sourcing is completely tailored to your preferences. Whether you're after a specific colour, trim, or feature set, the process is entirely personalized to ensure you get exactly what you want.

Car sourcing offers a streamlined, reliable way to buy a vehicle that aligns with your lifestyle and budget. With expert advice, access to exclusive deals, and a personalized approach, it's no wonder more people are choosing this smarter route to car ownership.



KIT CARS

A kit car is an automobile that is available as a set of parts that a manufacturer sells and the buyer then assembles into a functioning car. Usually, many of the major mechanical systems such as the engine and transmission are sourced from donor vehicles or purchased new from other vendors.

Kits vary in completeness, consisting of as little as a book of plans, or as much as a complete set with all components to assemble into a fully operational vehicle.

There is also a sub-set of the kit car, commonly referred to as a "re-body", in which a commercially manufactured vehicle has a new (often fiberglass) body put on the running chassis. Most times, the existing drive gear and interior are retained.

These kits require less technical knowledge from the builder, and because the chassis and mechanical systems were designed, built, and tested by a major automotive manufacturer, a re-body can lead to a much higher degree of safety and reliability.

The definition of a kit car usually indicates that a manufacturer constructs multiple kits of the same vehicle, each of which it then sells to a third party to build.

A kit car should not be confused with a hand built car or special car, which is typically modified or built from scratch by an individual for a specific purpose (e.g. Hillclimbing, road or circuit racing or record attempts. However, rally specials have, especially since World War 2, usually referred to manufacturers' specially series-produced cars.

A component car is a self-assembly car in which 100% of the parts required to build the car are purchased from a single company. Component Cars are distinguished from kit cars as all parts are



quality controlled and designed to fit together perfectly. They can be built in significantly less time than a "kit car".

Kit cars have been around from the earliest days of the automobile. In 1896 the Englishman Thomas Hyler-White developed a design for a car that could be assembled at home and technical designs were published in a magazine called The English Mechanic.

It was not until the 1950s that the idea really took off. Car production had increased considerably and with rust proofing in its infancy many older vehicles were being sent to breaker yards as their bodywork was beyond economic repair. An industry grew up supplying new bodies and chassis to take the components from these cars and convert them into new vehicles, particularly into sports cars.

Continued on page 90 .....





..... Continued from page 89

Fibre reinforced plastic (aka "GRP," or "fibreglass") was coming into general use and made limited-scale production of automobile body components much more economical.

Also, in the UK up to the mid-1970s, kit cars were sometimes normal production vehicles that were partially assembled as this avoided the imposition of purchase tax as the kits were assessed as components and not vehicles.

During the 1970s many kits had bodies styled as sports cars that were designed to bolt directly to VW Beetle chassis.

This was popular as the old body could be easily separated from the chassis leaving virtually all mechanical components attached to the chassis and a GRP-body from the kit supplier shop fitted. This made the Beetle one of the most popular "donor" vehicles of all time. Examples of this conversion include the Bradley GT, Sterling, and Sebring which were made by the thousands, and many are still around today.

Volkswagen based dune buggies also appeared in relatively large numbers in the 1960s and 1970s based usually on a shortened floor pan.

Current kit cars are frequently replicas of well-known and often expensive classics and are designed so that anyone with a measure of technical skill can build them at home to a standard where they can be driven on the public roads.

These replicas are in general appearance like the original, but their bodies are often made of fiberglass mats soaked in polyester resin instead of the original sheet metal.

Replicas of the AC Cobra and the Lotus 7 are particularly popular examples, the right to manufacture the Lotus 7 now being owned by Caterham Cars who bought the rights to the car from Lotus founder Colin Chapman in 1973. Caterham Cars are a “Component Car” and are a continued development of Chapman’s design, whereas all other Lotus 7 style cars are replicas, and are “Kit Cars” costing significantly less and not having the residual values of the Caterham.

These Replica kit cars enable enthusiasts to possess a vehicle similar in appearance to a vehicle which because of scarcity they may not be able to afford, and at the same time take advantage of modern technology.

The Sterling Nova Kit originally produced in the UK was the most popular VW based Kit being produced worldwide and licensed under several different names with an estimated 10,000 sold.

Many people react sceptically when they first hear about kit cars as it appears to them to be technically impossible to assemble a car



at home and license it for public roads. They may also be worried that such a car would not subsequently pass the mandatory quality control (road worthiness test) that is required in most countries.

For example, to obtain permission to use a kit car in Germany, every such vehicle with a speed over 6 km/h without a general operating license (ABE) or an EC type permission (EC-TG) has to undergo, as per the § 21 of Road traffic licensing regulations (STVZO), a technical inspection by an officially recognized expert of a Technical Inspection Authority.

In the United Kingdom it is necessary to meet the requirements of the IVA (Individual Vehicle Approval) regulations. In the United States SEMA has gone state by state to set up legal ways for states to register kit cars and speciality vehicles for inspection and plates.

A survey of nearly 600 kit car owners in the US, the UK and Germany, carried out by Dr. Ingo Stüben, showed that typically 100–1,500 hours are required to build a kit car, depending upon the model and the completeness of the kit. However, as the complexity of the kits offered continues to increase, build times have increased as well some running to 5000 hours plus for accurate replica kits.

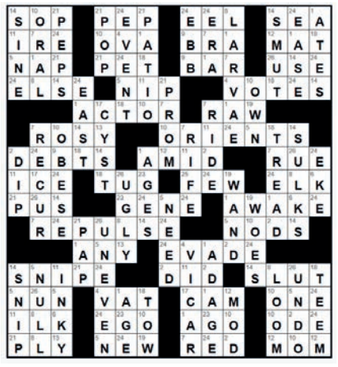
Several sports car producers such as Lotus, Marcos, and TVR started as kit car makers.











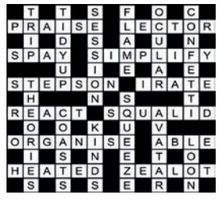
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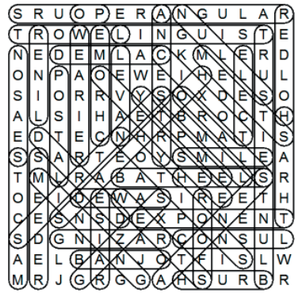
1	7	5	9	4	8	2	3	6
3	4	6	7	1	2	8	9	5
2	8	9	3	5	6	1	4	7
8	9	2	4	7	1	5	6	3
5	6	1	2	3	9	7	8	4
4	3	7	8	6	5	9	1	2
6	1	4	5	8	7	3	2	9
7	2	8	6	9	3	4	5	1
9	5	3	1	2	4	6	7	8

Medium

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

Puzzle Time Solutions





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Oasis Del Mar II: 1st Floor Spacious Apartment with 2 Beds & 2 Baths. Communal Swimming Pool. Independent Storeroom. Allocated Underground Parking. New Flooring, New Kitchen & Bathrooms. Excellent Presentation.

A1567 315.000€



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€



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 549.000€



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€

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