

# THE DREAM SCENE



## Newsletter

Issue no. 47 1st of January 2011

Well, what a year! Disasters, recessions, strikes, cut-backs, tax increases, and at times horrendous air travel, which once used to be a pleasurable activity, but has now deteriorated into a mind-numbing, frustrating chore. Despite all the gloomy predictions, the euro has still held its own against both the pound and the (once) mighty buck. Those of us who enjoyed a euro/sterling rate of 1.50 some years ago will surely never see it again. Lets just hope that the coming year will be an improvement on the last one. God knows, it shouldn't be too difficult!

Congratulations to all those who have placed festive decorations outside their properties. Many of them are spectacular!

I have been out of Dream Hills for much of December so I cannot really comment on much of the local activities for the month, although I have noticed that there is now a security presence back in Dream Hills. This is not the firm we have had for the last few years, so lets hope that the new bunch are as conscientious as the previous firm. I have been unable to find out much about the new firm as there seems to be 'a hold' on the relevant information. It appears that some of the committee did not like me sharing the fact that we had no security guards for part of last month, but I would certainly not have to report it if the committee had already informed the owners. 'Mickileaks' will continue if necessary! I also see that 'All Bar Sue' has reopened under new management. Here's hoping they do well in what is a very tough market.

The German Christmas Market on the Playa Flamenca beach-front was a bit of a disaster. The market was organised by a collection of German associations who collectively made an utter 'balls' of the whole thing! Whatever happened to the famous German planning and efficiency? Maybe the town hall should organise these events if outside groups are not capable.

I do know that there will be a Three Kings' Parade this year in Orihuela Costa. It takes place on January 5 at 18:00. It starts on the top end of Calle Luis Gordillo, where the Saturday market is held and will travel down the road to the back of the ayuntamiento in Playa Flamenca, where the children can meet the Three Kings. If you have 'ankle-biters,' (and I don't mean the four-legged variety) do bring them along as these parades are always fun for children and adults, and it is good to share in the Spanish Christmas. I also believe that some food is being laid-on, at least for the children.

We have a very mixed bag for you again this month. Great to see Angela's original cartoons back again and Pat Cartwright has once again provided us with an excellent report, together with photos of her and Adrian's trip to some of the historic cities in Andalucia; a 'taster' which will hopefully encourage some of you to visit these unique beautiful cities yourself! Unfortunately, I have had insufficient time this month to research and write the history article, however I have included a report and photos relating to the *caganer*, an 'earthy' Catalan tradition, on page 7. Also do take a look at page 9, which reports on new laws which cover 'car seizure,' and on page 4 we print Jim Storey's final report on the 'Poppy Collection' this year.

I hope you all have had a wonderful Christmas, and on behalf of all our advertisers and contributors, Tid and I would like to wish you a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year. Mick, Editor.



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### Angela's Cartoon



**His flight's delayed, can he join the party?**

## What's Up?

In a recent address to Congress Prime Minister Zapatero warned that it will take 'at least five years' to correct the 'structural imbalances' in the Spanish economy. The Spanish leader then listed the pending tasks that the country will have to tackle during this "decisive five-year" period: guaranteeing fiscal stability in the long run, a goal in which he included pension reform; modernizing "labour institutions, which have demonstrated chronic rigidity;" reforming professional services; reducing the administrative burden; reinforcing regional cooperation to eliminate differences between the regions; reaching a deal on the make-up of the energy industry; and consolidating the welfare state.

Some of the Wikileaks' reporting on the U.S. Embassy's comments on the Spanish Government revealed that the Prime Minister is said to control 'the chicken coop more than the front line' but is described as 'an astute politician, like 'a cat in the jungle.' Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba (the V.P.) is 'very capable, serious, charming and has the most impact'. José Blanco (Minister of Development) is not to be trusted as he does not look at the eyes of those he talks to. Defence Minister Carme Chacón is described as immature concentrating too much on the small details. Miguel Ángel Moratinos (Minister of Foreign Affairs) has a habit of shouting at foreign ambassadors, while José Bono (Speaker of the House) is described as a media wise man, indispensable in the political scene. The King is described as possibly being a formidable ally where the interests of Spain and the United States coincide. He has influence over Zapatero when he wants to use it.

The European Central Bank has called on the Spanish Government to take 'deeper measures' in the area of labour reform. The President of the bank, Jean-Claude Trichet, said it was essential for the prosperity of the economy.

After the 'roasting' the air traffic controllers (the best paid controllers in Europe) received from the government and the public, the strike action announced over Christmas by employees of the Spanish Airports Authority, AENA, against plans for partial privatisation, has been postponed until after the holidays. The Spanish Pilots' Union have also deferred their strike action. The main opposition party, the PP, have complained that the Spanish Secret Service, the CNI, was used to spy on the air traffic controllers. More than 150 controllers have been charged with sedition and some will receive jail sentences and some will have their assets embargoed.

El Altet airport in Alicante and Manises in Valencia will be the first of 15 airports out of a total of 37, to have their air traffic control function privatised. Arrangements for the first two should be completed by July, 2011.

The regional administrations will be cutting 3 billion € from health and education spending. The only budget which is being increased is that for the payment of interest charged on the public debt. The debt of the regional administrations in Spain at the end of the third quarter has reached a staggering €107.624 billion.

Auditors have found 753 million € of 'hidden' debt in Cajasur, the savings bank run by the Catholic Church which is now in the process of being absorbed by the BBK, a Basque bank. Cajasur lost 950 million € between January and September this year. The outgoing chairman, Father Santiago Gómez Sierra, together with the previous Chairman of Cajasur, Juan Moreno, and 38 members of the board, are all facing fines and charges from the Bank of Spain. The Catholic Church has now closed ranks and promoted Father Santiago to Acting Bishop in Sevilla.

The new General Telecommunications Law in Spain will allow you to change your telephone company within 24 hours and keep the same number. I would be happy to just get a bill from them!

One of the most controversial parts of the Government's legislation, the so called – Ley Sinde (named after the Minister for Culture, Ángela Sinde) – has been defeated in Congress. It comes after growing opposition to the measures which would have given the Government the power to close down web pages which contained download and P2P links to copyright content, such as music and films.

Consumers groups are demanding that the Government freeze the price of electricity following reports in the press that following the latest auction, it is set to rise by 9.8% today, January 1. Consumer group FACUA called on the Government to stop 'giving in to the interests of the power companies', while the OCU group has said that should the increase happen it would make electricity in Spain the third most expensive in Europe. Electricity bills have gone up in price by 44% since 2006, compared to prices inflation of 12%.

House sales in Spain are at a record low. Statistics show a 17.7% fall in October compared to the same month last year, the figures being the lowest since January 2007 when the National Statistics Institute started to publish the data.

The large tobacco companies have increased the price of rolling tobacco by 45%, to tie in with the latest Government increase in the special tax on tobacco. The best selling cigarettes in Spain are now some 40 cents more expensive per pack of twenty. Following the latest special tax hike, Fortuna and Nobel now cost 3.85 € Ducados 3.75 € and Marlborough 4.25 € The State wants to collect an additional 780 million € in tax per year with the latest increase.

The Spanish educational system fails to improve. After testing 27,000 Spanish pupils, the OECD (Organisation of European Cooperation & Development) reports that Spain is placed at 26th out of the 34 countries in the organisation. Madrid and Castilla y León were the best regions and Andalucía the worst.

P.M. Zapatero stated that the Government will be privatising 30% of the *Loterías* - the Spanish state lottery, one of the oldest and most lucrative in the world - and 49% of AENA, the Spanish airports authority. It means that the private management will be offered by tender of both the Barajas Airport in Madrid and at El Prat in Barcelona. The various unions are greatly 'pissed-off' by all this.

14 people have been arrested in a Spanish athlete doping scandal. These include the 3000m hurdles current world champion, Marta Domínguez, and her trainer, César Pérez. It appears that top level sportsmen and women were supplied with doping materials using blood transfusions.

More details have emerged about the seven suspected members of an Al Qaeda logistical unit who were arrested in the Raval district of Barcelona and in Badalona some weeks ago. Those arrested were six Pakistanis and one Nigerian. It was a counterfeiting group and is believed to have supplied one of the passports used in the Mumbai bombings two years ago. It now appears that their orders were received from a terrorist group based in Thailand, and that they purchased passports from pickpockets in Barcelona in order to produce the falsified documents which were then put into the hands of terrorist groups around the world. Pickpockets are considered by the police to be one of the main problems in Barcelona, and these criminals were originally only after cash, so were more than happy to pass on passports obtained, generally from foreigners in bag snatches. Soon the word spread among the pickpockets that the 'Pakistanis in Raval' paid a good price for the documents. One of those arrested on Tuesday was found to be carrying nine false passports. All those arrested have now been transferred to the National Court in Madrid.

The Guardia Civil's Anti-Drug Chief in Málaga and five other officers have been arrested for drug trafficking. The arrests follow an Internal Affairs investigation which began in spring this year resulting in a seizure of 1.5 tons of cannabis on a beach in Marbella in September.

A woman who lit a candle to her *El Gordo* lottery ticket hoping it would bring her good luck, achieved an unexpected result when her flat was completely gutted by fire. She left the candle burning when she went to collect her son from school and take him to hospital. Poor thing remarked to a local newspaper, 'Look what a prize I have won!'

A major tax investigation has begun into money laundering in nearby Murcia. It's understood the money came from sales of the drug known as hydrocodone, a derivative of opium. The AEAT tax authority said the network sold 50 million tablets of the drug between 2003 and 2007, with profits of 85 million dollars. Property searches took place in Murcia City and Mazarrón, where 9,000 € in cash was seized, together with jewellery, documentation and six vehicles. Other property confiscated included four horses! AEAT has also put a lien on 22 luxury properties, and 43 bank accounts with balances over 12 million €

Two women aged 39 to 43 years, natives of Alicante and Elche, were both arrested for shoplifting in the Consum supermarket at La Zenia. The women were found to have five bottles of rum and ten of gin hidden in their clothing. Although no vodka it would still have been a hell of a party!

A lorry containing 28 artworks by Chillida, Botero, Saura, Tàpies and Picasso was stolen in late November from an industrial park in Getafe. The artworks, worth an estimate €5 million, were in transit from a gallery in Germany. The lorry had been left open with the keys left in the glove compartment! The lorry has now been recovered in Madrid together with the artworks. One of the items, a sculpture by Chillida, was offered to scrap merchants for €30. It is valued at €800,000!

A 27-year-old man, with three times the blood-alcohol limit was arrested after travelling the wrong way up the A-7 motorway from Almeria to Murcia. He had driven his van more than 70 kms on the wrong carriageway before being stopped by police. Under the new law, see page 9, his van could be confiscated for this offence.

You will recall me covering the case of 'Father' Angel in a previous issue. This chap had been posing as a priest for several years and received some very healthy church collections. Amazingly, he has now been found not guilty of fraud and embezzlement by the court. The court has established that the faithful who, motivated by religious fervour, gave him part of their property (apartments, money & jewellery) did so "knowing what they did and in full exercise of their freedom, without notice reason to believe that were made under duress or deception whatsoever." However the Spanish tax authorities will be looking at the absence of tax returns between the years of 1992 and 2003. In the year 2000 alone he received €139,800!

Except for that of residents, traffic will be banned from the centre of Alicante City from February 1, 2011. A camera car-recognition scheme will be introduced which will facilitate the fining of non-resident drivers.

The Dream Scene Idiot of the Year Award is this year shared by two individuals. A forgetful thief is in custody in Seville province after accidentally leaving his house keys behind in one of the houses he had burgled. His target was an urbanisation where he stole 22 gas boilers. The 36 year old, who has a criminal record, lives in a property adjacent to the urbanisation, was identified by the Civil Guard when one of the keys on the set he had accidentally left behind him was found to fit his front door. In separate case in the Benalúa district of Alicante, a 46 year old man, also with a criminal record, was arrested after committing a bank robbery and then coolly walking into a nearby bar to order a drink. It happened this Tuesday December 28, the Día de los Santos Inocentes, the day in Spain when it is customary to play jokes (similar to April Fool's Day). As the bar owner told the press, he at first thought he was the victim of a joke when the man, who had made no effort to disguise himself, slapped money and a gun down on the bar and ordered a rum and coke. His customer casually commented that he had just robbed a bank, boasting that he had bought the fake gun in a Chinese shop. He was arrested moments later when police who were investigating the robbery came into the bar and took him into custody while he was still enjoying his drink. Gentlemen, take a bow!

### Talking Clock

After closing time at the bar, a drunk was proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends. He led the way to his bedroom where there was a big brass gong and a mallet. 'What's that big brass gong?' one of the guests asked. 'It's not a gong. It's a talking clock,' the drunk replied. 'A talking clock? Seriously?' asked his astonished friend. 'Yup, it is' replied the drunk. 'How's it work?' the friend asked, squinting at it. 'Watch,' the drunk replied. He picked up the mallet, gave the gong an ear-shattering pound and stepped back. The three stood looking at one another for a moment.....Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed, 'You asshole! IT'S 3:15 IN THE MORNING!'

(Pete Dudman)





## The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, 2010

Dear Friends,

May I, on behalf of the Phoenix Golf Society and the Phoenix Cafe Bar, take this opportunity in thanking you all for your kind generosity in supporting once again The Royal British Legion (Spain) Poppy Appeal, 2010. Special mention to Mike Carroll for the fun Golf Day at the Greenland's Golf Club; to Lowri Mitchell for making a Poppy Doll and raising €60; and to Kath & Rik at Galadriel for donating a 3 course Sunday lunch for two.

A big thank you to everyone who donated prizes for the Charity Night, which was organised by Thelma and Donna and was held on the evening of November 6 at the Phoenix Bar. Here we were entertained by the talented Ian, and a big thank you to him for giving up his time for such a worthy cause.

I am delighted to inform you all that the total raised this year was well in excess of last year's. This year's grand total was €69!

Once again, well done everyone.

Jim Storey (Capt)  
Phoenix Golf Society.

### Other News

There is to be a new direct bus service between Torrevieja and El Altet airport in Alicante. The bus service will operate between 07:30 and 22:30 in winter and it will be extended to midnight during the summer. About twelve buses a day will run with a single trip costing around €7. The link will be direct without stops along the route and will use the motorway rather than the N332. The Mayor of Torrevieja has not given a start date yet for the service as the Region also has some input, but it is hoped that the service may start after Easter 2011. No doubt this new service, when it eventually arrives, will be welcome to most travellers, although I can see that the taxi drivers will be fighting it 'tooth & nail.'

Less welcome has been the arrival of a new cactus to the mountains around Orihuela. This species, *Cylindropuntia Rosea* or the Hudson Pear is an invasive species, which is native to the Sonoran Desert in Arizona and to Northwestern Mexico. The cactus has pink flowers and white spines and grows to around a metre and a half high and three metres wide. The species was intentionally introduced into Australia in the 60's, but they are now considered an invasive species and a noxious weed. Their spines are particularly dangerous to animals and they are a known 'koala-killer.' An elderly gentleman died from shock after falling into one bush. The spines can penetrate boots and car tyres and pliers are often needed to pull them out.



The Culprit!

The Department of the Environment has now allocated €900,000 towards its eradication around Orihuela. Walkers and campers are asked to be careful and to brush seeds and spikes off their shoes, packs and tyres so that the species is not spread to other areas.

The ban on smoking in bars, restaurants and discos etc comes into effect on Jan 2, 2011. The only buildings where smoking is still to be allowed will be private smokers' clubs, prisons, psychiatric hospitals, pensioners' centres and centres for those with disabilities. Hotels can reserve up to 30% of their rooms for smokers. Fines for those who break the new law range from 30 to 600,000 € Although the law will be difficult to police fully, no doubt the anti-smoking nazis will have a great time.

Petrol stations, and shops whose main activity is selling newspapers such as *kioskos*, will now be able to house vending machines and also sell individual cigarettes, as happens on the Canary Islands.

I used to be schizophrenic, but we're all right now.

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Happy New Year to all!

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"Scientists are saying that a giant asteroid could strike the earth in 2182, and that it could decimate the planet and destroy most forms of life. A spokesman for BP said, 'Been there, done that.'"

—Craig Ferguson

I'm still struggling to comprehend how England failed to get the 2018 World Cup. From what I can see, FIFA has opted to go with Russia, a country with freezing cold, shit weather, and Qatar, a country with a large Muslim population.

England has both of those things so you can understand my confusion.

## Andalucían Cities: Granada, Córdoba, Sevilla, September 2010 by Patricia Cartwright

I write this in the depths of an arctic UK Winter and the sunny September days when we travelled across Andalucía seem a fantasy. Lucky you, all you permanent residents – thermal vests, long johns and woolly hats are just a distant memory!

Last September we flew into Alicante for a relaxed and lazy week at Dream Hills and followed this with a trip to Seville staying in Granada and Cordoba en route, prior to flying back to UK from Seville.

The trek started somewhat bad-tempered with the usual blitz-clean before leaving our house until next time. However, things began to look up, and tempers simmered down, as we headed towards Murcia and then into Andalucía. The quickest way to Granada is via the motorway and there are some stunning hill towns just off the road which make ideal stopping points for tapas or a picnic. One of these is Velez Rubio and a little further up the valley Velez Blanca, complete with medieval castle should you have time to explore en route.

The journey to Granada takes 3-4 hours and, as you would imagine in a World Heritage site, there is no shortage of accommodation (or tourists!). The Alhambra is of course the highlight of any trip to the city. This 14<sup>th</sup> century Moorish Palace and gardens was the last bastion of Arabic rule in Spain and is incredibly beautiful. Visitors are limited to around 7,000 people per day, which sounds a lot but I would strongly recommend pre-booking on the internet or via a travel agent having seen the queues for tickets winding down the hill towards the city. Entry to the palace itself is timed but the extensive gardens (Generalife) and Alcazaba Fortress can be wandered freely once you have entered the precincts.



Albacin, Grenada



Mausoleum of Isabella & Ferdinand

Other sites well worth seeing in Granada are the Cathedral, which contains the tombs of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand who defeated the Moors in 1492, the Albacin area and Sacromonte. The Albacin is the old Arab quarter, full of steep, narrow streets of whitewashed houses and Sacromonte is the traditional home to the Andalucían “Gitanos”.

Accommodation is plentiful but to get what you want it's worth booking ahead. Hotel booking websites such as [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com) feature all grades from budget hostels to 5 star luxury accommodation, priced accordingly.

Cordoba is about 120 km north west of Granada. The journey by car on the N432 is on single carriageway through extensive olive farms. Cordoba, hugging a bend in the Guadalquivir river, has been both a Roman and a Moorish capital in it's day. Today it is a provincial university town whose main attraction is the glorious “Mesquita”. Originally a mosque

built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and gradually extended, it now incorporates a Christian cathedral within the original building and is another world heritage site. On three sides the old quarter spreads in a maze of paved, whitewashed streets whilst to the south the Mesquita gives onto the river and the ancient Puente Romana (Roman Bridge). We found Cordoba easy to wander round, less crowded than Granada and certainly less steep! Again there is a wide range of hotel accommodation with prices to match the level of sophistication you choose. There are several small cafes and restaurants in the town offering authentic Spanish food – no McDonalds or fish'n'chips in sight!



Mesquita, Cordoba.

A fitting finish to our stay in Cordoba was visiting the Medinat Al-Zahra.

About 5 miles west of the city on the main road to Seville these 11<sup>th</sup> century ruins are the remains of the Sultan's Summer Palace which was built in honour of Abd Al-Raman's Syrian wife. The superb visitor centre includes a 30 minute DVD simulating what the palace was like in it's heyday. The site itself is still being excavated but the remains currently visible are easily seen. Entry is free to EU passport holders, although there is a 2 euro charge for the return bus journey of about 1km between the visitor centre and the site itself. There is also a bus out to the site from Cordoba city for those not wishing to drive.

**(Continued on Page 6)**

### Ark Royal Tribute

The Mayor of Portsmouth decided to arrange a suitable memento of Ark Royal to be placed near the dockyard entrance. The Anchor he thought had been made on the Clyde, so he commissioned a sculptor to carve a replica and raise it on a plinth beside the gate. On the great day, the assembled crowd of Royalty and dignitaries gasped as an enormous statue of Gordon Browne was unveiled. The Mayor turned to the sculptor and angrily said "What the hell have you done, I asked you to make a sculpture of the Biggest Scottish Anchor."

The sculptor turned up his hearing aid, and said "And that is exactly what I made."



### Andalucían Cities (Continued from Page 5)

Seville is a mere 87 km from Cordoba on a fast motorway. We spent 3 nights in a city centre hotel. Again accommodation is varied and plentiful but to get what you want I recommend booking ahead. The old quarter would be the most convenient place to stay as from here many of the main sites are in walking distance. The cathedral of Santa Maria de la Sede is a "must-see" and includes Christopher Columbus's magnificent tomb (although there is some dispute whether or not the remains inside are actually his!). The admission price includes entry to the Giralda (bell tower). The vino tinto and tapas may be worked off by walking up the 34 floors to the viewing platform – alternatively there is an elevator. Either way the views are simply wonderful – just use ear muffs if you're there when the bells strike the hour!! The Real Alcazar, next door to the Cathedral is absolutely stunning – a miniature Alhambra. Having been an Arabic palace in the 10-12th centuries, it became the official residence of the Christian kings in 1248. They rather liked the splendid design and preserved and enhanced the buildings in Moorish style. It remains a Royal Residence and King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia use it when visiting Seville.



Cathedral Plaza, Sevilla

The city may be explored on foot, using the "Hop-on, Hop-off" bus or in true style, by horse and carriage. The paved embankments on the Guadalquivir take you past the bullring, the opera house and the Torre del Oro, part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century fortifications of the city and river cruises leave from here. There is also the Plaza de Espana, a splendid semi-circular plaza which once housed the Spanish Pavilion and features *azulejo* tiles depicting all the major Spanish cities in alphabetical order. Opposite the main entrance to the plaza and surrounding park is the Real Fabrica de Tabacos completed in 1757 which inspired Bizet's opera "Carmen". For those keen on being scared stiff, feeling thoroughly sick and getting drenched, the Isla Magica theme park on Cartuja Island will meet your every need! The theme is the conquest of the New World with (I'm promised) white knuckle rides a plenty. We gave this a miss as the revolving tea cups at Alton Towers offers quite enough excitement for me!

We think Granada, Cordoba and Seville are absolute musts in seeing "real" Spain. If driving doesn't appeal there are several UK travel companies who do a week's guided tour taking in all 3 cities and often Ronda as well. It is probably possible to join them in Spain. I'm sure they are available on the Spanish Internet too – if your Spanish is good enough! Either way it's a trip well worth considering.

Hasta Luego! Pat Cartwright.

#### In Recovery

A wounded soldier is lying in bed in the hospital, wearing an oxygen mask over his mouth and nose, still heavily sedated from a difficult four hour surgical procedure.

A young QA nurse arrives to give him a partial sponge bath. Nurse,' he mumbles, from behind the mask 'Are my testicles black?'

Embarrassed, the young nurse replies 'I don't know, Sir, I'm only here to wash your upper body.'

He struggles to ask again, 'Nurse, are my testicles black?'

Concerned that he may elevate his vitals from worry about his testicles, she overcomes her embarrassment and pulls back the covers. She raises his gown, holds his todger in one hand and his 'family jewels' in the other, lifting and moving them around and around gently.

Then, after a close look she says, 'No sir, they aren't and I assure you, there's nothing wrong with them.'

The man pulls off his oxygen mask, smiles at her and says to her, 'Thank you very much. That was wonderful, but listen very, very closely.....'

'A r e - m y - t e s t - r e s u l t s - b a c k ?'



Barbi

One day a father finishes work and on his way home he suddenly remembers that it's his daughter's birthday. He pulls over to a Toy Shop and asks the sales person, 'How much for one of those Barbie's in the display window?' The salesperson answers, 'Which one do you mean, Sir? We have: Work Out Barbie for \$19.95, Shopping Barbie for \$19.95, Beach Barbie for \$19.95, Disco Barbie for \$19.95, Ballerina Barbie for \$19.95, Astronaut Barbie for \$19.95, Skater Barbie for \$19.95, and Divorced Barbie for \$265.95'.

The amazed father asks: 'It's what?! Why is the Divorced Barbie \$265.95 and the others only \$19.95?'

The tired salesperson rolls her eyes, sighs, and answers: 'Sir,.... Divorced Barbie comes with: Ken's Car, Ken's House, Ken's Boat, Ken's Furniture, Ken's Computer, one of Ken's Friends, and a key chain made with Ken's balls. (Pete Dudman)

#### Wicked!

A little Irish boy was crying by the side of the road. A man asks "What's wrong?"

The boy says "Me Gran's dead"

"Oh Good Lord", the man says "Do you want me to get Father O'Riley?"

The little boy replies, "No thanks Mister, sex is the last ting on me moind roight now."



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## The Caganer

No doubt some will say that the Dream Scene has finally and predictably descended into 'toilet humour', but this month, in the absence of a history article, I thought I would pass on some information about a Catalan tradition, which has now not only spread to a number of other regions in Spain but also to other countries.

Caganer is Catalan for 'shitter' and the caganer is basically a small statue or model of a defecater, crapper or shitter which is placed in an obscure part of the *belen* or Nativity scene. It must however, not be visible from the crib part of the Nativity scene and it is a tradition in the Catalan areas for children to search for the caganer.



The custom now extends beyond Catalonia to Andorra, parts of southern France, Murcia, the Balaeric Islands, Portugal and around Naples. I have seen one in the *belen* in Torrevieja a couple of Christmases ago. Indeed it may still be there!

The origins of the caganer are a little obscure, but it is thought that they originated in the late 17th - early 18th century. Equally obscure are the explanations for the enigmatic figure - some say it is to do with fertilising the earth, others say that it denotes the equality of man - but it may just have more to do with humour and fun. Although the practice is tolerated by the Catholic Church and the tradition is very popular, many think it is not really appropriate and some *belen* scenes, even in Cataluña, do not feature the statue. In 2005, when the Barcelona city council commissioned a Nativity scene without a caganer, there was a public outcry and much criticism seeing it as an attack on Catalan traditions. The crapper was reintroduced in the Nativity scene the following year.



Giant caganer in shopping mall.

Can you imagine this In Regent Street?

But of course these days the caganer has now become a collector's item. You can now purchase caganers in a whole range of celebrities ranging from Elvis and the Pope to Sponge Bob Square Pants and Tiger Woods. You can even buy a complete set of the Barcelona football team with all eleven caganing! One of my favourites is of Queen 'Betty' II. If you go to [www.caganer.com](http://www.caganer.com) you will see a whole range of models and some good YouTube clips.



## Mexican Oysters

A big Texan stopped at a local restaurant following a day roaming around Mexico. While sipping his tequila, he noticed a sizzling, scrumptious looking platter being served at the next table. Not only did it look good, the smell was wonderful. He asked the waiter, 'What is that you just served?' The waiter replied, 'Ah señor, you have excellent taste! Those are called *Cojones de Toro*, bull's testicles from the bull fight this morning. A delicacy!' The cowboy said, 'What the heck, bring me an order.' The waiter replied, 'I am so sorry señor. There is only one serving per day because there is only one bull fight each morning. If you come early and place your order, we will be sure to save you this delicacy.' The next morning, the cowboy returned, placed his order, and that evening was served the one and only special delicacy of the day. After a few bites, inspecting his platter, he called to the waiter and said, 'These are delicious, but they are much, much smaller than the ones I saw you serve yesterday.' The waiter shrugged his shoulders and replied, 'Si, Señor. Sometimes the bull, he win.'

(Dave Purdy)



Via Park 3

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### Sensitivity Training

The room was full of pregnant women with their partners. The class was in full swing. The instructor was teaching the women how to breathe properly and was telling the men how to give the necessary assurance to their partners at this stage of the pregnancy.

She said "Ladies, remember that exercise is good for you. Walking is especially beneficial. It strengthens the pelvic muscles and will make delivery that much easier.

Just take several rest stops and stay on a soft surface like grass or a path."

She looked at the men in the room, "And Gentlemen, remember -- You're in this together -- It wouldn't hurt you to go walking with her."

The room suddenly got very quiet as the men absorbed this information.

Then a man at the back of the room slowly raised his hand.

"Yes", answered the Instructor.

"I was just wondering if it would be all right if she carries a golf bag while we walk?"

This kind of sensitivity just can't be taught. (Peter Frazer)

### RENT THIS SPACE FROM JUST €.



### Quickies

Nintendo have released a new game about a little Jock shit who goes around mugging grannies, collecting ASBOs and being a little sod.

Its called 'Wii Bastard!'

I was walking down the road when I saw an Arab bloke standing on a fifth floor balcony shaking a carpet.

I shouted up to him, "What's up Abdul, won't it start?"

A Jewish woman walking down the street. A flasher jumps out in front of her, opens his mac and displays his 8" Pride & Glory.

The Jewish woman exclaims " Call that a lining!"



### **Tough New Laws including Car Seizure**

Spain's new Penal Code came into effect on December 23, toughening the sentences for terrorists, the corrupt, paedophiles, squatters, and ocean pirates. However, more than 200 drug traffickers will now find themselves given an earlier release from prison after 6,000 cases are to be revised under the new code. The new code is less severe on small traffickers, with stiffer penalties for the big dealers. The Government expects 239 prisoners of the 65,000 total will be released, including 40 immigrants who have been held for selling pirated copies of items in the streets. The new code describes that as a fault/misdemeanour and not a crime if the value of goods involved is less than 400 €. However repeated bag-snatchers will no longer remain immune even if the cases are under €400. Now they face weekend prison sentences i.e. a free weekend on the State!

Drivers are among those who could feel the effects of the reforms immediately. The Guardia Civil will now impound your car if a radar catches you speeding over 200 kms/hour on a motorway, or 120 kms/hour in town, or if you are found to be driving with more than 1.2 grams of alcohol per litre of blood. In such cases the vehicle will be impounded and lost forever. Also drivers who are 'kamikaze' driving up the wrong carriageway, will lose their cars, as will those who modify any road signs, covering up a radar for example, those who drive with no licence, and those who refuse to undergo an alcohol or drugs test.

Dangerous drivers now also face being sent to prison, and that could be for breaking the local speed limit by more than 60 kms/hr in town or by more than 80kms/hr out of town. This part of the new Penal Code, article 127, has been criticised by drivers' associations in Europe, such as the AEA who have described it as 'an authentic bodge' which will bring many challenges.

Prison terms for those in public office found guilty of corruption are set to increase and will now always be interned, whereas in the past it was just a slap on the wrist, a fine and a limited ban from public office.

There will be more controls after release on those imprisoned for sexual and terrorist offences. Those serving more than 5 years will not be allowed more generous prison conditions, such as the so-called 'third grade' until at least half the sentence is served. Paedophiles now face 15 years in prison, and using children in the filming of pornography is now also a crime. A new crime comes for those who sexually exploit victims, be that holding them against their will, or forcing them into prostitution.

Violent squatters and those who paint graffiti could face up to two years in prison, whereas now only fines are in place. Community work orders are expected to be used in such cases.

Piracy on the high seas is a new crime and could result in 15 years in prison if someone takes over the control of a boat or plane. Some environmental crime penalties have also been toughened, as has punishment for those who 'disappear' and try to evade justice.

As the new penal code comes into force and dangerous and drunk drivers face losing their vehicles, news comes from the coastal northern port of Gijón where a judge has released a driver who was double the alcohol limit without charge. The prosecutor had been demanding a €3,240 fine for the positive breath test, but the judge in Penal Court 1 in Gijón considered that it had not been proven that the driver's psychophysical powers had been affected as there was no irregular driving or traffic infraction carried out. Judge Lino Rubio also considered that the accused should not be charged with criminal responsibility as 'his right to the presumption of innocence had not been respected'. (It is a wonder they didn't give the driver a medal and a box of chocolates.)

### **A Close Thing**

I was a very happy man. My wonderful girlfriend and I had been dating for over a year, and so we decided to get married. There was only one little thing bothering me... It was her beautiful younger sister.

My prospective sister-in-law was twenty-two, wore very tight miniskirts, and generally was bra-less. She would regularly bend down when she was near me, and I always got more than a nice view. It had to be deliberate, because she never did it when she was near anyone else.

One day her 'little' sister called and asked me to come over to check the wedding invitations. She was alone when I arrived, and she whispered to me that she had feelings and desires for me that she couldn't overcome.

She told me that she wanted me just once before I got married and committed my life to her sister. Well, I was in total shock, and couldn't say a word.

She said, 'I'm going upstairs to my bedroom, and if you want one last wild fling, just come up and get me.'

I was stunned and frozen in shock as I watched her go up the stairs. I stood there for a moment, then turned and made a beeline straight to the front door.

I opened the door, and headed straight towards my car.

Lo and behold, my entire future family was standing outside, all clapping!

With tears in his eyes, my father-in-law hugged me and said, 'We are very happy that you have passed our little test. We couldn't ask for a better man for our daughter. Welcome to the family.'

And the moral of this story is: **ALWAYS KEEP YOUR CONDOMS IN YOUR CAR!!!!**

(This joke was sent in by Mo, Judy, Pete, Ken, Ann and far too many more to mention.)

Two Asian heroin addicts have injected themselves with curry powder by mistake - both are in intensive care....  
One has a dodgy tikka and the other one is in a korma.

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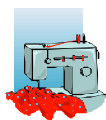


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## More Quickies

I asked my Gran what she wanted for  
Christmas.

"Something from the Body Shop  
please," she replied.

Hope she's got enough room in the flat  
for the front wing off a Mondeo.

Police in Birmingham have found a  
bomb outside a mosque.

They've told the public not to panic as  
they've managed to push it inside.

I had a mate who was suicidal. He was  
really depressed, so I pushed him in  
front of a steam train.

He was chuffed to bits.

What do you call an Indian man with  
pink hair?

Gandhi floss.

## The Little Firefighter

A fire-fighter was working on the engine outside the Station, when he noticed a little girl nearby in a little red wagon with little ladders hung off the sides and a garden hose tightly coiled in the middle.

The girl was wearing a fire-fighter's helmet. The wagon was being pulled by her dog and her cat.

The fire-fighter walked over to take a closer look. 'That sure is a nice fire truck,' the fire-fighter said with admiration.

'Thanks,' the girl replied. The fire-fighter looked a little closer. The girl had tied the wagon to her dog's collar and to the cat's testicles.

'Little partner,' the fire-fighter said, 'I don't want to tell you how to run your rig, but if you were to tie that rope around the cat's collar, I think you could go faster.'

The little girl replied thoughtfully, 'You're probably right, but then I wouldn't have a siren.'



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## A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Thank you all for the support given to me over the last few months and I hope that the articles have been useful to you, I will continue to provide them for the coming year and always look forward to receiving the e-mails that you send to me.

Firstly I would like to thank Mick and his little helper for the excellent Dream Scene that has been produced over the last 12 months, I know that our household cant wait for the e-mail to arrive on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month .

For this month I am going to be running a predict the FTSE competition with a prize of **25 Euros** to the winner!!!!

All you have to do is e-mail me what you think the FTSE closing figure will be on 31 December 2011 . The closest to that figure will be the winner of **25 Euros**.

The figure is currently around 5,900 with experts predicting anything from 5,200 to 7,000 for the coming year

You don't have to know anything about finance to enter , just choose a figure and e-mail it to me [mike@maypolefs.co.uk](mailto:mike@maypolefs.co.uk) Date for last entry is 21 January, 2011

Just one prediction per e-mail please.

*A Happy & Prosperous New Year  
to you all*

Mike

I have enough money to last me the rest of my life, unless I buy something. Jackie Mason



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### Confused Wingman

An old tanned, wrinkled and weather-beaten pilot, wearing his old leather flying jacket sat down at Starbucks and ordered a cup of coffee. As he sat sipping his coffee, a young woman sat down next to him. She turned to the pilot and asked, 'Are you a real pilot?'

He replied, 'Well, I've spent my whole life flying biplanes, Cubs, Aeronca's, Neiuports, flew in WWII in a B-29, and later in the Korean conflict; taught 50 people to fly and gave rides to hundreds, so I guess I am a pilot. Are you a pilot also, Honey?'

She said, 'No, I'm a lesbian. I spend my whole day thinking about naked women. As soon as I get up in the morning, I think about naked women. When I shower, I think about naked women. When I watch TV, I think about naked women. It seems everything makes me think of naked women.'

The two sat sipping their coffee in silence.

A little while later, a young man sat down on the other side of the old pilot and asked, 'Are you a real pilot?'

He replied, 'I always thought I was, but I just found out I'm a lesbian.'

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**Points to Ponder**

War is God's way of teaching Americans geography. Ambrose Bierce

Ipswich isn't twinned with anywhere, but it does have a suicide pact with Grimsby. Ken Dodd

The factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to stop the man touching the equipment. Warren Bennis

The big difference between sex for money and sex for free is sex for money usually costs a lot less. Brendan Behan

**Santa - The Facts**

1. He wears red
  2. He's good at breaking into houses
  3. He has loads of electrical goods that nobody can trace
  4. He drives an unlicensed vehicle
  5. He only works one day a year.....
- Lapland my arse - he's a f\*\*kin' scouser !!!

Organic Life, we are told, has developed gradually from the protozoon to the philosopher and this development, we are assured, is indubitably an advance. Unfortunately it is the philosopher, not the protozoon, who gives this assurance.  
 Bertrand Russell

You can take all the sincerity in Hollywood, place it in the navel of a fruit-fly and still have room for three caraway seeds and a producer's heart. Fred Allen

Remember that you can get your own copy of The Dream Scene delivered to your property or post box locally, or on-line, for a tiny contribution towards costs by contacting me at number 586 DH or at [mick.dreamscene@gmail.com](mailto:mick.dreamscene@gmail.com)

**Funny Quote -**

A war hasn't been fought this badly since Olaf the Hairy, High Chief of all the Vikings, accidentally ordered 80,000 battle helmets with the horns on the inside.

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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at [mick.dreamscene@gmail.com](mailto:mick.dreamscene@gmail.com) or at 586 Dream Hills.



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