

THE DREAM SCENE



Issue no. 65 1st of July 2012

Bienvenido and welcome to the latest issue of The Dream Scene.

Whereas last month's DS could be classed as the 'doom & gloom' issue, I have made a conscious effort to present this edition in a much lighter mood, as it is after all for most, a holiday period.

The 'bailout' preoccupied the news last month and I think the following described the government's approach to it very, very well -

'We don't need a bailout.'

"Yes you do."

'No, we don't!'

"Yes you do!"

'No we don't, we just need someone to lend us a load of money to prop up our banks.'

"That's a bailout!"

'No it isn't. It's just a bank rescue not a bailout or a loan and nothing to do with our economy.'

"Okay, all right then, we'll call it a gift which you can give to your banks, but you have to repay it with interest and there will be certain conditions."

'OK, can I have 100bn € then? But lets be clear it isn't a bailout, because if it was, it would add to our debt figures and that wouldn't make us look good.'

'Oh for God's sake just take the bloody money!' (Source: The Economist)

Community bad debt continues to be a major problem for urbanisations. The following is taken from a Spanish national newspaper, 'The bad debt in the *comunidades de propietarios* often in urbanisations for the administration of the costs such as lighting, gardening and other maintenance, has shot up by 31.2% over 2011. It went from 1 billion e to 1.35 billion. In the Madrid regions the debts amount to 375 million and 90% of communities have maintained or increased their quotas because of the risk of debts.'

Unfortunately we can expect several more price increases shortly. Electricity prices will increase by between 4% & 5% this month, this on top of 7% already approved in March! Gas *butano* prices will also go up by 5.8% this month, despite an 8.8% increase earlier this year. A *bombona* refill will shortly cost around €16.43. Although the government had planned to 'look at' the IVA (VAT) rates next year, they will likely to be forced to increase these substantially this year. This will effect everything from newspapers and entertainment to food & booze! One very telling indicator on the Spanish economy is that of fuel. Petrol consumption in Spain was down by 9.4% in April and back at levels last seen in 2001.

Thanks to David, now moved to DH2, for his generous donation and also 'Get well soon' to Pete from the Lime Bar.

Although The Dream Scene started out as an info' sheet just for Dream Hills five years ago, it has since grown into an information source for all & any expats on the Costa Blanca. Advertisers please note that there are now selected distribution points for the publication throughout many local areas, including Playa Flamenca and Los Montesinos.

Have a great month and keep cool! Mick & Tid

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Angela's Cartoon



'MUST you shout "Goal!"?"'

What's Up?

Spain has finally asked for a 'bailout' for the banks from the EU. Although €100 billion has been made available, external auditors state that the maximum that may be required is €72 billion. The money will come with strings attached and its usage will be supervised by various international authorities. The opposition Socialist leader, Rubalcaba, commented, 'They (the ruling PP) want us to believe that we have won the lottery or the Three Kings have come'.

Santander, BBVA, Popular and Sabadell banks have all said they do not want anything from the rescue fund.

The Bank of America said Spain may need a second rescue to tide it through the next three years, pushing the total loan package towards €450bn – a sum that would test the EU bail-out machinery and cause serious knock-on effects for Italy.

The New York Times reports that a rescue for Spain would nearly empty the Rescue Fund. The paper says that Spain's problems come from the uncertainty on the banks, the recession and the exit of investors. It notes that Spanish banks are the largest holder of Spanish debt bonds, and that foreign investors only hold 26% of Spanish bonds.

PM Rajoy said, "Spain is not Uganda. We are the fourth-largest economy in the euro zone." Wags on Twitter were quick to point out that Uganda's GDP growth and unemployment rate are both far better than Spain's, which is set to see GDP decline by 1.7% this year and suffers almost 25% unemployment!

Brussels said that Spain could have an extra year to get the deficit down to 3%, now by 2014 instead of 2013. But they made a series of demands in exchange. They want to see a quicker introduction of a later retirement age, and also want to see an increase in IVA/VAT. Spain must present a 'convincing and solid' budget for 2013 and 2014.

Stop Press: PM Rajoy admitted to the EU on June 27 that 'Spain cannot finance herself much longer with the high risk premium rates' on their borrowings.

The 24 billion euros of your money pumped into Bankia to keep the bank afloat has amounted to more than 500 euros for every man, woman, and child in this country. This is more than double the amount of what has just been cut from education and health spending! The main political parties have had representatives on the bank's board at different times. El Mundo published an informative article (in Spanish) detailing why the various politicians did not want to see an enquiry into the Bankia fiasco, surely a necessity - <http://www.elmundo.es/blogs/elmundo/contrapota/2012/05/26/por-que-casi-nadie-quiere-investigar.html>

The Anti-corruption Prosecutors are investigating possible crimes in the constitution of the Bankia bank, and have asked for information as soon as possible from the Bank itself, the Bank of Spain and the National Commission for Market Values. Bankia financed 334 million at 0% interest to a company which belonged to one of the board members of the bank. The ex-Chairman of Bankia, Rodrigo Rato, has renounced his 1.2 million €redundancy compensation from Bankia. This was a prescient move, not only because of the public outcry but the bank was about to revise this controversial clause in his contract. The European Central Bank has said that the Government acted 'in the worst way possible' with Bankia. They said the reaction of the Governments or the national supervisors was to underestimate the importance of the problem, presenting a first evaluation, then a second, third and fourth.

The President of Mercadona, Juan Roig (who received more than a million €in bonus this year), has said that Spain will be intervened in unless 'we make a great effort'. He said that the Spaniards have to make a change and realise that 'we are living above our productivity level.' He told National Radio that 'We have all overspent, including the unions, the businessmen, the banks, the politicians, the whole country', and he said that 'everyone' has to, in a global way, work more.

El Corte Ingles wants to break with its image of being "expensive" for food products. They have dropped the price of between 4,500 and 5,000 products by 20%. They hope to match their prices with those of Mercadona and Carrefour, a tall order - Mercadona being the cheapest.

In a surprise move, the Constitutional Court approved the legalisation of the SORTU political party in the Basque Region by a 5-4 vote. SORTU is seen by many, including the present government, as the political wing of the terrorist organisation ETA.

The Government owes 460 million €to the pharmacies in our region. The pharmacies closed for two days in June in protest at the intolerable situation. Six Alicante pharmacies have already presented petitions to the bankruptcy court with another 20 pending.

The Valencia Region, ours, is the third worst regions for the roll-out of the Dependency Law; the worst being the Canaries and the Balearics. Valencia has 270,000 on the waiting list.

Sheldon Adelson, the man who wants to establish a Eurovegas casino, hotel and leisure park, has now said that there is nothing solid about the project as yet. Last month he said it was 90% complete and all he had to do was to choose between sites in Madrid and Barcelona, but now it seems he is getting cold feet, linking the project's viability to the future of the Euro.

The Spanish Government's fiscal amnesty is to be extended to include cash. To legalise cash in Spain it will be enough to say that you had it since before 2011 and then pay it into an account. The definitive text has been published in the Official State Bulletin. As in the rest of the amnesty it has to be presented before November 30 2012, and the money will also be subjected to 10% tax. The Government hopes the regularisation program will allow them to collect 2.5 billion €

The net exit of capital from Spain is at a record level, with nearly 98 billion €leaving the country up to March this year. It's a consequence of the exit of investments made in the Stock Market, and loans and deposits. 66.2 billion was taken out of the country in March alone according to the Bank of Spain.

Amancio Ortega has become the richest man in Europe. The Spanish founder of Inditex (Zara, Massimo Dutti, Pull & Bear etc) increased his fortune to 39.5 billion dollars, and has overtaken the owner of Ikea, Bernard Arnault, according to Bloomberg. (It does make me laugh that IKEA is controlled by a charitable foundation!)

Politicians.

How long does a Spanish councillor serve for?
Until he gets caught.

Since a politician never believes what he says, he is quite surprised to be taken at his word. (Charles de Gaulle)

Chancellor Angela Merkel arrived at passport control in Poland to watch one of the recent European Cup games:
"Nationality?" asks the immigration officer.
"German" she replied.
"Occupation?"
...."No, just here to watch the match....."

What's Up? continued

If you have been following the escapades of the 'dodgy' Duke of Palma in these pages, you may like to know that the Hacienda inspectors want Iñaki Urdangarin and his partner, Diego Torres, to pay €5.4 million to satisfy their IRPF (personal tax) demands. It has also emerged that the Duke and Torres organised two regional summits for the Valencian politicians. They charged €1.1 million and €1.2 million for the summits which cost no more than €160,000 each! Valencia, under the then leadership of President Camps, was truly a 'ship of fools.'

A uniformed Chief Inspector of the National Police was arrested in the city of Cadiz for driving his patrol car while drunk. That he was drunk is not in dispute as he hit a bollard and a lamppost in his travels. The Chief Inspector is the coordinator for the night time services of the city - knows all the good bars no doubt.

Locally, a British lady crashed into the back of a police car at the traffic lights. She was five times over the alcohol limit!

The body of a resident of Cañizal, Zamora, has been found dead in his home. The body of the man, who would have been 73 last month, had been there for anything between fourteen and twenty years. His skeletal body was found by his nephew after he climbed into the house through a window and found his uncle's body. Other residents of the village thought, as he was a solitary type, he had just left and gone elsewhere.

The Police have arrested a 67-year-old, who ran a nursing home in Barcelona, and is alleged to have defrauded the Social Security for over 137,000 euros over 13 years, during which time he allegedly falsified the signature of a deceased person taking the pension of up to €748 per month.

The judge in the Instruction Court in Valencia, has ordered two women who were looking after a three year old child, who is now dead, to prison without bail. The judge has accused the women of homicide, abuse and crime simulation. According to reports the two women have admitted to the judge that the child died when he hit his head accidentally, and that they had decided to throw the body into the rubbish! These women, 20 and 25, are friends of Lohammy, the boy's mother, since they were 10 years and were paid to care of the youngster when his mother had to go to Paris for work. She had not seen him for five months but spoke regularly with him on the phone. The mother raised the alarm with police when she returned to Spain in early-June. Two landfills were searched, the body being discovered by one of the police dogs after sifting through a 700 ton site on June 4.

Málaga City Hall has fined a school in the city for the noise the children make. There are 500 pupils aged between 3 and 12 at the Parque Clavero College. Local residents placed a complaint in 2010. The college director, Reyes Durán, said that they had adopted several measures to reduce the noise when the first complaint was made in 2010. Some classes had changed location and they had spent 6,000 € on lowering the ceilings in some classrooms and installing soundproofing on the walls. 'I've taken measures, but I can't put stoppers in the children's mouths.' he said.

The Prosecutors' Office has said that it will now act against parents/drivers who do not protect their children in the car. 79 children were killed on Spain's roads in 2010, and a study has detected that 46% of the fatalities were not using any seat belt or car seat. Drivers with children not belted up will be fined €200 and 3 points will be lost, and the new law will demand that no children of 14 years or under can travel in any form of public transport, including taxis and buses, without the corresponding system of retention. Children can use normal seat belts when they are more than 135cm tall.

Caixanova bank sold preferential shares to illiterate persons when, because of their complexity, these products should only have been sold to investors according to the National Commission of Market Values. El País says that one purchase was signed with a thumb print. In Galicia alone 43,000 people have been affected by the scheme which many consider to be a swindle. Caixanova is one of the savings banks currently asking for financial help.

Karaoke bars combine two of the nation's greatest evils:
people who shouldn't sing.

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Twenty-five parachutists on 8 to 9 June, jumped from the rooftop of Hotel Gran Bali in Benidorm - about 160 meters - in a competition for the World's Championship Extreme Jumping. Only one suffered injuries.

Many users will have to pay for their TDT Digital Terrestrial Television antennas to be moved as the Government has decided to keep most of the €800 million it was paid by the mobile phone companies for expanded frequencies. It will be spending only 1.4 million on the process. Higher internet speeds on mobile phones mean they need more bandwidth and that is why the TDT frequencies are moving again. The date of the change in frequencies has also been brought forward a year to January 1 2014.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Madrid, Antonio María Rouco Varela, revealed during an interview on ABC Punto Radio just how much he earned - €1,160 a month "like all the Spanish bishops". He said a parish priest earned between €800 and €900 on average although the longest-serving ones may get €1,000. Obviously the 'wages of sin' are much, much higher!

It's emerged that the companies running the Toll Motorways in Spain are not making enough to even break even, and have run up debts of €8 billion! Their takings are just €50 million a year, not enough even to pay the interest on the debt. Nine concessionaries are now on the edge of bankruptcy. The Development Minister, Ana Pastor, has announced 290 million more will be given by the Government to the toll motorways, with the money coming from the 2012 budget. There have been three previous rescues of toll motorways between 1980 and 1983.

Manners & Etiquette

- Never pick your nose when you are working with superglue. Emo Philips
- Travelling in non-British ships is preferable as there is none of that nonsense about women and children first. Somerset Maugham
- I made a terrible gaffe. I went to a Ken and Barbie party dressed as Klaus Barbie. Arthur Smith
- Take the first right and go along the corridor. You'll see a door marked Gentlemen, but don't let that deter you. F.E. Smith

Round & About



June 6 was a particularly busy day at Torrevieja Hospital, with a record eight births - all spontaneous - four of them were Spanish, three Moroccans and one English. Obviously there was nothing on TV on the night of October 6, 2011!

The Corpus Christi celebration/fiesta, took place in Spain in June. This is a big fiesta with processions throughout Spain and is also an important tourist event in all the major cities. There is a Spanish saying which translated states, 'Three Thursdays in the year that the sun shines: Holy Thursday, Corpus Christi and Ascension Day.' The feast day also marks the period when Catholic children receive their First Communion.



As you can see from the photo taken locally, the young girls dress in white and carry baskets of rose petals. The boys - or at least the affluent ones - dress in pseudo military uniforms, see photo. (I find it amusing that tradition has these Catholic boys wear 'navy' uniforms whereas it was a Protestant English navy that consigned the mighty Armada to the bottom of the ocean!) All the good quality large Spanish restaurants were fully booked by the proud families for several weekends. This is a very expensive time for the Spanish.

The beaches in the Orihuela Costa have again gained more awards than any other in the Valencia Region - five Quality Flags and seven Blue Flags.



The above photo was taken in a new hotel in Ibi, Alicante. This new four star hotel, Hotel de Juguete (The Toy Hotel) has 21 rooms which have been decorated with children in mind. There are the stars with images of classic toys on the walls, stuffed animals on the beds and even theme rooms sponsored by brands like Playmobil or Bebé glotón (glutton Baby). Room prices (to sleep four) vary from €130 upwards. Themed suites are €300 plus per night. Ibi is the home of the Spanish toy industry where dozens of factories produce many of the famous toy brands. There is a Toy Museum, a Museum of Biodiversity and a major project -Casa de los Reyes Magos (The House of the Three Kings) - is under construction in the town.

See more here - <http://www.hoteldeljuguete.com/>

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Above is one of the beautiful gigantic paper-mache constructions being prepared for the San Juan Fiesta in Alicante. There will be 184 *ninots* in all. (The cherry-picker on the right gives you an idea of the scale of this *ninot*.) These were all burned together with around 160 bonfires on June 24. The fireworks, *ninots*, etc for the fiesta cost €57,000!

The Chinese are continuing to blight the Orihuela Costa with their giant stores all selling the same crummy products. The latest is now a new build in La Zenia opposite the unfinished Emergency & Security Centre. (Work on the latter stopped when the developer went bust. The town hall seem to have neither the competence nor will to resolve the matter.) Meanwhile the Chinese are making full use of their five-year tax break, doing nothing to help unemployment locally. Why non-Europeans should get preferential treatment is beyond me. Surely it is discriminatory? The town hall couldn't give a damn!

20/20?

I bumped into an old school friend today. He started showing off, talking about his well paid job and expensive sports car. Then he pulled out a photo of his wife and said, "She's beautiful, isn't she?"

I said, "If you think she's gorgeous, you should see my girlfriend."

He said, "Why? Is she a stunner?"

I said, "No, she's an optician."

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Weddings

The 80-year-old man had gone to see his doctor for pre-marriage tests.

'I'm marrying a twenty-year-old,' he said.

'Why are you doing that?' asked the doctor.

'I want a son and heir. Can you give me any advice?'

'Yes, get a lodger.' said the doctor smirking.

A few months later, the old fellow returned to the doctor.

'Is your wife pregnant yet?' Queried the doctor.

'Yes.'

'So you did take in a lodger?'

'Oh yes,' replied the old man. 'and she's pregnant too!'

A woman rushed up the steps to the church, late for the wedding. An usher asked to see her invitation. 'I don't have one,' she said.

'Well, are you a friend of the groom?' asks the usher.

'Certainly not!' she stormed. 'I'm the bride's mother!'

Tension in Torrevieja

There has been rising tension between the police and the Senegalese traders who trade from the promenade in the town for some time. Although always a potentially volatile area (there were some confrontations there in May) it escalated to a riot on June 18, when the police arrested six Senegalese who were 'without papers' and trading in illegal goods. One of them had a head-wound (obviously self-inflicted) and needed hospital treatment. Around 50 Africans then blocked all traffic on the *Paseo de la Libertad* in protest, demanding the release of the six. Chairs and tables were thrown about to block more roads and bottles were thrown on the roads and pavements. The *Guardia Civil* arrived in force – more than 15 vehicles – with 30 of the *Guardias* in full riot gear, see photo. Some of the Senegalese then managed to placate the more vociferous elements among them and the riot police left after an hour leaving the situation to the remaining *Guardia Civil*. The mob then moved in the direction of the bus station (many of them live in this area) which they blockaded and also formed a barricade of rubbish containers to block some streets. It took about nine hours in all before the riot fizzled-out, and thankfully, with the remarkable restraint shown by the *Guardia Civil*, no further heads were broken and a catastrophe avoided.

(Photos from *Informacion online*)



I took an American friend to watch her first ever game of cricket.
She took one look at the umpires and said, 'What are the butchers for?' Alan Henderson

Local Stuff!

Events unfolding in the local Orihuela City Council continue to be 'jaw-dropping' demonstrating the Machiavellian nature of local politics. The ruling tripartite, PSOE, Clr and Green Party are now fighting among themselves, the former two ganging-up on the mayor, Monseratte Guillén of the 'Greens - Los Verdes.' But two of the Clr councillors also have an issue with their boss, Pedro Mancebo. The tripartite then leaked the personal financial details of the assets of their hate-figure and one-time-ally, Bob Houliston of CLARO, to the media.

The ruling tripartite have 17 salaried positions in the council made up of councillors and advisors. The PP opposition, under ex-Mayoress Monica Lorente, have now pulled the rug from beneath the tripartite by proposing that only two of the 17 be paid, and two from the opposition! Houlliston of CLARO is now working and voting with the PP and it is likely, depending on legalities, that this will come about. It is due to be debated on the last day of June. Meanwhile, the six councillors of the Socialist PSOE have resigned from the ruling tripartite governing body, with some of them going back to their previous jobs. Although the Mayor recently lost a vote of confidence, he is hanging on by his fingernails but he must by now be feeling very isolated.

This is dirty politics at its best and it is hugely enjoyable!

Meanwhile, the ex-Mayores of Orihuela, Monica Lorente, and the ex-Mayor of Torrevieja, have to now answer various charges relating to the awarding of the *basura* contracts for both towns/areas. The rubbish collection and disposal contracts for any Spanish council are very high value (9.7 million euro for Torrevieja in 2004 which was awarded against the advice of town hall officials) which probably leads to much temptation. I would expect that winning contractors are expected to contribute to the political coffers or similar. Both ex-mayors say that they are 'very relaxed' about the charges, Lorente adding that her name does not even appear in the 18,000 page prosecution submission.

The *Noche de San Juan* in Torrevieja drew a crowd of around 10,000 to the beaches to view the firework display. At 11.55pm, three rockets were launched to announce the imminent display and then.....nothing! Almost an hour later there was an announcement that the firework display was cancelled due to technicalities, a real damp squib, or as The Leader called it, 'a damp squid!'.

A large new bar/restaurant on the site of the failed Big Wok in Calle Mosca. It is called The Palms Beer Garden. It has been completely refurbished with an outside patio area and a large soft-seated relaxation area inside near the bar. The restaurant is large and spacious and features only a set menu, not incl. drink for €25 a head. The bar snacks feature (smoked salmon bocatas & chips - €6.20) and coffee (€1.20). The waitresses are multi-lingual. (More later.)

Close to the bone?

I took my granny to a book signing by Rolf Harris. Gran says to him, 'You're the singer who did *two little boy's* in the seventies aren't you?' Rolf looked really shocked and replied, ' No dear, I think that was Gary Glitter.....'

The harbour police were on patrol on the Thames. Suddenly they saw a small boat with two Pakistanis paddling furiously for the shore. They ask the two guys, "What are you doing?" The Pakistanis answer: "We're going to invade London!" Police: "Hah, just the two of you?" Pakistanis: "No, we're the last ones. All the others are already here!"

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The Last Pigeon

Mrs Solomon, Mrs Levy and Mrs Lefkowitz were discussing their sons. Mrs Solomon says, 'My Sheldon is a world-famous lawyer with big-shot clients, a mansion in Beverley Hills and a summer home in Hawaii. He has a beautiful wife and everything a man could want.'

Mrs Levy says, 'That's nice: but let me tell you about my son Jonathan. He's a doctor: a world-famous researcher. He was nominated for a Nobel Prize in Medicine.'

Mrs Lefkowitz says, 'Well, my Hershel might not be rich or famous, but his pee-pee is so long, ten pigeons can perch on it in a line!'

The ladies pause for thought and Mrs Solomon says, 'Actually, I have a confession to make. Sheldon's an up-and-coming lawyer in L.A., but he doesn't have a mansion or a summer home.'

Mrs Levy says, 'I've got a confession too. Jonathan's a very good doctor but he was never nominated for a Nobel Prize.' Mrs Solomon and Mrs Levy look expectantly at Mrs Lefkowitz.

'Well, all right,' says Mrs Lefkowitz. 'The last pigeon has to stand on one leg.'

The Gypsy

Zoe was most concerned and went to see her local doctor. 'I've got green marks on the inside of my thighs,' she complained to the doctor.

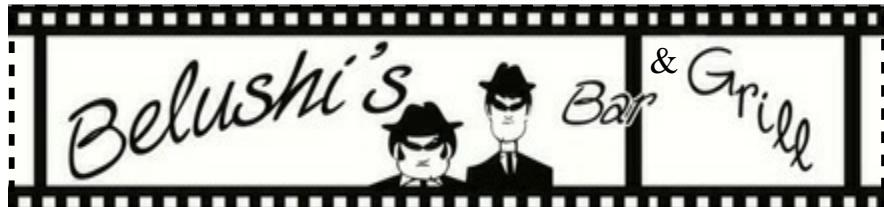
The doctor got her to remove her clothing and get on the couch for an examination. 'Hmmm,' he murmured. 'I've only seen this problem once before.'

'What is it?' cried Zoe.

'Have you had sex with a gypsy?' asked the doctor.

'Well yes I have,' confessed Zoe.

'That's the problem,' said the doctor. 'Next time you see him, tell him his earings aren't made of gold.'



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An insurance salesman is trying to convince a young wife to take out a policy on her husband. The woman can't make her mind up, so the salesman tries being blunt. 'Be honest,' he says, 'if your husband dies tomorrow, what do you think you'd get?' The woman thinks for a moment, then says, 'I suppose I'd get a budgie.'



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The Ferris Wheel

Two gays, Danny and Bruce, went to the fairground. Danny said he wanted to go on the Ferris Wheel but Bruce was too scared, so Danny went on his own. Round and round the wheel went suddenly the wheel came off its pivot and flung poor Danny, who was on the top of the wheel, crashing to the ground.

'Oh my God!' said Bruce, 'are you hurt pumpkin?'

'Hurt? Of course I'm fu**in' hurt!' said Danny. 'Ten times around and you didn't even wave once!'

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The fight with Kelly.

A man walks into a bar with his arm in a plaster cast.

'What happened to you? asked the bartender.

'I got in a fight with Kelly.'

'Kelly? He's only a small guy - he must have had something in his hand.'

'He did - a sledge-hammer.'

'Didn't you have anything in your hand?'

'I did - Mrs Kelly's left breast. And a beautiful thing it was too, but not much use in a fight!'

Banco Sabadell offer CAM solution.

Sabadell has announced it will exchange CAM customer investments in *participaciones preferentes* and *deuda subordinada* for shares. It will buy back 100% of the face value at a price reflecting the average price of the last ten days prior to the closing of the offer, or at least 2.3 euros per share. Their value last week would result in investors assuming an initial loss in the region of 35 to 40%. On the plus side, the bank has offered these customers up to an additional 24% back via 16 payments every four months over a four year period at a guaranteed annual interest rate of 6% - but only if they do not sell any of the shares in the meantime. In addition Sabadell believe that annual dividends of between 4 and 5% would also be paid. However people who hold CAM *quotas participativas* still face uncertainty as these are not part of Sabadell's buyout package. To the 30,000 who say that they were mis-sold this product, Sabadell say that they will offer 'personalised solutions' which will provide a 'win-win' opportunity for the bank and customers.(Their words, not mine.)

Plataforma CAM are a pressure group of CAM investors who are taking legal action to recoup their investments and they advise investors to refuse the Sabadell offer. Their website in Spanish is at <http://plataformacam.com/> (This article is provided as general information, not advice.)

CAM Bank and developer lose important court case.

The First Instance Court of Hellín on June 8 returned their verdict in favour of the group of 47 homeowners in their case against the CAM Bank and developer, Cleyton GES SL .

The court rule that 1.5 Million Euros should be returned to the 47 members of the Finca Parcs Action Group for properties that were never built at the abandoned Las Higueras, Finca Parcs development close to Agramón, Albacete.

The Judge declared the 55 sales contracts terminated due to "serious breaches" by the developer, in particular, "the long and indefinite delay in delivery of the properties, the failure to obtain the First Occupation Licences and the lack of Bank Guarantees for deposits paid by the buyers". The Judge also stated that CAM Bank "failed in its legal obligations to control the use of off-plan deposits paid in advance for this development".

This was a very important judgement and gives hope to hundreds of people who have paid in full for properties around the Orihuela Costa which have either been uncompleted or have a developer's mortgage attached to the deed. CAM Bank was due to auction the properties in Bosque del Lomas III (which all contained developer's mortgages) this month, but have now, following this judgement, postponed the auctions indefinitely.

Sight & Sound

Sadie went to her doctor and confessed to an embarrassing problem. 'I fart all the time, doctor, but they're soundless and they have no odour. In fact, since I've been here, I've farted at least twenty times. What can I do?'

'Here's your prescription, Sadie. Take these pills three times a day for seven days and come back and see me in a week.'

The next week, a very upset Sadie marched into the doctor's office. 'Doctor, I don't know what was in those pills, but the problem is worse! I'm farting just as much, and they're still soundless, but now they smell terrible! What do you have to say for yourself?'

'Calm down, Sadie,' said the doctor soothingly. 'Now that we've fixed your sinuses, we'll work on your hearing.'

Lime Bar Golf Society Los Altos, Orihuela Costa

The golf societies venue for the 13th June 2012 was held at La Finca Golf Course.

It can only be described as perfect for golf with the course in very good condition. Although the scores were fairly moderate the 23 players enjoyed a wonderful days golf and although very warm, the occasional cooling breeze made it tolerable.

The competition was in the stableford format, and the scores were recorded, as follows:-

Nearest the Pin on the 3rd was Steve Cottle.

Nearest the Pin on the 6th was Dave Lathham.

Nearest the Pin on the 13th was Damien Steed.

Nearest the Pin on the 16th was Dave Cahill.

Best Guest Arthur Jones 34 points
Silver Class runner up was Don Martin with a score of 30 points.

Silver Class winner was Paul Abbott with a score of 31 points.

Gold Class runner up was Steve Cottle with 34 points.

Gold Class winner was Dave Lathham with a score of 36 points.

A day's golf in pleasant company, with a thank you to George Reilly who manages these events for us and also thanks to the Staff at The Lime Bar for a most enjoyable meal. Anyone wishing Join our friendly society just need to phone George on 693 789 082 or contact the Lime Bar at Via Park III Los Altos.

(Colin Clarke)



Crafty Scouser!

A Liverpool girl goes to the welfare office to register for child benefit.

"How many children?" asks the welfare officer.

"Ten" replies the Liverpool girl,

"Ten?" says the welfare worker.

"What are their names?"

"Nathan, Nathan, Nathan, Nathan, Nathan, Nathan, Nathan, Nathan and Nathan"

"Doesn't that get confusing?"

"Naah..." says the Liverpool girl, "It's great because if they are out playing in the street I just have to shout 'Nathan yer dinner's ready!' or 'Nathan go to bed now!' and they all do it."

"What if you want to speak to one individually?" says the curious welfare worker.

"That's easy," says the Liverpool girl... "I just use their surnames"

Phil Herdman

New Bus Service, Playa Flamenca - Guardamar - La Marina - Alicante's El Altet Airport.

The Costa Azul bus network has announced the launch of a new direct service between Playa Flamenca and Alicante airport, which will run in addition to the express service that also operates from Torrevieja.

The service, which starts operations on the 1st July, will also collect and drop off at La Marina and Guardamar and will offer 4 services each way until 31st August. The bus to the airport will depart the Mercadona roundabout at Playa Flamenca at 08:00, 10:30, 15:00 and 17:30, picking up at the bus station in Guardamar at 08:30, 11:00, 15:30 and 18:00, then at the Mercadona roundabout of La Marina at 08:40, 11:10, 15:40 and 18:10, before reaching the destination of Alicante's El Altet airport at 09:10, 11:40, 16:10 and 18:40.

The service from the airport will depart at 09:15, 11:45, 16:15 and 18:45, taking around 30 minutes to reach La Marina, 40 minutes to reach Guardamar and just 70 minutes to reach Playa Flamenca.

This provisional service will be welcomed by many a resident and tourist alike and will provide a much more cost effective service from the airport, without the risk of using unlicensed and illegal taxis, which are also going to be facing further crack-downs during the summer as licensed taxis from Orihuela City will be allowed to operate on the coast for the first time. (Source: The Leader & www.costazul.net)

I assume that, similar to the Torrevieja service, this may not operate on Fiesta days.

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PHOENIX GOLF SOCIETY

The June monthly outing was held at El Plantio Golf Course near Alicante Airport. The weather was hot and the course was in good condition. After a hard fought contest the results were as follows:- Overall winner - Tim Ryan, Gold Category - Richard Hurst, Silver Category - Peter Brain, Bronze Category - Terry Dunn, Best Guest was Gary Hesketh, Nearest the pins were - Terry Dunn, Gary Hesketh and John Searson, The must try harder trophy went to Jim Storey with the two free games going to Andy Edwards and Dave Wightman.

The latest recruit to the lets go hang-gliding without a hang glider is Captain Peter Brain who attempted a back flip and ended up with his ankle in plaster. Details of both clubs can be found at the Phoenix Bar Via Park 5.

(Rob Hughes)



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Changes re prescription charges.

The changes to the new prescription charges (see May issue for details) will start on July 1, this year. The Health Secretary General, Pilar Farjas, has announced that the 44 million people who use the national health system have now been given an extra identification code which will indicate how much they will have to pay for their medicines. The software for the computerised health system has been adapted to incorporate new data from the social security and tax offices. The swapping of the various information has already revealed that more than 200,000 were falsely claiming to be pensioners in order to get free medicines!

Sra Farjas indicated that 83% of pensioners (earning less than €18,000) will pay less than €8 per month, while 18% (who earn more than €18,000) will pay less than €18 per month. The new coding, numbering 1 (nothing to pay) to 6 will appear on the printed prescription, which can then be scanned by the chemist/farmacia.

There are hundreds of questions still to be answered on the scheme, for example, how can one claim for overpayment?, how are couples who are taxed together treated?, why do non-Spanish European pensioners have to pay anything when their national government pays so much to the Spanish for their health care?

The Ministry of Health is to exclude 456 medicaments from public financing. The proposal would save the Government more than €440 million. The list includes medicaments against migraine, inflammation, coughs, haemorrhoids and psoriasis. More details of these next month and more health news. I expect that this column will become a regular one for several months yet.

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Spain, the 'greed' continues!

94% of Spanish directors consider it feasible that their companies could resort to corruption. They said gifts and bribes would be accepted to achieve their objectives. The number compares to 56% as the European average. The latest survey from Ernst & Young showed however that cash bribes are falling in number.

The banks are getting the homes of owners who have been evicted for lack of payment, at 50% of their true worth! The claim is made by the consumers' organisation, FACUA. The organisation says that the banks have been using a subsidiary to bid in the auction to lower the price. The law allows the banks to buy the homes at auction provided they beat the other bidders and reach at least 50% of the value of the property's worth. After that the mortgage owner or their guarantors still have to find and pay back the additional amounts.

The sheer wastage of taxpayer's money in Valencia continues to astound. In the latest shocker, it seems that an architect was paid €94 million to design Valencia's City of Arts & Sciences. You may recall a previous report where I wrote that he was paid €15 million for the design of three towers, neither of which have been built! The architect, Santiago Calatrava, says his fees are 'modest' and low by international standards.

The Spanish Supreme Court Chief Justice and president of the General Council of the Judiciary, Carlos Divar, has resigned from his position as the top judge in Spain. It is alleged that Divar charged more than €30,000 to his expense account for more than 30 extended private weekend breaks at top class hotels in Marbella and other resorts. Divar, who denied the charge, said the 'breaks' were work related but couldn't prove it. For each trip away he was also accompanied by a team of six bodyguards, whose accommodation, food and transport came to a significant additional cost.

The anti-corruption prosecutor has begun legal action against the former directors of Novacaixagalicia Bank for having concealed from the bank's board and the Bank of Spain the amount of money they awarded themselves in the form of early retirement packages, to which they were allegedly not entitled. Novacaixagalicia, which was formed after the merger of Caixa Galicia Savings Banks and Caixanova, needed two capital injections via the state Orderly Bank Restructuring Fund (FROB) totaling 3.7 billion euros. The current vice president, the ex-chairman, the former deputy chairman and two former directors are reportedly involved, the latter four taking home €2 million excluding their board payments.

Other News

An ex-councillor from the Spanish North African enclave of Cueta was arrested before boarding the ferry to the Spanish port of Algeciras. The problem? 690 kilos of hashish in the back of the van he was driving. He had no idea the drugs were there and had borrowed the van to carry out a move, but he couldn't give any details of who he borrowed the van from. I believe him, don't you?



Anyone who has tried to swat a cockroach will know those insects' strange ability, in the heat of pursuit, to disappear. Robert Full and his colleagues at the University of California, Berkeley, have now worked out how they do this—and taught a miniature robot to copy the feat - God know why! Dr Full had been using high-speed photography to study how cockroaches employ their antennae to sense and cross gaps. When the researchers made the gaps wider, they saw the animals flipping back underneath the ledge at the edge of the gap, rather than jumping across the empty space. As they report in the Public Library of Science, cockroaches running towards a gap suddenly grip the edge with the hook-like claws on their rear legs and swing 180° to land firmly underneath the ledge, upside down. They can pull off this stunt in a fifth of a second—so fast that the animals' bodies are subject to between three and five times the force of g. So when you can't see the scuttling blighters, they are underneath!



Okay, maybe not the sort of guy you would like to see come through the front door with your daughter, but this is the matador Juan Jose Padilla (above), also known as the 'Cyclone of Jerez.' Juan Jose suffered some serious gorings in the ring, the first in 2001 and the most serious in October 2011 when the bull took his left eye. He returned to the ring in March 2012 and was awarded two ears for his performance, a singular honour. But this time he has been in trouble with the police. While being driven home by a friend at 3.30am one morning, the police tried to breathalyse his driver when Juan Jose punched the breathalyser out of the hands of the policeman and then proceeded to 'tuck into' the policemen. He escaped a custodial sentence last month as he paid one of the injured policemen €1,800, the court a €400 fine and had no previous convictions.

A Brazilian waiter (see photo) dressed up as an Arab Sheik and defrauded Getafe football club in a million € agreement. Getafe cancelled the agreement last April after detecting that the cheques from the Arabs, who were going to purchase the club, had no funds. The fraudsters passed themselves off as intermediaries, in exchange for large commissions, convincing the clubs that the Arabs would make large investments. When the club realised that they had been duped, the fraudsters were long gone. There



Grab it while you can!

Amelia was left on the shelf and was resigned to a life on her own. One afternoon as she was strolling through the park, a man jumped out from behind a tree and said, 'This is a stick-up!' 'I haven't got any money,' she said, giving the would-be robber her handbag. 'I'm going to search you,' growled the robber. He put his hand inside her blouse and felt inside her bra - then ran his hands up and down her legs and his fingers searched EVERYWHERE. Finding nothing, he turned to walk away. 'Don't stop searching,' she said. 'I can write you a cheque.'

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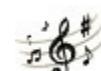
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The Accordion

What's the difference between an Uzi and an accordion?
The Uzi stops after 25 rounds.



What is an accordion good for?

Learning how to fold a map.

Why are accordionists' fingers like lightning?
They rarely strike the same spot twice.

Following a late-night gig, an accordion player woke up in the morning and realised he had left his accordion on the back seat of his car which was parked out on the street. Convinced that the instrument would have been stolen overnight, he dashed out in his pyjamas and, sure enough, saw that the side rear window of the car had been smashed. But when he looked into the back seat, he saw not only his accordion but two more accordions.

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The Honeymoon

A honeymoon couple returned home barely on speaking terms.
The best man asked the groom what the problem was.

The groom explained: 'After making love on the first night, I got up to go to the bathroom and I put a 50 euro note on the pillow without thinking.'

'Don't worry,' said the best man reassuringly. 'She'll get over it. She surely didn't think that you've been saving yourself all these years?'

'Maybe,' said the groom, 'but I don't know if I'll get over it - she gave me 20 euros change!'

On the first day home after the honeymoon, the husband said, 'If you make the toast and pour the juice, breakfast will be ready.'

'How thoughtful,' said the wife. 'What are we having?'
'Toast and juice.'

What's happening in July?

As the temperature is hiked-up in July, so is the entertainment. For a comprehensive list of what is happening locally and throughout Spain, go to this website - http://www.entertainmentinspain.com/July%20festivals_events_in_spain1.htm

It also covers future months as well and is a good reference site. July also sees the *Fiesta San Fermin* with its famous bull run, which takes place from July 6 to July 14. The following photos were taken at previous runs.



'Here come the boys!'



'Say "Hello" to my little friends!'



'I can wait all day!'



'What a tangle!'



'Gotcha!'



Still more airport lunacy!

You may recall I reported last month that a hold was put on developments at Corvera Airport. This was because no one had looked into the question of sharing airspace with the Air Force at San Javier and as you can guess, Wing Commander Paco did not like to share his fighter's airspace with RyanAir. So the Ministry of Defence in Madrid has now appointed Colonel Emilio Gracia to oversee the project of reclassifying and coordinating the airspace between Murcia's San Javier and Corvera airports. Meanwhile, the Minister of Public Works for the region of Murcia has reported that the new airport will be operational in October.....honestly! My advice would be to poke your head out your front door and check the sky for flying pigs.

The regional government of Murcia is due to renegotiate their €200 million guarantee for the construction of Corvera airport. This guarantee was granted to Aeromur, led by the majority shareholder and developer of the project, Sacyr, to enable them to complete the construction work. The current agreement states that repayments of the loan are not due to commence until after the airport has been operational for 12 months. However, the guarantee carried the stipulation that it would only be valid for two years, and as such is due for negotiation. If the airport launched this May, as was originally intended, it would not have been necessary for this to happen. Yesterday local Minister Jose Ballesta commented how Aeromur had been paying the interest on the loan up until now, but that as the airport is taking longer than planned to open, they should be prepared to make further loan repayments.

So what will happen if the region is unwilling, or unable to guarantee extension of the loan? Recent reports in the press that Corvera airport is "on hold" have done little to improve confidence in the project, making it a distinct possibility that the banks will be nervous about extending the duration of the loan for the project - regardless of who the guarantors are. Equally so, if the airport does become operational as planned, but fails to provide a return on the investment, the Regional government of Murcia would still be liable for the €200 million loan repayment.

A further concern likely to affect the process is the matter of the credit rating of the region of Murcia being downgraded by both Moody's and Fitch's credit rating agencies over the last few weeks to 'junk' status. It would be irresponsible for the regional government of Murcia to continue to underwrite such a massive contingent liability.

Equally ominous is the fact that the proposed Paramount Theme Park Project, seen by the local government as the panacea for all its economic woes and new airport, has still not got a single investor, despite the land being bought.

The city council of Benidorm has approached the central government in Madrid and requested that both San Javier and Corvera airport be closed and the capacity of Alicante's El Altet airport used to absorb all flights.

Meanwhile that farce of an airport - Castellon, completed over a year ago and still no flights since March 2011 - has found that a wild rabbit colony around the airport has grown to an estimated 4,000! As there has been no activity at the airport, the rabbits have been breeding like.....well you know! They are now digging holes everywhere including burrowing under the runways and fences, and I doubt that any pilot would look forward to a welcoming committee of a couple of hundred bunnies on the runway! More than 20 falcons are now being used to reduce their numbers.



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Quickies:

- A guy with a pistol rushed into a bar in Via Park III and snarled, 'Which bastard here had sex with my wife?' A voice was heard in the background, 'You don't have enough bullets, mate!'
- The Doctor looked me squarely in the eye. "You seriously need to reduce your alcohol intake or you'll ruin what's left of your liver completely."
- "Piss off, Doc," I replied. "You always say that when it's your round. Get the beers in, you tight git."

Idiot Of The Month Award - a particularly busy month!

I am not sure whether it was the arrival of the hot weather or some other unfathomable factor, but last month there were plenty of contestants for the award. I have selected just three.

In third place this month are all those who have been ‘balconing.’ ‘Balconing’ is a particular lunacy whereby guests in hotels or apartments jump from balcony to balcony endangering life & limb. Several people have lost their lives doing it so far this year and in most of the cases the unfortunates have been British and probably ‘pissed’ as most of the incidents take place in the early morning hours , usually between 2 and 4am. However last week the British lost the ‘title’ when a 19-year-old German man tragically lost his life at around 4am in the morning, while ‘balconing’ in an apartment block in Lloret de Mar in Girona.

Second place goes to Carmen Vela. Carmen, a politician, announced in *Nature* magazine that ‘Spain has too many scientists’ and that the ‘R & D scientists in Spain need to be “thinned-out” to be made stronger.’ (I can recall a chap with a funny moustache saying the same about the Germans in the first half of the 20th century.) This despite the fact that Spain, per capita, produces less than half the scientists produced in the UK and much less than the western European average. By the way, Vela is Spain’s Secretary of State for Research and Development!

But pride of place this month goes to an unnamed gentleman in Granada who decided to stick his penis in a small metal pipe which was just two centimetres in diameter and five centimetres long. Quite an achievement you might think BUT the problem was he couldn’t get his *todger* out of the tube! So this very unwise 52-year-old heads off straight to the *Hospital Virgen de las Nieves* in Granada. Here the emergency medical staff were baffled as to how they could remove the metal pipe from the, by now, strangulated appendage. The cutting equipment at the hospital was totally unsuitable for the task as it would damage the captive organ and the doctors considered it impossible to remove the pipe. As the remaining choices appeared to be either gangrene or amputation, one bright medic decided to call the *Bomberos* - the Fire Brigade. But when they arrived it was found that their equipment was better suited to



removing people from crashed cars than inquisitive penises from small metallic objects. When all appeared lost, one of the firemen decided that he might have, if you pardon the expression, a tool which might do the job. He rushed home to his garage and returned with a small DREMEL drill with a small circular cutting saw. After two further hours, they managed to free the trapped appendage of the by now heavily sedated man. (See photos above and across.)

Since the incident, there has been a ruckus at the hospital as some photos and videos were taken of the incident and available on the ‘net. The hospital has launched an enquiry saying that the photos etc., were a serious violation of the individual’s ‘right to privacy and confidentiality.’ Personally I feel that the guy’s face, name, etc should appear on a poster with the advice ‘Don’t put things where they don’t belong!’

You can still see a video relating to the event here -

<http://www.ideal.es/videos/granada/noticias/1686752854001-bomberos-salvan-pene-urgencias.html>



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On the stock market today: Helium was up, feathers were down, paper was stationary, fluorescent tubes were down in light trading, knives were up sharply, pencils were down a few points, elevators were up and down, escalators experienced a slight decline, mining equipment hit rock bottom, sun peaked at midday, the market for raisins dried up, vacuum cleaners picked up, caravans were trailing, socks were unchanged, balloon prices were inflated, origami folded and the bottom fell out of disposable nappies.

The History of Spain, Part 29. The Rise of the Carlists.

We saw in Part 28 how King Fernando VII reintroduced the concept of absolute monarchy quashing the Liberal Movement. But the seeds of the French Revolution and early Spanish liberalism, continued to take root and spread. It was the army in particular where the need for change was debated, with free-thinking officers flocking to Masonic lodges and other liberal clubs where the new liberal ideas and the 1812 Constitution were explored and debated. (The Freemasons became the bogeyman for Spanish reactionaries even up to and including the Franco regime.)

In 1820, an army of reinforcements under the leadership of Colonel Rafael de Riego (see right) was awaiting transport from Cadiz to an uncertain future in the by now revolutionary colonies. Headed by Riego, the troops revolted in the name of liberalism. This was the first army *pronunciamiento* (a 'pronouncement' of rebellion), but definitely not the last. From 1820 to 1874 there was one every 20 months on average. A liberal lion had been let loose on the Spanish political scene.



Garrison throughout Spain rose up in support of Riego and after several months of procrastination Fernando pledged to reform. However, it was not long before the liberals began to split into conservative (*moderato*) and radical (*exaltado*) factions, the classic Spanish division between those who wanted slow, orderly change and those championing social revolution. This led to a period of civil disorder, and sensing weaknesses in his liberal opponents Fernando appealed to his fellow European monarchs for help.

The French king sent an army to the aid of Fernando in 1823, called the 'Hundred Thousand Sons of St. Louis.' Although this was more of a military procession than an invasion, Fernando seized the opportunity to unleash a reign of terror against the liberals, with such ferocity that even the French were shocked. Riego was dragged through Madrid in a coal scuttle and then hung, drawn and quartered in public. Hundreds more went to the gallows and the mere possession of a picture of Riego carried the death penalty. Fernando was once more an absolute monarch.

The remaining decade of Fernando's reign was devastating for Spain. The countryside became depopulated and infested with bandits, poverty was rife, smuggling was rampant, trade and industry was in a shambles and the king's ministers were little more than sycophantic bungling bureaucrats.

By 1829, Fernando's three marriages had failed to produce children and it was assumed by many that his brother Carlos would inherit the throne. But one year later Fernando married his Italian niece, Marie Cristina, who soon became pregnant. The followers of Carlos, called Carlists, were outraged but were comforted as they believed that a woman could not rule as a monarch in Spain. But what they did not know was that in 1789 a secret session of the *cortes* repealed the Salic Law which dated from the early 1700's, thereby opening the door to a female monarch.

In 1830 a daughter, Princess Isabella, was born. Three years later Fernando died and Marie Cristina was named regent for Isabella. But the Pretender Don Carlos, who was in exile in Portugal, announced 'Now I am king.' The nation braced itself for Spain's first major civil war.

Don Carlos (see right) was a pious individual and staunchly anti-liberal. He wished to return his country to glorious days of Felipe II (1555-1598). Unlike his brother Fernando, he had plenty of backbone and was the only Spanish royal to stand up to the badgering of Napoleon. But he possessed absurdly romantic and quixotic ideas. He named Our Lady of the Sorrows as *generalísimo* of his armies. The Duke of Wellington called him 'one of the silliest devils I ever knew.' His Carlist support came from those who wanted to establish a separate Bourbon reactionary line and included the ranks of traditional Spain - clergy, ultra-conservative monarchists, and peasants - especially from the northern areas; it was this rural peasant stock who would later form part of Franco's army in 1936. Carlism was an exceptionally long-lived movement being a significant player in Spanish politics from 1833 until the end of the Franco regime in 1975 as a social and political force, and one of the main, pro-Franco participants in the Spanish Civil War in the 1930's.



The First Carlist War was fought over a six year period (1833-39) and claimed 140,000 Spanish lives. The Carlists were ferocious in battle and soldier-priests of the 'Exterminating Angel' led their troops in appalling barbarities. But the entire army, fortified by troops and supplies from Britain and France, remained loyal to Isabel and the regency. The war also witnessed the birth of popular anti-clericalism which would reach ghastly proportions in the next century.

In 1837, the Carlists gambled all on a disastrous march which reached the outskirts of Madrid; but they had lost the war, because as one historian put it, 'They were even madder and more foolish than their adversaries.' A peace was signed



at Vergara in 1839 recognising Isabel as Spain's legitimate queen. Don Carlos retired to France with several thousand followers but there were many die-hards remaining in Spain including hundreds who choose suicide rather than accepting a female on the throne - among them two fanatics who simultaneously skewered each other with their bayonets!

Just one year later, in 1840, a new coup (*pronunciamiento*) led by General Espartero ousted Maria Cristina. It seems that Maria Cristina (left) lost the support of the generals after she secretly married an ex-corporal of the guard and son of a shopkeeper. (Don't forget that Spanish 'liberalism' then was very different to the 'liberalism' of today.) Marie Cristina was referred to as the 'royal whore' when she failed to conceal a series of pregnancies. However, Espartero's 'reign' would last only two years. More next month.

Maybe, just once, someone will call me 'sir' without adding, 'you're making a scene.'

Homer Simpson, *The Simpsons*.

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Here come the Scuds!

When the air raid siren went off in Tel Aviv during the Gulf War, Hannah rushed down the stairs towards the basement of their block of flats. Issac was much slower so she stopped and shouted back up the stairs, 'Come on, Issac, get moving will you?' Issac shouted down to her, 'Wait a minute, Hannah. I'm looking for my teeth.' 'Never mind your silly teeth, Issac,' Hannah shouted back, 'what do you think the Iraqis are dropping on us - smoked salmon bagels?'

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Dream Hills (1) AGM

The following quotas (annual urbanisation fees) were agreed at the recent AGM: Houses - €193.52; Ground floor apartments/bungalows - €145.14 and First floor apartments - €129.02. These were payable in June 2012. The quotas are lower than last year's, which is good news.

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Music

The first Sunday I sang in the church choir, 200 people changed their religion. Fred Allen

'Did I Shave My Legs For This?'

Country music song title

-You sing like the Spice Girls.

-Thanks.

-Unfortunately, it wasn't a compliment

Simon Cowell to contestant in Pop Idol.

If music be the food of love, stand by for a good 'rogering!'

Jingle on Planet Rock

Michael Jackson will be remembered for how he touched people.

Martine McCutcheon

-Your band must arrive on the film-set promptly at 8 o'clock in the morning.

-Jesus Christ, my boys don't start vomiting 'till eleven.

Film Producer and Tommy Dorsey

When Phyllis Diller started to play, Steinway came down personally and rubbed his name off the piano.

Bob Hope

Madam, you have between your legs an instrument capable of giving pleasure to thousands - and all you can do is scratch it.

Thomas Beecham to a cellist

What has 300 legs and seven teeth?

The front row at a Willie Nelson concert.

Age Concern España now have a website in English.

You can find it at www.acespana.org

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