

# THE DREAM SCENE

Issue no. 66 1st of August 2012



*Bienvenido a todos!*

Welcome to the August edition of the Dream Scene, and what a hot month July has been with peak temperatures in the low 30's locally. The strong winds and high temperatures have contributed to many serious fire outbreaks nationally. These have been visible from aircraft travelling from Northern Europe and the damage to date has been extensive. So far, around seven people have lost their lives, some, in Catalonia, after jumping in to the sea to escape the flames. Two fire-fighting helicopters crashed in northern Valencia, with one pilot killed.

Locally, the Orihuela Town Council have been attempting to cut costs by cutting back on public street lighting, but this hasn't happened locally yet. There is however, a marked deterioration in the collection of rubbish, particularly garden waste. Large mounds of dried palm leaves etc., are now led around the area and pose a fire risk. The Aldi store between Entre Golf and Dream Hills II is scheduled to close down at the end of August. And the Formula One race in Valencia has been moved to New Jersey. This will save the region about €20.7 million annually. There is a possibility that Valencia and Barcelona might share the race in the future, but there is no money available now.

The austerity measures and tax increases are taking their toll. Development work in relation to the co-payment system introduced for prescriptions has unearthed major abuse of the health system. The government has reported that 150,000 SIP (health) cards of dead people were being used to obtain medicines, and that 800,000 cards were identified from owners who were no longer in the Social Security system. Andalusia has been highlighted for major fraudulent use of the health cards and although the new scheme has only been in use for a month, nationally there has been a drop of 15 - 20% in the number of prescriptions issued. There is more on the co-payment system on page 18.

The EU has virtually forced the government to introduce increased IVA (VAT) charges a year earlier than expected. Although it was originally announced that these new rates would become effective from end July, the government decided to delay them until September 1, 2012, to assist the tourist industry. You can see details of these new rates on page 7. Spain is also tightening up residency eligibility. See page 18.

This month's issue is very much a 'mixed bag' with minimum comment inside on the crisis; it is after all for most people - the holidays! Aside from all the 'doom and gloom,' the summer months in Spain are, despite the heat, times for parties and fiestas. The various Moors & Christians events are well worth visiting but do try and get a seat at whatever venue you visit, as standing in the heat for long periods can be torturous. Torrevieja has already had and is having a number of events concentrating on music, particularly with the Habaneras. The further you are prepared to travel the more you will see!

Expats in Spain are a very, very generous bunch. Their voluntary work for a myriad of charitable organisations and their kindness when it comes to donations is admirable. Take a look at the 'Before' and 'After' photos of the child at the bottom of the page. This charity does tremendous work throughout the world, and this local effort to raise some funds needs YOUR support. If you cannot attend the event, which promises to be great fun, maybe you can drop off a small donation or some raffle prizes at Victor's Bar - Laguna Vista in Lago Jardin II..

Thanks to Pete & Sue from the Lime Bar for their kindness and offers of help to The Dream Scene.

Wishing you all a wonderful month and do please take care in the sun!

Mick & Tid

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Last week, Catalonia, which has an economy the size of Portugal, said it would follow Valencia and Murcia in asking for help from the Central Government to overcome its monetary problems. Weighed down by debt of 42 billion euros, the economic powerhouse of Spain, is struggling to pay its suppliers, hospital staff etc. The Spanish lottery will now have to fund the regions to the tune of several billion €

Although various government ministers continue to deny that Spain will need a bailout, the rest of the world seems to think it is inevitable.

The markets will not give Spain a break until the banks' problems have been properly addressed. As it stands, the bank bailout has been based on insufficient data. Three audits/reviews were to be carried out and the first two were done by the IMF and two international consultancies. These were compiled quickly and based largely on information provided by The Bank of Spain. These were quick superficial audits which took top-down assumptions about property prices and economic growth and modelled them against the banks' loan books. The real audit is still being conducted by the big four accounting firms, who are opening up the loan books of every Spanish bank to see what crawls out. This will take several more months and the markets will remain jumpy until a credible picture of the Spanish banks' debts finally emerges.

A High Court judge has indicted former Chairman Rodrigo Rato of Bankia and 32 other board members of the beleaguered bank, as well as that of the parent company Financial Savings Bank (BFA). They are targets of an investigation into alleged financial crimes in the run-up to the institution's collapse - the biggest debacle in Spanish financial history.

The most affected region in Spain for property foreclosures during the first quarter this year is by far is the Community of Valencia, with 4,562 foreclosures. They are followed by Andalusia with 3,272; Madrid with 2,913; Catalonia with 1,874 and the Balearic Islands with 1,021 repos. Total foreclosures for the first quarter were 18,424 - a record. The Supreme Judicial Council noted that the process has accelerated in recent months.

France has increased its minimum wage to €9.4 per hour. The minimum wage in Spain is €2.6 per hour.

Spanish shares suffered their biggest one-day drop in two years during July after our Spanish region, Valencia, said it needed rescuing by its cash-strapped government and the country braced itself for at least 18 more months of recession.

The exit of capital from Spain has reached a new record for the year to April at €21.891 billion. The data also shows that the investments of foreign savers in the Spanish financial markets fell by nearly 60 billion €. These figures come from the Bank of Spain.

Spain has been left out in the sharing of the key economic posts in the Eurozone. The Governor of the Luxembourg Central Bank, Yves Mersch, was recommended by the Eurogroup to become a member of the European Central Bank. He would replace the Spanish, José Manuel González-Páramo, according to community sources. It means a loss of influence for Spain in Brussels.

Aside from an extremely hot July, the new cutbacks announced by the government and the announcement of the new IVA (VAT) rates have raised tempers and led to numerous demonstrations nationwide. Violence during these has not been excessive. Civil servants, including police and Guardia Civil also protested calling the cutbacks, particularly the removal of the extra payment at Christmas as a 'scam.' In one police district station in Madrid, Moratalaz, 30 vans which are normally used by the police for crowd control were found to have punctures. These were all in a secure compound.

How many Guardia Civils does it take to break an egg?  
None, it 'fell down the stairs.'

Shops in Madrid can now open 365 days a year. This new relaxation of the law could extend to the rest of Spain.

The Spanish transplant system has again set a new record. On Tuesday, June 28, there were 18 organ donations and 36 transplants performed in 24 hours in Spain. Spain has become a world leader in transplants over the past two decades.

Aqualandia have acquired a 70.76% share of Benidorm's Terra Mitica theme park. The €65 million deal saw Banco Sabadell (through their recent acquisition of CAM) and Bankia selling off their 49% stake, and the Generalitat Valenciana is selling 22.31% of their majority stake, keeping a 29.24% stake in the venture. Speculation is that this is simply to allow them to 'cash in' on the possible sale of the land if the Theme Park was to fold later.



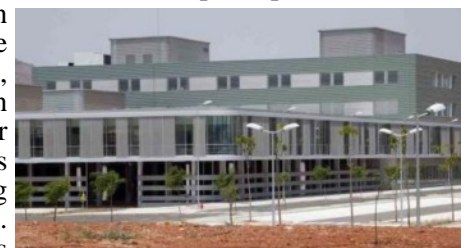
Terra Mitica opened in 2000, however it soon became apparent that it was little more than the brainchild of over-enthusiastic regional politicians, developers and bankers; a lack of visitors meant that many of planned attractions were never built. Shareholders, - including Paramount - have come and gone over the years and have had little impact. The Park leaves debts believed to be in excess of €45 million.

Eleven people have died in the last month from drowning in pools and beaches of Valencia, mostly male and aged over 66 years, according to data released by the Information and Coordination Centre Emergency Unit (CICU) and the Guardia Civil.

The economic crisis has not only affected the number of unemployed, it is also affecting the unemployment benefits. One third of those registered as unemployed - 34.6 percent - don't receive any aid. When based on the active population, the statistics reveal that almost half of the people who are unemployed receive no benefits.

The cutbacks are resulting in nearly 5,000 horses being sent to the abattoir every month. Some abattoirs now have a waiting list as they are coping with some 165 animals a day. Keeping a horse costs a minimum of €300 a month.

The 96-bed Guadalorce Hospital (photo) has been completed in Cártama on the Costa del Sol, but it has been empty for several months with no opening date planned.



The problem is the electricity company, Endesa, wants €2 million to install the electrical connection required. Endesa say that a nearby electrical substation will have to be expanded and no one wants to pay for it!

## Maths

Teacher: 'If you had one euro and you asked your father for another, how many euros would you have?'

Boy: 'One euro.'

Teacher: 'You don't know your arithmetic.'

Boy: 'You don't know my father.'

With my first child I can recall screaming, 'Get this thing out of me! Get this thing out of me! And that was just the conception.'  
Joan Rivers

## What's Up? continued

As from the 2nd of July AENA have applied an increase in air travel tax across all of their airports in Spain. The measure was approved earlier this year in the central government's draft budget, and will see airport taxes increase by an average of 10.2% - however certain airports such as Barajas and Madrid will see increases of almost 50%. The increases are said to vary from between 8 cents to 18 Euros, depending upon the airline and airport in question.

Ryanair has cancelled fifteen routes to Madrid and Barcelona because of the increased airport taxes. It means that 2,000 jobs will be lost and the airline says that it will take passenger numbers down by 2.3 million over a year.

Following the revelations concerning the hunting escapades of King Juan Carlos in Africa, the World Wildlife Fund Spain have finally decided to oust him as their honorary president.

The 'Nieuw Amsterdam' cruise liner has been diverted to Málaga port after the Moroccan Government refused permission to dock in Casablanca. The reason - most of the 1,564 passengers were gay. The owner of the liner, Holland America Line, and the travel agency who arranged the trip, RSVP Vacations which specialises in the gay market, said it was the Moroccan authorities who rejected any homosexuals - half of them from the United States - disembarking in the Maghreb Country.

The police arrested two men, a 45 year old Briton and an 18 year old Spaniard in Llíber in eastern Alicante suspected of a crime against public health after discovering the largest plantation of cannabis in Europe, with nearly 10,000 plants in 16 greenhouses (inset). The two had applied for a license for the installation of greenhouses devoted to growing vegetables, which had been refused permission by City Hall. A van with a false bottom was also seized. It is thought the crop was destined for Holland and Belgium.



An anti-corruption Prosecutor is studying official documents related to José Luis Baltar, the PP manager in Ourense Galicia, who for two decades governed Ourense. Over that time he accumulated a significant portfolio of properties and more than 100 vintage cars. Grants and jobs were handed out to relatives and cronies. His son is now taking over the job!

Outrageous allegations and disclosures concerning the 'dodgy' Duke of Palma, Iñaki Urdangarin, continue to surface. The latest in El Mundo states that he tried to pass two fake invoices for €2 million to the Valencian regime. It has also been revealed that the 'dodgy duke' is also on the payroll of Telefonica. They have just renewed their labour contract with him. He will be paid €1.5 million a year, and will also receive 1.2 million for the rental of his house in Washington, his car service, bodyguard and plane tickets. If Telefónica sacks the Duke, they will have to pay him €4.5 million. And what does he do for this money? *Nada, bupkis, ingenting, nichts, yì diǎn yě bù, sweet f.a.!* But what is surprising is that Telefonica has now announced that it will not be issuing a dividend this year due to their financial situation! No doubt the shareholders are very impressed.

The EU has also declared municipal taxes imposed on phone companies for erecting their mobile masts as illegal. The phone companies now claim for the taxes to be returned by more than 1,600 ayuntamientos who have been collecting 1.5% of their profits since 2008. The Luxembourg Court said that local Town Halls have no right to impose taxes for the use of antennas.

Brussels is to encourage Spain to increase the frequencies of the ITV/MOT inspections on cars and motorcyclists. Cars and motorbikes that are more than six years old will be inspected annually, and member states can impose tougher restrictions if they wish.

An ice cream seller was found lying on the floor of his van covered in 'hundreds & thousands.' Police say he topped himself.

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The Torrevejea Handball Club has closed the 2011/2012 season with a debt of €372,200! Those little balls must be very expensive.

The SGAE copy and performance rights organisation has been fined €1.7 million for trying to get paid for music played at weddings. The National Competition Commission, CNC, considers that the SGAE has abused its dominant position in applying tariffs for weddings, baptisms, and communions.

The new drug controls brought in on Spanish roads has resulted in half of the tests being positive. The DGT has started a new campaign of 'Zero tolerance' on drivers who have taken drugs or drunk alcohol. 101 drug tests were carried out in a week, and 90% of the positives said that they had consumed cocaine and cannabis. In 232,000 tests with the breathalyser resulted in 2,400 people were found positive for alcohol.

In the space of just TWO hours, nineteen people had been rescued from the sea off the La Mata beach in Torrevejea one day mid-month. It has also been reported that some of the lifeguards have been insulted and even physically attacked by bathers after preventing them from entering the sea. (A 76-year-old British man drowned in the Playa del Cura in Torrevejea on July 18.) A mix of high winds, very hot temperatures and very stupid people can often prove fatal.

The Socialist Junta de Andalucía will pay a fine of 12€million for software piracy. Unlicensed copies of software was distributed throughout the staff.

Meanwhile in Torrevejea, it is alleged that the brother of the councillor responsible for police and security received 31 contracts from the council in four years.

The Cabinet approved the draft for the reform of the Ley de Costas which extends the concessions for the properties in the public coastal land area to 75 years, and which may allow for sale of the property. Up to now the concessions were for 30 years, with an occasional concession to 60 years. Environmental and ecological organisations such as Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund, are most unimpressed saying it grants an amnesty to some and it will encourage others to flout the law.

Steer well clear of the knight in shining armour. He'll only want you to polish it. Anon.

When you are next in Torrevieja, take a good look at the Municipal Theatre (photo). Although the original budget was €6.4 million for a 20-month build, the project actually came in at €9.8 million and a 30-month build, 52.5% over budget and 10 months overdue! Why is it that local government contracts in Spain seem to be a license to print money - paid for of course by the tax payer?



The above is a bird's eye view of the new shopping centre, La Zenia Boulevard. Scheduled to open this autumn with a possible budget of around €180 million, you can bet that there will be few overruns in this project, it being for a multinational corporation, Grupo Auchan SA. Among the well-known names opening here are Supermarket Al Campo, Leroy Merlin, Decathlon, Worten, Primark, Inditex group (Zara, Pull & Bear, Massimo Dutti, Stradivarius, Oysho, Bershka and Zara Home) C&A and more. The three big players here, including the developer, are French.

Next time you are complaining about a neighbour's cat crapping in your garden.....take heart.



Things could be much worse! The Guardia Civil have arrested a 63-year-old Spaniard in Extramadura for keeping a lioness (see photo) next to his house in an urbanisation. The lioness was only discovered by the police when he came to sell it. The man purchased the nine-month-old lioness for €2,500 and believed he had all the correct documentation. The man has now been indicted 'as the alleged author of the crime of fraud'(?), and another of 'trafficking in threatened species'. What a surprise little *Paco* got when he went into that garden to get his ball back!

The tripartite ruling council in Orihuela, or the 'three-ring-circus' as it is now called, continues to meander from crisis to crisis. Recently the opposition (who hold a numerical majority) proposed a motion that most of the councillors' salaries be eliminated, except for four. However Mayor Monserrate Guillén, see inset, refused to put the proposal forward. Many, including two Clr members of the ruling coalition, stated that it was illegal to prevent the motion being voted on. The opposition PP is now taking the mayor and coalition to court on the matter and the two outspoken Clr members have been sacked from the governing team. While the partially completed projects such as the Emergency & Security Centre and the new school, continue to grow weeds, the Socialist/Green/Liberal coalition have been selling off land on the coast to generate funds. Land earmarked for a car pound at La Zenia opposite the Security Centre has been sold to accommodate yet another Chinese brick-a-brack shop. The socialists, the PSOE, now want greater freedom within the ruling council so that any contracts they make do not have to be countersigned by any other political group. Last winter, a payment of €800,000 which was scheduled for Orihuela Costa was 'diverted' to a number of inland locations. The farce continues.



Public money is like holy water; everyone helps himself.  
Italian proverb

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**The Spanish Maid.**

The Spanish maid asked her boss for a pay increase. The wife decided to question her about the raise. She asked: "Now Maria, why do you want a pay increase?"  
 Maria: "Well, Señora, there are tree reasons why I wanna increaze. The first ees that I iron better than ju."  
 Wife: "Who said you iron better than me?"  
 Maria: "Jor hozban he say so."  
 Wife: "Oh yeah?"  
 Maria: "The second reason eez that I am a better cook than ju."  
 Wife: "Nonsense, who said you were a better cook than me?"  
 Maria: "Jor hozban did"  
 Wife increasingly agitated: "Oh he did, did he???"  
 Maria: "The third reason is that I am better at sex than ju in the bed."  
 Wife, really boiling now and through gritted teeth asked "And did my husband say that as well?"  
 Maria: "No Señora..... The gardener did."  
 Wife: "So how much more do you want?"

**Problems**

A man goes to his doctor.  
 'I have a terrible problem,' says the man. 'My wife's pregnant, but we haven't had sex in over a year. Is there any way that it would be medically possible for her to get pregnant.'  
 'Oh, yes,' replies the doctor. 'It's a condition we in the profession call a "grudge pregnancy"; someone has obviously had it in for you.'

When I came into my hotel room last night I found a strange blonde in my bed. I would stand for none of that nonsense! I gave her exactly 24 hours to get out.  
 Groucho Marx

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### The Castaway

A man had been stranded on a desert island for ten years. In all that time he had never seen a soul while living on coconuts, shellfish and water.

Then one day, to his amazement, a gorgeous blonde stepped out of the sea wearing a tight black wet suit. She walked over to him and started caressing his beard.

'How long is it since you last had a cigarette?' She asked.

'Ten years,' he gasped. She slowly unzipped a waterproof pocket on her left sleeve and produced a packet of cigarettes with a lighter and lit a cigarette for him.

How he enjoyed that smoke and when he was finished she asked, 'And how long is it since you have tasted whiskey?'

'Ten years,' he croaked.

And she slowly unzipped the waterproof pocket on her right sleeve and brought out a bottle of whiskey.

'Gee, this is great,' he said, drinking half the bottle. 'I'd forgotten how just how good whiskey tasted.'

Then the lady began to slowly unzip the long fastening at the front of her wet suit and whispered seductively: 'And how long is it since you had some real fun?'

The man could hardly believe his luck. 'Don't tell me you've got a set of golf clubs in there as well!'

### The Euro 2012 Football Championship

The recent football championship generated great enthusiasm and interest locally. It is fair to say that the competition heralded a number of surprises, but the final success of Spain was never in doubt. Once their own country was eliminated, most expats cheered for Spain, as the photo of non-Spanish Spanish supporters below shows -



And on the right we have 'Asterix' & 'Obelix' who have just witnessed the Germans being hammered by the Italians.



The football provided one unlikely casualty, Francisco Fernández Fábregas (above), the 67-year-old Spanish ambassador to Poland. While enjoying a dinner at his official residence with some Spanish entrepreneurs in Warsaw during the French match, he made a number of remarks on camera such as 'Come on, let's screw the French' and 'Quick, more French champagne!' Hardly startling stuff, but he was sacked from the position just 13 days later. He had been ambassador to Poland since 2008.

### MAJOR CHANGES TO IVA (VAT) RATES.

The 4% rate – remains unchanged at 4% from September 1, 2012

This Reduced Rate is applied to all items that are considered to be of basic and primary need. It includes :

- Bread, frozen dough, eggs, cheese, milk, beans and fruit and vegetables.
- Books, magazines and newspapers.
- Medicines ( not for Animals though )
- Vehicles for the disabled, wheel chairs and other transport for the disabled.
- Prosthetics and implants.
- Official protected housing.

The 8% rate – to increase to 10% from September 1, 2012

This is applied to :

- Foodstuffs in general (Excepting those in the 4% band)
- Soft drinks.
- Animals that are to be for human consumption or breeding.
- Agricultural products, farming and forestry activities, such as seeds and fertilisers.
- Contact lenses and glasses.
- Disabled lifts and products for the diagnosis of illnesses.
- Health assistance services, social services, and dental work.
- Imported artworks and antiques.
- The sale of property, including garages and annexes.
- House construction (between promoter and contractor).
- Services supplied by artists and technicians.
- Hotel and restaurants
- Cleaning of streets and public gardens.
- Refuse collection.
- Public transport and Motorway Tolls.

The General Rate – 18%, due to rise to 21% on September 1, 2012

This rate is the general rate, which is applied to all other products, including :

- Alcoholic drinks and tobacco
- Animals used in bullfighting
- Agricultural machinery.
- CD's. & DVD's
- Devices for the diagnosis and monitoring of pregnancy.
- Television and radio services.
- Hairdressing \*
- Sports, cultural and recreational services, exhibitions and fairs \*
- Funeral services \*

\* Moved from the reduced rate category to the general rate.

### **In Therapy**

A psychologist was conducting a group therapy session with four young mothers and their small children. "You all have obsessions," he observed.

To the first mother, Mary, he said, "You are obsessed with eating. You've even named your daughter Candy."

He turned to the second Mom, Ann : "Your obsession is with money. Again, it manifests itself in your child's name, Penny."

He turned to the third Mom, Joyce : "Your obsession is alcohol. This too shows itself in your child's name, Brandy."

At this point, the fourth mother, Kathy, quietly got up, took her little boy by the hand, and whispered, "Come on, Dick, this guy has no idea what he's talking about. Let's pick up Peter, Willy, Percy and John Thomas from school and go get dinner. (Pete Dudman)

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### **French to penalise foreign second home owners.**

Approximately 200,000 Britons own second homes in areas such as the Dordogne and other parts of France, particularly those serviced by budget airlines. There are an estimated total 360,000 non-resident second home owners in France. Now, however, holiday home owners find themselves in the sights of President François Hollande as he seeks to tax the better-off to reduce France's large budget deficit.

On July 4th, the French government announced it was to increase taxes on foreign-owned second homes. Tax on rental income would rise from 20 per cent to 35.5 per cent, and capital gains tax on property sales would rise from 19 per cent to 34.5 per cent. The extra in each case is being labelled a "social charge".

A British Treasury source said on Wednesday night: "We will need to study the details. But we will of course challenge any proposal which breaches European single market laws and anti-discrimination rules."

It is understood that President Sarkozy proposed a similar tax increase last year which was also challenged by the British Government.

The rise in tax on rental income will be retrospective, from Jan 1 this year. The increase in capital gains tax applies from the end of this month, meaning property owners will have little time to escape the increased tax by selling their homes.

David Cameron infuriated the French last month by promising Britain would "roll out the red carpet" to wealthy French citizens and companies who wanted to emigrate and pay their taxes in Britain.

Holiday home owners already pay two other taxes to the French government: the *taxe fonciere*, which is paid by the house owner and the *taxe d'habitation*, which is paid by those who live in it. (Source: Telegraph online.)

Let's hope that the Spanish are never tempted to introduce similar legislation.

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## Letters to the Editor

### It must be Race Season in Dream Hills!

How do I know? The idiots are here again, thinking that the side roads are test tracks for Brand's Hatch. I thought that idiots kept their brains in their pants, but it seems that the issue is their right foot, obviously a 'holiday heavy right foot problem.' Once an idiot always an idiot, Spanish or English, there is no difference.

10 Km per hour please if you can read because you can't drive!

Angry Resident. (Name & address supplied)

Some (cynical?) alternative symbols for the London Olympics 2012



### The Five-Year Plan

Charlie was 88 years old and went to see his financial advisor.

'So what do you think is an appropriate investment for me?' asked Charlie.

'Well,' replied the advisor, 'I have found a terrific investment that will double your money in just five years.'

'Are you crazy,' said Charlie, 'A five-year investment?'

Why, at my age I don't even buy green bananas.'

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**Gone!**

A man was drowning his sorrows in a bar with a fellow drinker. 'I had it all,' he groaned, 'money, a beautiful house, fast car and the love of a beautiful woman. Then suddenly it was all gone.'

'What happened?' asked his companion.

'My wife found out.'



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### **The Bus Trip**

A woman wearing a tight miniskirt tries to get on a city bus. However, her skirt is too tight and she can't raise her leg high enough to put her foot on the step. Embarrassed, she reaches behind her and unzips her skirt a little to loosen it up. This doesn't work, so she tries again and unzips a little more. The skirt is still too tight, so she has another go. It still doesn't work. At this point a large man standing behind her lifts her up onto the bus.

'How dare you touch me!' fumes the lady. 'You had no right to go grabbing me like that.'

'Well, I'm sorry, Miss,' replies the man, 'but after you unzipped my fly three times I figured you wanted to make friends.'

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### The Three Rednecks

Three rednecks are sitting on a porch comparing wives. The first redneck says, 'My Cindy's so dumb, she bought a toilet, and we don't even have running water. The second says, 'That's nothing! My Maisie bought a ceiling fan, an' we don't even have no electricity.'

The third says, 'Aw, that ain't nuttin! I was going through my Lou-Lou's purse for some whiskey money and I found a packet of condoms. And you know what? She ain't even got a pecker!'

### The Theft and Recovery of the Priceless Códice Calixtino.

On July 5, 2011, a priceless

12th century manuscript known as the Códice Calixtino (inset), was reported stolen from the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral in Galicia. The ancient manuscript was the first guide for pilgrims to the Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage. In terms of historic and national importance, it would be ranked alongside the Irish Book of Kells and the English Magna Carta. The only valuation ever placed on it was by one dealer at €100 million.

One year later, in early July 2012, the National Police arrested a 60-year-old ex-worker from the cathedral, Manuel Fernández Castiñeiras, for the theft. Manuel's wife, his son and girlfriend were also arrested. Manuel had been carrying out electrical maintenance at the cathedral for 25 years, but was sacked by the Church when it was decided to regularise

the labour situation of the employees. He was not on a contract.

Police raided the man's garage and found the priceless treasure wrapped in a black bin-liner and placed in a large cardboard box, together with some silver objects and other rare volumes stolen from the church. Further searches revealed a suitcase containing €600,000 in cash (see photo) and it soon emerged that Snr. Castiñeiras also had a number of properties valued at €1.2 million! Significant but undisclosed amount of more cash has been discovered which includes actual cash stolen from the cathedral. Not bad income for a 'sparks'! It now appears that the electrician had been stealing treasures from the cathedral for as many as 10 years and disposing of them to willing cash buyers. This has highlighted many issues, particularly regarding the security and 'stock' control at the cathedral. Certainly the most famous and possibly oldest church in Spain, it had large amounts of valuable relics and manuscripts dating back many hundreds of years; however, it seems that they may have never compiled a comprehensive inventory of the many valuables. It has also now emerged that the cathedral covered up shortfalls in its accounts between 2005 and 2008, which would indicate a serious lack of openness in the establishment.

Snr. Castiñeiras has now been charged with the theft of the Códice and other crimes, such as continued theft with aggression, larceny, and crimes against the intimacy of people - now what the heck is the last one? Sounds like an offence held over from the Middle Ages. His wife, son and son's girlfriend have been charged with money laundering.

But two side issues concerning the whole affair are interesting. The first was that a police team had identified Manuel as one of the most promising suspects just days after the theft and reported it to senior police officers. Why did it take a full year before they even searched his garage? The second is concerning Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy. Now Rajoy has had nothing but very bad news for the Spanish since he took power last year. But when the Códice was discovered he rushed up to Galicia and personally presented the manuscript back to the local clergy at the cathedral, for an unashamed photo opportunity. After receiving no gratitude from his fellow countrymen for his swinging cuts and tax increases, maybe he is now looking for some approval from a much higher source?



**Swimming News**



Congratulation to the grandson of John and Penny Halton of Dream Hills, Joe Patching, who recently won a gold medal (see photo) for the 200 Metre Backstroke at the recent European Junior Championship. Joe also won a bronze medal in the 4X100 metre Medley Relay. I have no doubt that we will be hearing more about this talented athlete in the future. The following short article is taken from the British press -

**Patching reigns supreme on day four in Antwerp 7th July 2012**

The GBR Swimming Team added another gold and silver medal to their tally on day four of the European Junior Championships in Belgium.

In a session dominated by semi-final action, Joseph Patching made it count and shone in one of the few finals of the night, claiming victory on the penultimate day of competition in Antwerp.

In a tantalisingly close race with Italy's Fabio Laugeni, Patching pushed his body to the limit to secure the third gold medal of the event for the British Gas GBR Swimming Team.

The Plymouth Leander swimmer's breathtaking performance saw him smash through the two-minute barrier for the first time, touching in 1.59.45!

"I'm absolutely speechless," said Patching. "I've broken the two minute barrier which was my primary goal, but my second goal was to win the gold for the team and I managed to do both. The Italian was coming down hard on me in the last 50 metres but I just thought to myself 'This is my day, I'm not going to let him pass' and I swam through it. Now I get to stand on the podium and hear our National Anthem - I'm so happy and so relieved."

**Lime Bar Golf Society Los Altos, Orihuela Costa**

The golf societies venue for the 11th July 2012 was held at the Hacienda Riquelme Golf Course.

A first time for most of the players on a tricky course which was in very good condition. This resulted in the scores being fairly moderate, however the players enjoyed a good day's golf and although very hot, the later occasional cooling breeze made it tolerable.



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

Four guests played and were made most welcome.

Nearest the Pin on the 5th was Mick Slater.

Nearest the Pin on the 7th was Bob Adair.

Nearest the Pin on the 15th was Dominic Smith.

Nearest the Pin on the 17th - No winners.

Best Guest was Brent Crosbie.

Silver Class runner up was Tony Jones with a score of 26 points.

Silver Class winner was Andy McDonald with a score of 32 points.

Gold Class runner up was Steve Cottle with 31 points.

Gold Class winner was Mick Slater with a score of 32 points.

A day's golf in pleasant company, with a thank you to Norman Dobson who manages this event for us with the assistance of Stewart Coleman and also thanks to the Staff at The Lime Bar for providing an enjoyable meal. Anyone wishing to 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)

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**PHOENIX GOLF SOCIETY**

Our July outing was held at Roda Golf Course on Sunday 8th July. As usual the course was in excellent condition ensuing in a hard fought contest with little moaning or whinging with the results as follows:-

Overall winner - Rob Hughes, Gold Category - Tim Ryan, Silver Category - Ken Sutton and Bronze Category - Jim Waddell. Nearest the pins were Graham Mitchell and Colin Bain.

Best Guest was Colin Bain.

The must try harder trophy went to Ron Smith.

I am also happy to report that this month we had no new recruits to the Let's go hang gliding without a hang glider club.

Details of the Society can be found at the Phoenix Bar in Via Park 5.

Happy flogging, Rob Hughes.





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### Illegal dump continues to grow.

Residents of Entre Golf and Dream Hills 2 are most unimpressed with the failure of the Orihuela Town Council in clearing an unauthorised dump close to their urbanisations. When the current town hall administration were in opposition, they strongly condemned the then PP ruling council for their inactivity in clearing the site. Now, more than a year later, the new councillors have also done nothing to clear or even stop the illegal dumping. In the last year alone, the amount of rubbish and hard-core dumped at the side of the track has doubled, with the rubbish now covering both sides of the track for several hundred metres and reaching as far as the old bridge. What used to be a lovely view in the area is now blighted by this dump.



### Fair Trade?

Charlie was talking to his friend Harry. 'There's nothing I wouldn't do for my wife, Daisy,' he said, 'and there's nothing Daisy wouldn't do for me. And that's how we go through life - doing nothing for each other.'

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### More Cuts and Changes

The government have been issuing many new changes demanding greater austerity and cut-backs from the regions and local councils.

A cut in the number of interpreters at police stations means that non-Spanish speakers will find it difficult to place a denuncia or make a complaint in most of the Police Stations. El Mundo reports that the National Police are telling foreign callers, 'I'm sorry, sir, with these cuts I cannot say anything else. We cannot help you unless you bring an interpreter'. An interpreter company was taken on last May to give a national phone service, but this has now gone bankrupt.

Electricity bills, water, gas and telephone relating for July and August to be charged at the higher rate of 21% (was 18%), although the rate does not officially change until September 1, complains the consumer organisation FACUA. They also advise people who are buying new cars to wait until December, when prices are cheaper, despite the increase in the IVA.

PM Mariano Rajoy has announced that there will be a 30% reduction in the number of councillors of the more than 8,000 municipalities throughout the country. He said he was looking for more "austerity" and "efficiency." (This reduction, which will probably be applied at the next local elections, will sound the 'death knell' of many of the smaller parties such as CLARO. Under the proposed arrangements they would have to at least double their vote to gain a seat.) The government will also regulate the salaries of mayors and councillors. Total savings from the cut-backs and salary regulation should be around €3.5 billion.

The Christmas bonus, extra month's pay, for all public employees has been cancelled for 2012. This has created ructions!

The tax relief on a home mortgage, only reintroduced last year, has been removed.

There are scores of other cuts, the army taking a big hit on its modernisation projects being reduced by 97.6%, from €4.95 billion to €204 million. Expect to see soldiers parading with spears soon!

# Fly Screens 4 U!!

'Feel the breeze not the bites'

Bernie, Michelle and family arrived in Spain September 1999. After commuting to the UK every month with Bernie's business commitments, it was getting very stressful. So in 2003 Bernie and Michelle looked at insect screens rather than high-maintenance rollers and sliders; after extensive research over a 12 month period they invented their unique 100% magnetised and totally flexible, frameless fly screen system for any shaped windows and doors.

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Fly Screens 4 U supply individually tailored fly screens for windows starting from as little as €9 and for security grill doors from only €9! One of their new inventions for 2012 is a totally flexible fly screen door for patio/doors for only €9!

All Fly Screens 4 U products are measured, made and fitted by Michelle, with a same day service available if required. The special magnets used are UV protected and have a lifetime guarantee.

Now they are in their 8th year with countless happy customers, going from strength to strength with their new summer promotion of a gift of an electricity energy saver which could help to reduce your electricity costs and help to pay for your fly screens, on all orders over 3 windows.

We carry with us a sample window incorporating our unique flexible fly screen to demonstrate how the system works.

If you would like to know more about Fly Screens 4 U, then please contact us on 965 078 877 or 695 504 034.

## Giving credit where it is due:

I am always happy to report if an advertiser on the Dream Scene does a good job at a realistic cost for us personally. We had **Fly Screens 4 U** install magnetic screens to two large windows and to two security grills on the ground floor of our property in early June and were very pleased with the installation, the almost indiscernible visual effect and 'bug free' results; and no, I am not on commission!

## The Yorkshire Farmer

A Yorkshire farmer goes to his doctor and says, 'I'm reet worried about me wife. Yesterday morning she got up at four and fed t'chickens and milked t'cows. Then she ploughed three fields, mek me breakfast and spent an hour repairing t'pigsty. After that, she got in two ton of potatoes and mended t'fence on t'bottom field. Then she comes in, lies on t'bed, and says she's too tired to do 'owt else! Have thee a tonic I could give her?'

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## The Asturian Miners' Strike

There has been coal mining in the Asturias region of northern Spain since Roman times. However 40,000 jobs have been lost in the industry during the last two decades. There are now just 8,000 miners left in the region. Spanish coal is poor in quality and more expensive than the coal produced from mines elsewhere in the world (Australia, Colombia, Russia, China and the world's emerging coal power, Mozambique). Two years ago the European Union announced that member states must end subsidies to the coal sector by the end of 2018; indeed the EU has been pressurising Spain to close the industry down since Spain joined the EU in 1986, a situation Franco had predicted previously.

This year the Spanish government plans to slash the coal industry subsidies for 40 mines down from €301m (for last year) to €111m this year. Unions say the cuts threaten 50,000 jobs in the region and could destroy their industry. But as one government official stated 'to subsidise every mining employee to the tune of €50,000 per annum in the current troubled economic climate is unsustainable.' The Asturian miners responded by commencing a total strike in late May this year.

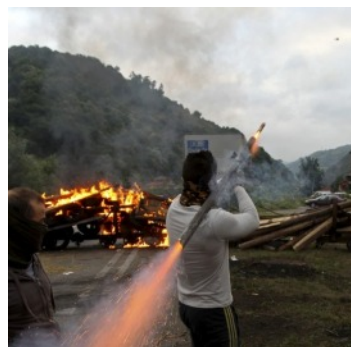
The strike has been very aggressive to date with attacks on the police and on the offices of the ruling Partido Popular (PP). The miners have blocked up to 60 roads including 16 main roads and motorways and two railway lines. In June, a rail passenger was injured when the train on which he was travelling collided with tree trunks placed on the tracks. What I find remarkable is the muted response from the police, including the Guardia Civil. There is massive disruption in the area and I cannot see these actions being tolerated in any other European country. The strikers are using fireworks and rockets (see photos), together with sling-shots firing nuts, bolts, ball bearings and rocks against the police while the police respond with baton charges and rubber bullets, but arrests are still sporadic.

While all this was going on, around 240 miners began a 400 km march, the *Marcha Negra* or 'Black March' to Madrid in June (see photo). Here they were joined by other protestors ferried into the city by 500 buses, which together with local supporters, swelled the crowd

to 10,000. 76 people were injured, 33 police and 43 demonstrator. Eight were hospitalised. As expected in these marches, there were also agitators who threw fireworks, stones and petrol bombs. The police responded with rubber bullets which are like small rubber cannon balls and being hit by one would certainly ruin your day! Despite all this there were only eight arrests.

To understand the muted response by the authorities, one needs to look a little deeper into Spanish history. In 1934, there was a miners' strike in Asturias which was part of a failed general strike countrywide. This quickly developed into an insurrection/revolution in Asturias with the miners, boosted by communists and anarchists, attacking police stations and barracks. They went on to capture several towns including Oviedo. The government responded by sending masses of troops in to recapture the towns and the navy also bombarded a number of coastal towns. There were atrocities on both sides and a young General Franco, heading a force of battle-hardened Spanish Foreign Legionnaires boosted by Moroccan mercenaries, cut a ferocious and merciless swathe through the rebels. After two weeks the rebels were crushed with fatalities on both sides coming to more than 2,000. Franco firmly believed that the insurrection was organised by Moscow. There is little doubt that these events influenced and focused the minds of the generals when organising the military coup which led to the Spanish Civil War less than two years later. The strike of '34 still remains an emotive episode for the Spanish Left.

Meanwhile, at the time of writing, the latest Asturian miners' strike continues.



### Let's have a go at the .....

**Germans:** How do you make a Black Forest Gateau? First you occupy the kitchen.....

**French:** How do you identify a French infantryman? Sunburned armpits.

**Irish:** A woman goes to a police station and says, 'Officer, I've been molested by an Irishman.'

The desk sergeant asks, 'How do you know it was an Irishman?' The woman replies, 'I had to help him.'

**Greek:** What does a Greek bride get on her wedding night that's long and hard? A new surname.

**Scots:** It's very easy to catch Scotsmen who make obscene phone calls; they always try to reverse the charges.

**English:** An Essex girl was driving down the motorway when her car phone rang. It was her boyfriend, urgently warning her, "Treacle, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on the motorway. Please be careful!" "It's not just a car!" said the Essex girl, "There's hundreds of them!"



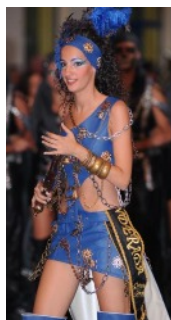
## Moors & Christians Fiestas

The Moors and Christians is a set of festival activities which are celebrated in many towns and cities in Spain, but particularly in the Valencian Community. It is always a colourful and noisy fiesta celebrating the *Reconquista* campaign of the Christians against the Moors which ran from the 8th through to the 15th century. The festival which takes place at different times of the year in different areas, usually lasts around four or five days. It often starts with the invasion by the Moors, and ends some days later with the Christians finally defeating the Moors with a simulated battle around a castle. It is a fun fiesta rather than a sombre or solemn one with everybody, regardless of age, having a great time.

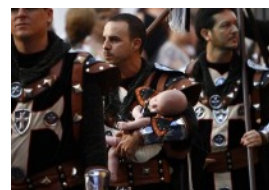
Of all the wonderful fiestas in Spain, the *Reconquista* or Moors & Christians is undoubtedly the most colourful, mainly due to the elaborate colourful costumes which do not necessarily meet historical authenticity. This year there were some oddities such as pirates making an appearance in Orihuela and cave-women in San Blas, Madrid.

The following are a selection of images taken from the Spanish media (particularly *Informacion.es* ).

### ORIHUELA



### SAN BLAS MADRID



### ALCOY



### Cutting back

After our last child was born, my wife told me we had to cut back on expenses. She said I had to give up drinking beer: so I gave it up, even though I didn't drink much. Then, the other day, I came across one of her shopping receipts and saw that she'd spent €85 on make-up. 'Wait a minute!' I said. 'You said we had to cut back. I've given up beer and you haven't given up anything! Why don't you give up make up? You're spending a fortune on it.'

'I buy that make-up for you,' she says, 'so I can look pretty for you!'

'Hell,' I said, 'that's what the beer is for!' I'm not sure when she's coming back.

## IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION FOR RESIDENT EXPATS.

### New Residency Requirements for Spain

The Spanish Government has issued new residency requirements for all EU citizens - including Britons - who intend to remain for longer than three months.

The Ministerial Order sets out the new requirements and some of the documentation applicants may be asked to present. A British Embassy (and therefore unofficial) translation with more detailed information is available on the UKinSpain website.

When applying for residency in Spain, EU citizens may be required to produce evidence they have the means to support themselves and their families. And under the changed requirements they may also be asked to prove they have private or public healthcare insurance. It is the right of all EU citizens, citizens of countries party to the European Economic Area and Swiss citizens, to move and reside freely within Europe. You can read more here -

<http://www.roundtownnews.com/rtn-news/costa-blanca-this-week/item/37961-new-residency-rules.html>

and here - <http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk/en/news/?view=News&id=790024182>

### Claiming back overpayment on prescription charges.

The new system of prescription charging has now been in place for a month, the details of which have been reported on at length in previous issues. It will not be until month two or three that we can see if the 'bugs' have been corrected and that people, particularly pensioners, are paying only the correct amount. This should only be a maximum of 8 or €18 euros for pensioners, depending on your income. If you are paying more than that you can claim back the excess charges using the following forms, which are available in PDF online -

[http://www.lafe.san.gva.es/gesteco\\_docs/modelo%20alta%20tercero.pdf](http://www.lafe.san.gva.es/gesteco_docs/modelo%20alta%20tercero.pdf)

[http://www.san.gva.es/cas/prof/dgf/farmacia/pdf/MODELO\\_SOLICITUD\\_GENERAL.pdf](http://www.san.gva.es/cas/prof/dgf/farmacia/pdf/MODELO_SOLICITUD_GENERAL.pdf)

You may not be able to gain access to the Valencian Health/Salud websites using Chrome and some other search engines. Enter the above web addresses using Internet Explorer and when asked 'unblock the content.'

After you have completed the forms, take a copy of them and attach the following - photocopy of receipts from the pharmacy; photocopy of your passport; photocopy of your residencia (green paper); photocopy of your SIP card (both sides). After you have done all that give yourself a stiff drink before you proceed to the next challenge! You then take the above - together with the originals of the above documents, to your nearest post office or town hall where, I am sure, they won't have a clue what to do! So you may as well treat yourself to another stiff drink. If all goes well, you should have the surplus money you paid out credited to your bank account in between three and six months.

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#### A Multi Lingual Parrot

Moshe wants to buy a parrot and goes to his local pet shop to see what they have. The assistant shows him a parrot and explains that this one is really quite special - it can speak most languages. So Moshe decides to test this out.

'Do you speak English?' asks Moshe.

'Sure do,' replied the parrot.

'Habla espanol?' asks Moshe.

'Si,' replied the parrot.

'Larlez-vous francais?' asks Moshe.

'Oui,' replied the parrot.

'Sprechen Sie Deutsch?' asks Moshe.

'Ja,' replied the parrot.

'Falas portugues?' Asks Moshe.

'Sim,' replied the parrot.

Moshe pauses for a while, then asks the parrot, 'Do you speak Yiddish?'

The parrot shrugs its shoulders and says, 'Vis a nose like dis, vot you tink?'

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#### Bad Aim?

Two Jewish gentlemen, both strangers, Harry and Victor, are in the Gents' toilet at King's Cross Station in London, both 'pointing their Percy's at the porcelain.' Harry says to Victor, 'Are you from Golders Green?' Victor replies, 'Yes, how did you know that?' Harry asks, 'Do you belong to Holders Synagogue?' Victor exclaims, 'Yes, how did you know that?' Harry then asks, 'Is Rabbi Levy still there?' Victor replies, 'Yes, but how did you know that?' Harry answers, 'It's obvious. Rabbi Levy always cuts on a slant and you're pissing on my shoe.'

### *Julio Iglesias, The Idol.*

As it is far too hot to be messing about with tomes on Spanish history, I thought it might be a good opportunity to take a brief look at one of Spain's favourite sons, Julio Iglesias.

Julio José Iglesias de la Cueva was born in Madrid in 1943. In the 60's he began to study law and was also a brilliant goalkeeper for one of the Real Madrid teams. But in 1963 he was involved in a serious car crash which damaged his spine, the injuries to it being still treated as late as 2010. After he recovered from his injuries (although he still has a slight limp) he travelled to Ramsgate and Cambridge to learn the English language.



In 1971, he married a Spanish Filipino journalist Isabel Preysler and they had three children, Chabeli Iglesias, Julio Iglesias, Jr. and Enrique Iglesias. (Enrique is now a hugely successful singer and occasional actor.) Their marriage was annulled in 1979. In 1981 his father, Dr. Julio Iglesias Puga Sr\*, was kidnapped by Basque terrorists but found alive two weeks later. This prompting Julio Iglesias to move his children to Miami, Florida. In August 2010, Julio Iglesias and Dutch model Miranda Rijnsburger got married after a 20-year relationship. This produced five more children together.

Julio's singing and songwriting career received a big boost in 1968, when he won the Benidorm International Song Festival, a songwriter's event in Spain, with the song "La vida sigue igual" (meaning "Life Goes On The Same"). To date, he has sold over 300 million albums worldwide in 14 languages. According to Sony Music Entertainment, he is one of the top 15 best-selling music artists in history. He sits comfortably in the ranks of The Beatles, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Michael Jackson, ABBA, Elton John and Madonna.

At 68, Julio Iglesias, Spain's venerable Don Juan, shows no sign of slowing down and is still 'banging them out' on tours which take in the five continents. Interviewed recently by El Pais, Julio was his usual charming and open self, but surprised the journalist, Rosa Villacastín, with his occasional swear words. At the start of the interview, he told Rosa to 'write bad things about me or nobody's going to pay any f\*\*king attention to it. When I was younger, I was a really bad singer.....I didn't have a f\*\*king clue. Now I that have learned to sing, I do it with dignity.' He is probably the only male singer who can sing about begging for a woman's love and not come across as a wimp. '30 years ago when I was travelling by plane, I was focused more on flirting with the flight attendant. Now I am more concerned about the weather, as I shit my pants when there is turbulence!' Julio is now mid-way through a concert tour of Spanish cities. Last month he gave away 800 free tickets to the unemployed for a concert in León.

'I'm very excited about this tour,' says Julio. 'I don't know how to do anything other than sing. What do you want me to do? Stay at home all day scratching my balls? I couldn't possibly do that.' (Readers, please note that Spanish newspapers are much more robust and outspoken than British ones.)

\*The Patriarch of the Iglesias, a former gynaecologist, was jailed during the Spanish Civil War for being a Falangist and fighting against the Left; serving time in six different prisons and narrowly escaping execution. He fathered a child when in his late 80's, and another was born shortly after his death at age 90! It's all in the genes!

### **Relax!**

A woman was in bed with her husband's best friend when the phone rang. After hanging up, she turned to her lover and said: 'That was Jim, but don't worry, he won't be home for a while. He's playing cards with you.'

### **Foods that help you live longer and healthier.**

**1. Chocolate** — You already know it's going to be a great list when it starts off with chocolate. Cocoa is a heart-healthy food that has been linked to reduced blood pressure and improved blood vessel health. Take note that this does not mean you can eat every chocolate bar around. Because many chocolate bars contain large amounts of sugar, experts recommend 2 - 4 squares per day of dark chocolate that has at least 70% of the flavonoid-containing compound cacao.

**2. Coffee** — In a Harvard University study, coffee was shown to reduce the rates of prostate problems. Men who drank one to three cups of coffee daily still had lower rates of prostate issues compared to men who didn't drink any at all. **The study showed no difference between decaf and caffeinated coffee.**

**3. Walnuts** — If nuts are superfoods, walnuts could be a super nut. Walnuts contain twice the amount of antioxidants per ounce compared to peanuts and almonds. Also a source of essential fatty acids, walnuts were found to be better in terms of the quality and quantity of antioxidants. Walnuts can help maintain healthy cholesterol levels and manage weight by delivering heart-healthy fats and proteins.

Source: Prevention

I took a physical for some life insurance. All they would give me was fire and theft. Milton Berle

### **The Young & Beautiful?**

Informacion.es is the online edition of the Alicante newspaper Informacion. I check out the site regularly for local news and came across a 'gallery' or selection of photos of the young & beautiful enjoying themselves at parties and fiestas in the Alicante area. You can also check it out here -

<http://comunidad.diarioinformacion.com/galeria-multimedia/FIESTAS/noche-alicantina/27590/1.html>

On this particular gallery, readers get to vote on a particular photo if they like it. The votes for a particular photo usually total between a couple of hundred to a thousand odd. But imagine my surprise when I came across three photos of a couple, sample below, which received a total of more than 39,000 votes!

I mean, just look at it! The bloke's tie is far too shiny, he's not smiling and he hasn't even shaved! Honestly, I just cannot understand what people see in it! Can you?



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An auction's in progress when the auctioneer suddenly stops to make an announcement, 'I'm sorry to interrupt,' he says, 'but I've just been informed that a gentleman in the room has lost a wallet containing €5,000. If you find it, please take it to the main office. There's a €200 reward.' There's a second's silence; then a voice call out from the back of the room, '€250!'



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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.

**The Demon Drink**

- What's up, Mr Peterson?  
 - The warranty on my liver.

Woody and Norm in *Cheers*

Uncle Seamus, the notorious and poetic drunk....would sit down at the breakfast table the morning after a bender, drain a bottle of stout and say, 'Ah, the chill of consciousness returns.'

Molly O'Neill

An alcoholic has been ..... defined as a man who drinks more than his own doctor.

Alvan L. Barach

'Pour him out of here!' Mae West, when W.C. Fields showed up drunk on the set.

I'll stick with gin. Champagne is just ginger ale that knows somebody.

'Hawkeye' Pierce in *M\*A\*S\*H*

I like a drink as much as the next man - unless the next man is Mel Gibson.

Ricky Gervais at the Golden Globe Awards

If you go to Germany and get drunk, at some point you're going to look up Hitler in the phone book.

Dave Attell

I'm an occasional drinker, the kind of guy who goes out for a beer and wakes up in Singapore with a full beard.

Raymond Chandler

Say when?..... When it's running over my knuckles!

Sir Les Patterson

Alcohol is necessary for a man so that he can have a good opinion of himself, undisturbed by the facts.

Finlay Peter Dunne

I wouldn't call myself a wine connoisseur. I'd suck the alcohol out of a deodorant stick.

Karen Walker from *Will and Grace*

**Age Concern España** now have a website in English.

You can find it at [www.acespana.org](http://www.acespana.org)

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