

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

Helping to keep expat's informed.....and smiling.

Issue no. 74 1st of April 2013

Bienvenido and welcome to the spring edition of the Dream Scene. We have had an exceptionally warm winter here, and except for the occasional strong, chilly northerly winds, the daytime temperatures here have been in the low 20's. We have seen on the television the dreadful weather being experienced in the UK and Northern Europe. Remember, the clocks go forward an hour, early on the morning of March 31st.

Just a reminder that if you have a car in Spain, the municipal car tax, *Impuesto Municipal Sobre Vehiculos*, is probably due this April. Also, if you are an expat' officially resident in and paying income tax in Spain, you have until April 30, 2013, to report any assets within certain groupings, which exceed more than €50,000 per person, per grouping. See issue number 73 for more details. Fines for not doing so are substantial, but as it is a very simple return, your agent, gestor or tax account should do this quite cheaply. If they charge more than €30 you are being had!

A major nuisance and hygiene problem throughout Spain is that of dog faeces. Uncaring and irresponsible pet owners are mainly to blame; the dogs doing only what comes natural to them. But now there is some light at the end of the tunnel. The Department of Animal Psychology in Crevillente University have come up with a unique program. Professor Pedro Conenorm-Esbolas has developed an advanced training technique whereby the dogs themselves can be trained to collect their own poo. This revolutionary new training regime involves the judicious stimulation of sensitive parts of the dog's body with electrical currents which motivate the animal to quickly learn certain basic actions and procedures. The dogs also have fur-coloured Velcro sleeves fitted to their front limbs which help them to grasp objects. The courses have been so successful that Mayor Dolon of the Torre Vieja Town Hall has said that the town hall will fund the training program for up to fifty dogs this coming year. You can collect an application form from your local town hall. The course organisers have stressed that this program is quite unsuitable for cats and they will just have to continue crapping on your neighbour's garden or patio.



Two new bars have opened locally, The Ragus in Lago Jardin II and La Frontera opposite the Altomar Restaurant at the bottom of Los Altos. Also a mini-market/coffee lounge/delicatessen called Jukes will also be opening in Via Park V in late April or early May.

Thank you to all those who renewed their email, home delivery and mail-box delivery subscriptions this year. Thanks also to the Hagger family, John Lumsdon, Tony & Lil Harris, Bernard & Chris, D & B and V for their kind donations towards costs. If I have forgotten anybody I apologise. Four extra pages this month due to two extra full page ads.

Last month a neighbour in Dream Hills told me that they send a printed copy of the monthly newsletter to a friend in Seattle, Washington. Honestly, when I heard that, my head got so big I nearly fell over. Anyway, hello to you in Seattle, this month's edition is dedicated to you!

Have a great month. Mick & Tid

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Angela's Cartoon



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There was once a young man who, in his youth, professed a desire to become a "great" writer. When asked to define "great" he said "I want to write stuff that the whole world will read, stuff that people will react to on a truly emotional level, stuff that will make them scream, cry, wail, howl in pain, desperation, and anger!"

He now works for Microsoft writing error messages.

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A friend of mine confused her Valium with her birth control pills. She had 14 kids but didn't give a shit.

Joan Rivers

The European Court of Justice on Thursday ruled that Spain's mortgage law is incompatible with a European directive on abusive practices in consumer contracts, opening the door to more legal protection for households facing eviction from their family home. The ruling comes in response to a question posed by a Barcelona court in connection with the eviction of Moroccan immigrant Mohammed Aziz from his home in January 2011, after he failed to meet mortgage payments on a 138,000-euro loan granted to him by savings bank CatalunyaCaixa in July 2007. The court wanted to know if the eviction breached Aziz's rights. The European Court now ruled that the process of ousting him from his home infringed the European Union's 1993 Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts (93/13EEC) directive on consumer protection.

The ruling will apply to all eviction cases currently being processed across Europe but will not apply retroactively, as pressure groups have been calling for. Amendments to the mortgage law, which is more than a century old, are currently going through parliament, and it appeared as if the government was waiting for the Luxembourg-based court's judgment before proceeding with the passage of the draft law.

One of the anomalies of the current law in Spain is that if a homeowner fails to meet a single monthly mortgage payment, the bank can initiate accelerated proceedings to evict the borrower and take possession of the property. Even if the borrower alleges the contract he has signed is abusive and a court agrees with him, if the eviction has already been carried out the homeowner has the right to compensation but not the right to recover the property. The bank can also ask for full repayment of the loan even after obtaining possession of the property in question.

"The Court. ... holds that the Spanish legislation does not comply with the principle of effectiveness, in so far as it makes it impossible, or excessively difficult, in mortgage enforcement proceedings initiated by sellers or suppliers against consumer defendants, to apply the protection that the (93/13EEC) directive confers on those consumers," the court's ruling said. The court also questioned whether Aziz would have willingly signed on equal terms with the bank a contract that included a penalty clause for back payments with an annual default rate of 18.75 percent. "The national court must in particular compare that rate with the statutory interest rate and determine whether it is appropriate for securing the attainment of the objectives pursued in Spain and does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve them," the court determined. (Source: El Pais 14/03/13)

As yet, the government has not come out with the promised re-drafted mortgage legislation. I would also like to see changes in the inheritance tax treatment of Europeans, who are not resident in Spain. The EU has already informed Spain that these rates are discriminatory but the authorities have just ignored the ultimatum.

Flights between Cardiff Airport and Spain are set to increase this summer, thanks to a surge in demand from Welsh passengers. Vueling has announced it is to lay on extra flights to both Malaga and Alicante for the busy Easter period, together with the summer months. A spokesman for the airport spoke of the quality service and competitive price offered by Vueling and urged more Welsh passengers to support their local airport wherever possible.

The additional new routes will see Vueling offer flights from Cardiff to Alicante, Barcelona, Malaga and Palma Majorca from March 23rd. The news is sure to be welcomed by passengers, many of whom are being forced to travel to Bristol to take advantage of the low-cost flights offered by Ryanair.

Three nuns die and go to heaven, but all must answer one question to get in. The first nun is asked, "Who was the first man on Earth?" She says, "Adam." Lights flash and the pearly gates open. The second nun is asked, "Who was the first woman on Earth?" She says, "Eve." Lights flash and the gates open. The third nun is asked, "What was the first thing Eve said to Adam?" Puzzled, the nun says, "Hmmm, that's a hard one." Lights flash and the pearly gates open.

Spain is close to nationalising 9 or 10 toll road concessions, some of which are already in administration, to avoid them being completely liquidated, Expansion newspaper reported, citing government sources. Five concession groups, managing six motorways close to Madrid and in the south of Spain, are already in bankruptcy proceedings. That process normally protects companies from creditors and can allow them to renegotiate debt. The government is planning to bail those out and could also rescue another four to five other toll road concessions that are struggling, according to Expansion.es. It said the nationalisations would be done in agreement with creditors and investors, who would likely have to take losses. The Public Works Ministry was not available to comment. (Reuters)

The former directors of CAM Bank are being 'hailed over the coals' in a Madrid court due to their chronic mismanagement of the bank's loan portfolio. It seems that the directors approved millions of euros of loans to companies without any technical reports or assessments, basing their judgement purely on the name of the company. Lots of juicy info' is bound to emerge during these investigations, the latest being that the former president of the CAM, Modesto Crespo, received €640,000 in respect of allowances between 2009 and 2011. This is 30 times larger than the maximum amount authorised by the board, which was €20,645.

After no less than three separate price increases in electricity during the last few months, electricity prices should drop by around 5 to 6% during the next quarter due to a reduction in wholesale electricity costs. This will effect consumers who pay at the standard rate. Whereas this relief may be temporary it is still welcome. The Ministry of Industry is preparing a new round of energy reforms in an attempt to keep the tariff deficit from growing higher and adding to 28 billion euros of accumulated debt. It will try to create a stable regulatory framework that makes adjustments (ie. increases) over time and in relation to the economic climate.

Torre Vieja and Orihuela Costa are left with only two of its 20 petrol stations open all night. A decline in fuel sales and a significant drop in the 'grocery' sales from their shops has forced the cut-backs and job losses. The Repsol service station, near Torre Vieja Hospital and the Cepsa service station on the CV-905 (from Crevillent) near Torre Vieja will remain open 24 hours.

Following on from last year's hike in airport taxes, the Spanish Airports Authority - AENA - seems determined to squeeze even more money from tourists visiting the country. Following positive news in the press over recent weeks that Spain is set to expect a record number of visitors in 2013, and that Spain has been found to be the 4th most competitive holiday destination in the world, AENA have announced they are to implement a "Trolley Tax" at the country's most popular airports. A fee of €1 is to be charged for the use of trolleys at Madrid's Barajas airport, followed in due course by Tenerife South, Alicante, Barcelona's El Prat airport, Palma de Mallorca, Malaga and Gran Canaria. AENA's justification for this being that they are simply trying to recoup some of the €3.5 Million per year that the trolleys cost.

Traffic fines can no longer be paid in cash at *Trafico*. Fines must now be paid by credit card at *Trafico*, through the internet or by phone at 060. You can however pay the fine in cash at post offices or at branches of Banco Santander.

What's Up? continued

The Valencia City Council is tightening up the control of feral cat feeding. It seems that the city now has 12,500 cats in 500 colonies. After a selection process, volunteers will be given a license and they are then allowed to feed and water the cats. They will also be responsible for cleaning-up after the cats and arranging sterilisation programs. The feeding areas must not be near schools, hospitals or monuments. Anyone caught feeding these cats without a license can now be fined €150.

The 'dodgy' Duke of Palma, Inaki Urdangarin, the king's son-in-law, was once again questioned in court concerning the alleged diversion of public funds and money laundering. However, on this occasion the duke seemed to have a massive attack of amnesia. During four hours of questioning, he could not shed any light on the charges. His testimony comprised 84 pages of evasions to the judge's questions. On 20 occasions he answered, 'I do not know' together with numerous responses of 'I do not remember', 'I can not say more,' 'I think not', 'I do not know what you mean,' 'I have no idea', 'I have nothing more to say / contribute,' 'Not sure', 'I am not aware,' 'I can not know' and 'I remember nothing.' The case continues.

A 65-year-old went to a hospital in Andalucia complaining about his leg. After X-rays, the doctor bandaged his leg from thigh to calf and told him he had osteoarthritis and to come back in 10 days. The patient had to return to the hospital after just nine days as his leg was very cold and bruised. Upon examination, his leg was amputated due to necrosis. It appears that the earlier treatment made his leg worse and the original tests which were administered, insufficient. He was awarded €201,605 in damages. The events originally took place in January 2008.

A court in Valencia declared that four home loans were void due to 'usury' by the unnamed lender. The lender charged the borrower a default rate of 29%, the customer eventually owing eight times more than he initially borrowed.

The National Energy Commission is to investigate petrol station operators in Spain after observing that some companies have been lowering their fuel prices on Mondays, and then raising them in time for the peak demand time at weekends.

Overseas Markets (Iceland Supermarket) in Torrevieja, was broken into in the early morning of March 11th and a substantial amount of money stolen.

Two men, a 39-year-old Armenian and a 41-year-old Frenchman, were arrested for stealing 10,000 eggs from a farm in Valencia. One of the men worked on the farm. He opened the door for his accomplice, who stole around 2,000 eggs every week. Both have a criminal record, the Armenian having been expelled from Spain on a previous occasion.

The Spanish Foreign Ministry is warning Spaniards not to travel to Acapulco following the gang rape of six women from Spain who were holidaying at the international resort in early February.

A dentist in Zaragoza has been arrested for allegedly assaulting a patient. It seems that the 39-year-old dentist budgeted €6,000 for work to a new dental bridge for a patient. The final costs exceeded the budget which the patient refused to pay. While the patient was sitting in a chair at the surgery some days later, the dentist approached the patient and snatched-out all the bridge work he had placed earlier. After making a statement to the police, the dentist was released.

The Wrong Sanie's!

There was an Englishman, a Scotsman and an Irishman working building a fence at the top of a cliff. They were complaining about their packed lunches when the Englishman said, "If I have cheese in my sandwich tomorrow, I'll jump off this cliff." The Scotsman said, "If I have jam in my sandwich tomorrow, I'll jump off the cliff." The Irishman said, "If I have ham tomorrow, I'll jump off the cliff."

The next day, the Englishman had cheese, the Irishman had ham, and the Scotsman had jam. So they all jumped to their death. At the funerals, the wives of the Scotsman and Englishman said, "Why didn't they just tell us they didn't like their sandwiches?" The Irish lady said, "I don't know why my husband jumped off the cliff. He made his own sandwiches."

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Regular readers of this newsletter may recall previous reports of the ERE scandal in Andalucia. This case relates to an alleged multimillion-euro fraud scheme involving a public fund set up to help firms pay severance packages to laid-off workers. The case is well on the way to becoming one of the biggest corruption cases in Spain to date in terms of the number of defendants being investigated which now numbers 82. In comparison, Operation Malaya — the massive property fraud scandal in Marbella that broke in 2006 and is considered to be among the biggest graft sweeps in recent history — resulted in 95 defendants going to trial.

Whereas the most recent corruption and money laundering scandals such as the Barcas and Gürtel affairs put the spotlight on the ruling PP camp, the ERE scandal in Andalucia is wholly a socialist affair, the PSOE governing in Andalusia since 1980. It is alleged that early retirement packages and grants were fraudulently awarded to individuals and firms who did not qualify. Massive fees and commissions were paid to lawyers and insurance companies and over 75 people received early retired packages from firms they never worked for. The Guardia Civil estimates that some 50 million euros was diverted from the fund. The former Director General of Labour (photo) in Andalusia is alleged to have received €249,000 in kick-backs from various consultants and, as he represents a 'flight risk,' has been returned to prison without bail. Then last week, a former senior union official was found by police to have €3,000 in cash under his bed. Maybe the Tooth Fairy?





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Following a decision which could only have been brought about by eating the wrong kind of mushrooms, the 'law-makers' in Torrevieja have now deemed it an offence for tourists and members of the public to purchase anything from the 'lucky-lucky' men. Now this is not an *April Fool* prank but an example of town hall lunacy. I really believe that many town hall officials are only still alive and walking around because it is illegal to shoot them. Obviously the police can no longer control these unlicensed traders from Africa, who are mainly Senegalese. They have regular 'dust-ups' with the police, but punishing the tourists or locals is like blaming a rape victim for 'tempting' a rapist.



Following cuts introduced to the night-time ambulance service by the regional authorities, three ambulances in Torrevieja will cover the night-time service to 33,000 residents of Orihuela Costa, 23,400 residents in Pilar de la Horadada and 103,700 residents residents in Torrevieja. So if you are experiencing some chest pains tonight, you will no doubt be happy you are doing your bit for the regional economy while waiting for an ambulance to arrive possibly from Guardamar!

A court in Torrevieja has opened summary procedures against the former mayor of the municipality Pedro Angel Hernandez Mateo for a crime against individual rights by not convening regular full meetings of the council between 2003 and 2006. Mateo, you will recall, has already received a jail sentence of three years for duplicity in the awarding of contracts. The original complaint and the new one were introduced by the Greens.

The emergency services in Torrevieja carried out a simulated earthquake rescue exercise in early March. Over 300 emergency service personnel, an army unit, three helicopters and 200 public volunteers were involved in the exercise, which was a great success. Torrevieja was destroyed by an earthquake in 1829.

A Residents Association in Calle Moncayo 84 in Los Altos have complained about an 'illegal hidden bar' allegedly set up in their neighbourhood. (Informacion.)

A popular dog food which was withdrawn last year from Mercadona's shelves is alleged to have poisoned several dogs. It is believed the food was withdrawn because it had high levels of vitamin D which may have caused kidney problems in the dogs. One Costa Blanca owner received a one-off compensation payment of €5,509 from Mercadona.

There is little to report on political developments in the Orihuela Costa. The minority government continue to plod on and the opposition, who are now in a majority, continue to chase their tails like neutered cats. I have noticed a growing incidence of pot-holes in the roads. Hopefully these will be corrected before the summer season at least.

Pensioners registered in the Orihuela municipality who have a pension under €506 are entitled to apply for grants to help pay their water bills. Applicants can claim up to €20. Application forms can be had from the department of social affairs in the city and in the civic centre in Alameda del Mar. The cut-off date for applicants is April 19.

El Pais states that the Supreme Court will meet in April to decide whether to revoke a jury's acquittal last year of former Valencia regional premier Francisco Camps on bribery charges. The accusations stemmed from the Popular Party (PP) politician allegedly accepting dress suits and other luxury items from a group of businessmen who received fat contracts from his government as part of the Gürtel scandal which has dogged the conservative grouping. Justices from the top court agreed to review an appeal presented by the Valencia Socialist Party (PSPV-PSOE), which asked them to throw out the January 2012 jury acquittals of Camps and Ricardo Costa, the PP secretary general in the region. Lawyers for the PSPV argue that there was "an obvious contradiction" between the evidence that jurors determined was unquestionable and their subsequent decision to acquit. The tailor who made the suits stated that businessmen paid for all of Camp's suits.

The first beer spa has been opened in a hotel in the Valencian town of Cofrentes. Here you can have a beer bath, see photo, enjoying that wonderful liquid externally rather than by the usual method. The beer, golf and spa resort has 45 double rooms, a hot spa and a restaurant.



A 78-year-old man had to be rescued by helicopter after he suffered several fractures after a fall while walking the Sierra de Orihuela last month. Many would consider it foolish for a man of such a mature age to go walking through such dangerous terrain. His rescue cost the local taxpayers more than €3,000. The photo below shows the hills and the rescue.



Arsonists are burning cars again. Two vehicles were set alight in San Luis Street in Los Montesinos on the early morning of Saturday March 9. Then early on the following Sunday morning, three more vehicles were burnt in Los Montesinos. Police suspect that it may be the same arsonist.

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 A friend asked me, "Now that you're retired, do you still have a job?"
 I replied, "Yes I am my wife's sexual advisor."
 Somewhat shocked, he said, "I beg your pardon, but what do you mean by that?"
 "Very simple. My wife has told me that when she wants my f***ing advice, she'll ask me for it."
 (Mel Bettel)

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One day this Irish guy goes into a pharmacy shop, reaches into his pocket and takes out a small bottle and a teaspoon. He pours some liquid onto the teaspoon and offers it to the chemist. "Could you taste this for me, please?"

The chemist takes the teaspoon, puts it in his mouth, swills the liquid around and swallows it.

"Does that taste sweet to you?" says Paddy. "No, not at all," says the chemist.

"Oh that's a relief," says Paddy. "The doctor told me to come here and get my urine tested for sugar." (Pete Dudman)

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She Moved!

Moshe was making love to his wife when suddenly, to his intense surprise, Ruth wiggled and let out a short cry of delight.

Totally unfamiliar with such a reaction Moshe exclaimed, 'My God, honey! What happened?' 'It's wonderful,' Ruth said. 'I finally decided that those curtains would look much better in peach.'

"The Ferrari F1 team fired their entire pit crew yesterday."

This announcement followed Ferrari's decision to take advantage of the British government's 'Work for your Dole' scheme and employ some Liverpoolian youngsters.

The decision to hire them was brought about by a recent documentary on how unemployed youths from Toxteth in Liverpool were able to remove a set of wheels from a car in less than 6 seconds without proper equipment; whereas Ferrari's existing crew could only do it in 8 seconds with millions of pounds worth of high tech equipment and training.

It was thought to be an excellent and bold move by the Ferrari management team as most races are won and lost in the pits, giving Ferrari an advantage over every other team.

However, Ferrari got more than they bargained for! At the crew's first practice session, not only was the 'scouse' pit crew able to change all four wheels in under 6 seconds but, within 12 seconds, they had re-sprayed, re-badged and sold the car to the McLaren team for 8 cases of Stella, a bag of weed and some photos of Lewis Hamilton's bird in the shower.

(Stewart Pickles & others)

Spanish Property Sales - Two Views.

Spain's battered housing market received a welcome boost at the start of this year as home sales shot up to levels last seen at the start of 2011, according to figures released recently by the National Statistics Institute (INE).

The INE said transactions in the housing market rose 18.9% in January from the same month a year earlier to 39,670 units, a figure only surpassed in the past 2 years by the some 45,000 transactions registered in February 2011.

The INE's figures are based on transactions entered into the records of property registrars. Since it normally takes one to two months for a property that has exchanged hands to be officially registered, the figures for January in reality correspond to those for the end of last year before the super-reduced value-added tax rate and tax relief on servicing the mortgage on the family loan were eliminated at the start of 2013.

The VAT rate on new home sales was raised from 4 to 10% as of January 1st, while home purchases made after that date will no longer be entitled to a reduction in personal income tax of up to some €9,000 a year.

Despite the increase in sales at the start of the year, the housing market retains the overall weak tone seen since a massive bubble burst at the start of 2008. With credit remaining tight and unemployment at over 26%, demand remains weak despite ongoing falls in house prices.

According to figures released by leading appraiser Tinsa, the fall in house prices in January slowed to an annual 11.6% to 13.8% the previous month. Prices have now fallen 35.6% from their peaks at around the end of 2007. (El Pais)

Foreign purchasers flooding back!

The number of non-resident foreigners who bought holiday property in Spain last year rose by 28.4pc to 38,312 buyers, according to figures from the General Council of Notaries, reported in the Spanish press. Some buyers may have bought more than one property, so the actual number of properties sold to foreign non-residents last year is likely to have been even higher.

House purchases by foreign non-residents are now almost back to their pre-crisis levels of 41,787 in 2007, when the market was already showing signs of cooling.

Foreign buyers are being lured back to Spain by lower house prices and fewer town-planning and property related scandals that so blighted Spain's reputation at the tail end of the boom.

The surge in foreign demand last year was not evenly spread, however. Foreign purchases doubled in Catalonia and increased in the Valencian Region, but fell in Murcia and Andalusia, according to the Notaries. There were 204 foreign buyers in Madrid last year, an increase of 200pc on 2007.

Nowhere are foreign buyers more important than the Valencian Community, home to the Costa Blanca and Costa del Azahar. Said Vicente Dómine, head of the Housing and Public Works Department of the regional government "the purchase of homes in the Valencian Community by foreign citizens was 29pc of the total, representing a rise of 32pc on 2011, and income of 1.6 billion Euros," in comments to the press. "The property market of the Valencian Community is recovering thanks to purchase of homes by foreign citizens," he said. Russians are now the second group of buyers behind the British, and ahead of the French, whilst the Norwegians and Belgians have overtaken the Germans, who have fallen into sixth place. Italian demand collapsed, reflecting economic problems at home, whilst the number of buyers from North Africa has ticked up, as the Arab Spring turns to winter.

Foreign non-resident buyers spent an average of €230,000 on Spanish property last year, down 28pc from €320,000 at the end of 2007, and 42pc above the €160,000 mark the Government has floated as the price for getting a residency permit thrown in with your house-purchase. (Spanishpropertyinsight.com)



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I took these photos on the left to illustrate the 'new look' at Macklin's Welcome Inn. It is very, very attractive with a spacious feel to it and lots of comfortable plush soft seating. The décor is very tasteful and I was particularly impressed by the design of the bar itself, which is clad in a dark slate or stone. Access to the snooker & pool room is either through the bar or from the concourse outside. It is well worth a visit - why not check it out and get a warm Irish welcome!

Forget about it!

An elderly husband and wife visit their doctor when they begin forgetting little things. Their doctor tells them that many people find it useful to write themselves little notes.

When they get home, the wife says, "Dear, will you please go to the kitchen and get me a dish of ice cream? And maybe write that down so you won't forget?"

"Nonsense," says the husband, "I can remember a dish of ice cream."

"Well," says the wife, "I'd also like some strawberries and whipped cream on it."

"My memory's not all that bad," says the husband. "No problem -- a dish of ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream. I don't need to write it down."

He goes into the kitchen; his wife hears pots and pans banging around. The husband finally emerges from the kitchen and presents his wife with a plate of bacon and eggs.

She looks at the plate and asks, "Hey, where's the toast I asked for?"

40 Years of Marriage..

A married couple in their early 60s are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary in a quiet, romantic little restaurant.

Suddenly, a tiny yet beautiful fairy appeared on their table. She said, 'For being such an exemplary married couple and for being loving to each other for all this time, I will grant you each a wish.'

The wife answered, 'Oh, I want to travel around the world with my darling husband.' The fairy waved her magic wand and - poof! - two tickets for the 'Oasis of the Seas' - the biggest cruise ship in the world - appeared in her hands.

The husband thought for a moment: 'Well, this is all very romantic, but an opportunity like this will never come again. I'm sorry my love, but my wish is to have a wife 30 years younger than me.'

The wife, and the fairy, were deeply disappointed, but a wish is a wish! So the fairy waved her magic wand and poof.....!

The husband became 92 years old!

The moral of this story:

Men who are ungrateful bastards should remember fairies are female.....

(Pete Dudman)



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Homer Simpson.*

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A drunk guy in Alaska decides to go ice fishing. He starts sawing a hole in the ice, when a loud booming voice says, "You will find no fish there."
The drunk looks up, ignores it, and continues on. The voice booms again, "You will find no fish under the ice."
The drunk looks up and says, "God, is that you?"
The voice says, "No, I'm the manager of this ice rink."

Valentine's Night at the Dona Monse Hotel by Vivianne.

My other-half decided that we should do something nice and romantic for Valentine's Night. We looked around and found that the new Hotel Dona Monse in Los Balcones had a Valentine's Dinner with live music and DJ afterwards, so we decided to give it a try.

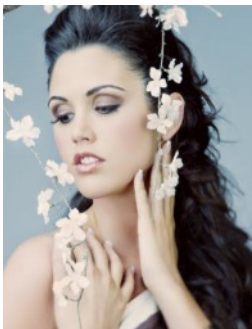
The price seemed a bit high - €80 for 2 or €149 if you wanted to stay the night. (As it turned out it was a great night and well worth it). However he booked the Valentine's Dinner and earned himself hundreds of 'brownie points.'

We arrived at the bar in the hotel at 8pm to have a drink and we were pleasantly surprised when we went in. It was all very plush and comfortable and the staff were very attentive. We ordered two gin & tonics. They were well presented in large bowl glasses with a bottle of Nordic Blue tonic, and to our surprise it was only €8 euros for the two drinks!

Then at 9pm we went down to the room on the lower floor. This special function room was romantically lit with soft lighting, balloons and white linen table cloths. All of the tables had fresh flowers and candles. There were about 100 people there in total, some small tables and a few tables of 12 or more. It looked lovely. There was a dance floor and a small stage/band-stand set up in the corner. It was all very impressive. There was also a bottle of red wine on each table; we started with white and the waitress came and poured out the white, as much as you wanted and both wines were delicious.

Onto the meal. There were five courses in all, every one delicious. There were chocolates and sweets on the table. The first course was an anchovy and salmon pate, which was followed by asparagus in a reduction with parmesan pastry with duck pate and quail's egg. Then there was a chicken salad in a yogurt vinaigrette. The main course featured a choice of either fillet of cod in a sauce or a steak with a sauce, both of which were delicious. For dessert there was a lovely strawberry mousse on a chocolate base.

Wine, beer, water and a glass of Cava after dinner were all included in the price of the dinner, which was, I have to say, faultless!



During dinner this beautiful girl called Melissa Lopez (photo), sang. She was fab, had a great voice and lovely romantic songs. She sang for about one hour and was amazing. Everybody was dancing and there were all ages from 20 to 70 there. Melissa Lopez is well known in Spain and is singing the Spanish entry for the European Song Contest in Malmö, Sweden, in May this year. Melissa will be singing Spain's entry, 'The Point of No Return.'

After the singer left and at about 12.30am, the DJ started. It was great fun and everybody was enjoying themselves during what was a wonderful evening.

We left at about 3am and the party was still going strong. Interestingly, the hotel rooms were fully booked. On the basis of our experience there I would certainly recommend going to a function in this hotel. Everything was professionally done and there was no shortage of drink, food or entertainment.

Karate Chop!

A huge guy walks into a bar, approaches a little guy and karate chops him in the back. When the little guy gets up, the huge guy says, "That was a karate chop from Korea." A little later, the huge guy walks back over to the little guy and karate chops him in the back again. The huge guy says, "That was a karate chop from China."

The little guy leaves the bar, comes back and 'clobbers' the big guy on the back of the head, who now drops unconscious to the floor. The little guy says to the bartender, "When he gets up, tell him that was a crowbar from Leroy Merlin."

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The Love Dress.

Martha goes to her son's house and having a key, walks in. There, she is astonished to find her daughter-in-law Florence lying on the couch, totally naked. Soft music is playing and the aroma of expensive perfume fills the air. 'Florence, what are you doing?' Martha asks.

'I'm waiting for David to come home from work,' she replies. 'But you're naked!' says Martha.

'I know,' says Florence, 'this is my love-dress. David loves me to wear this dress. It excites him no end. Every time he sees me in this dress, he instantly becomes virile and makes love to me for hours on end. Why don't you try it with your Harry?' Martha goes home, undresses, has a bath and puts on her best perfume. Then, still naked, she dims the lights, puts on a romantic CD and lies on the settee waiting for Harry to arrive. Harry comes home and sees Martha lying there, ever so provocatively.

'What on earth are you doing, Martha?' he asks.

'This is my love-dress,' she whispers, sensually.

'It needs ironing,' he says.

Jewish Condoms

Abe walks into a chemist and asks for some condoms.

'Yes sir, do you want the Catholic pack, the Protestant pack or the Jewish pack?'

Abe asks, 'What's the difference?'

The chemist replies, 'The Catholic pack has six, one for each day of the week, but never on a Sunday. The Protestant pack has eight, one for each day of the week and twice on Sunday. And of course the Jewish pack has twelve.'

'Why twelve?' asks Abe.

The chemist sighs and counts on his fingers, 'January, February, March.....'



State Challenges Catalan Declaration

The central government said it would challenge the legality of a sovereignty declaration made by the Catalan assembly in January with the Constitutional Court.

The decision was taken after the administration of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy received the backing to do so from the State Council, a consultative body whose rulings are non-binding. The Council issued a judgment indicating that there are sufficient legal grounds to dispute the assembly's declaration on January 23 the Catalan people constitute a "sovereign political and legal entity."

The solicitor general's office has also come out in favour of taking the issue of the declaration to the Constitutional Court on the grounds that it breached the article in the Constitution that upholds the "indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation."

The Defense Ministry said that it will investigate statements purportedly made by a general who justified military intervention in Catalonia as a measure to prevent the region from breaking away from the rest of Spain. General Juan Antonio Chicharro (photo),



who is not retired but is active in the reserves, made his statements to a group of about 100 people at a discussion in a club in Madrid. Among those present at the discussion was the Supreme Court Justice Ángel Calderón, chief justice of the military chamber, Pedro González-Trevijano, the chancellor at the King Juan Carlos University, and Judge José Antonio Fernández Roderá, who is the editor of the military's in-house magazine *Jurídica Militar*. According to those present, Chicharro said that he normally would not have accepted the invitation to speak, but the "separatist-secessionist offensive" in Catalonia obligated him to come forward and issue an opinion. "The homeland comes first and is more important than democracy. Patriotism is emotion and the Constitution is just another law," the general told the group.

Chicharro asked what would occur if the Popular Party (PP) were to lose its majority in Congress in the next general elections and the Catalan nationalists offered their support in exchange for reforming Article 2 of the Constitution, which outlines Spain as "an indissoluble unity" and recognizes "the common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards."

"What then would the armed forces do?" he asked, without providing an answer. Those present gave him a standing ovation with cheers of "Bravo! Bravo!"

Another general, José Mena, was placed under house arrest and later replaced as head of the ground troops after he made a speech on January 6, 2006 criticizing that Catalan autonomy statute and suggesting that military intervention might be necessary to quell the region's demands for increased home rule.

THE DIFFERENCE IF YOU MARRY A YORKSHIRE GIRL!

Three friends married women from different parts of the world...

The first man married a Greek girl. He told her that she was to do the dishes and house cleaning. It took a couple of days, but on the third day he came home to see a clean house and dishes washed and put away.

The second man married a Thai girl. He gave his wife orders that she was to do ...all the cleaning, dishes and the cooking. The first day he didn't see any results but the next day he saw it was better. By the third day he saw his house was clean, the dishes were done, and there was a huge dinner on the table.

The third man married a girl from Yorkshire. He ordered her to keep the house cleaned, dishes washed, lawn mowed, laundry washed, and hot meals on the table for every meal. The first day he didn't see anything, the second day he didn't see anything either but by the third day, some of the swelling had gone down and he could see a little out of his left eye and his arm was healed enough that he could fix himself a sandwich and load the dishwasher. He still has some difficulty when he urinates...

(Stewart Pickles)

Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club.

Well, our new chairman doesn't hang about!

Organised or thirsty?? Our monthly meeting only lasted 1 pint & no fag breaks either!

Beware the Ides of March (fickle fish) at Nancy's.

On March the 15th, we fished at Nancy's for the last spot in the "Winter Final".

The fish were very localised. Pegs upstream from the Marjal T junction were dead.

Ron the Nomad & I turned up late again. The only pegs left were in the dead patch and we were having a peaceful day, until a load of escapees from the local school decided to test the Nomad's Spanish skills! *QUE!*

There were a few dry nets again, but there were a few good catches too.

Well done to Keith who won the match with Barry as runner up (even though he weighed in early).

John (the chairman) also had a 7 pounder.

Anti Baz must be coming down with a dose of something. Mid afternoon, everyone was down to T-shirts, but he was still wearing 3 - 4 layers, a coat and a woolly hat!

The "Winter Final" (the 6 winners of the monthly comps), will be fished at Nancy's on the 28th March. Results in next month's Dream Scene.

On the anti social front, anti Baz will organize a p**s up in a brewery - sorry, I meant a darts night.

And now for something to help the dry netters!

What is the best way to catch a fish? - Get someone to throw it at you!

What do you call someone who is good at catching fish? - Annette!

Sorry! Granddad told me these.

Next meeting is at The Lime Bar @ 17.30 Mon 1 April (Fool's day & Easter Monday).

Fishy fingers!

The Ghost.

O'er!

Girl to fiancé: 'When we're married I want to share all your troubles and worries.'

Fiancé: 'But I don't have any troubles and worries.'

Girl: 'I know, but we're not married yet.'



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LIME BAR GOLF SOCIETY, LOS ALTOS, ORIHUELA COSTA

The golf societies venue for the 13th March 2013 was held at the Altorreal Golf Course. The weather was cold in an extremely strong wind making play difficult, however this did not deter an enjoyable round of golf on a course a number of our players had not played before. This is the furthest our society has travelled to date, making the relevant 'Sat Nav's' come into their own and a few curses expressed as well.

The competition was in the Stableford format and the scores are recorded as follows.

Nearest the Pin on the 8th hole was Colin Capper.

Nearest the pin on the 17th hole was Pete Rushton.

Best guest with a score of 15 was John MacGregor.

Silver Class 3rd place was Colin Clarke with a score of 28 points.

Silver Class 2nd place was Andy MacDonald with a score of 29 Points.

Silver Class 1st place was Mark Taylor with a score of 33 points.

Gold Class 3rd place was Graham Mitchell with a score of 25 points.

Gold Class 2nd place was Mick Slater with a score of 30.

Gold Class 1st place was Bob Addair with a score of 32.

An enjoyable day in pleasant company, thank you to Captain Mick Slater and for organising the event and also thanks to the Staff at The Lime Bar and ladies for a most enjoyable meal. Anyone wishing to join our friendly society just needs to phone Mick on 659866468 or Stewart on 966180003. In addition I would like to thank our stand-in photographer Kevin Pritchard.



UP-COMING FIXTURES

Fixtures for the next two months of 2013 are:
April 10th, Curtis Cup at Vistabella – 35 Euros;

May 8th, Captains Day at La Torre - 50 Euros.

All games include green fee, buggy, prizes and buffet.



Mercadona improves earnings despite recession

Supermarket chain Mercadona, already Spain's biggest retailer by turnover, increased its sales further last year when it created a further 4,000 jobs in a flagging economy in which high unemployment is by far the biggest concern.

The unlisted Mercadona's revenues increased 7 percent to 19.077 billion euros while earnings rose by the same magnitude to 508 million, company chairman, Juan Roig said at a results presentation in Puçol in the province of Valencia. The improved performance was achieved despite Spain slipping back into recession for the second time in four years as GDP contracted 1.4 percent. Mercadona ended the year with a workforce of 74,000.

Roig, who is 219th in Forbes magazine's list of the world's richest people with a personal fortune of \$5.5 billion (4.2 billion euros), said Mercadona had decided to delay its plans to expand abroad. "We can't go and capture a castle overseas when things aren't quite right here," he said.

The billionaire was downbeat about the prospects for next year when the government is predicting a contraction in output of only 0.5 percent, compared with a forecasted decline of 1.4 percent from the European Commission "It's going to be a very, very difficult year," Roig said. He expects Mercadona to see its earnings fall to around 430 million euros in 2013, predicting a further loss of spending power for consumers already badly hit by the government's austerity drive and a jobless rate that has risen to 26 percent.

Roig lamented the government's decision to increase value-added tax in September of last year, which he said had come as a "blow for all Spaniards." Mercadona decided not pass on the increase to consumers at a cost to the company of 25 million euros a month.

Mercadona's name was included in a series of unofficial ledgers allegedly compiled by former Popular Party treasurer Luis Bárcenas that detail illegal contributions to the party and dubious cash payments to PP officials. Roig denied that Mercadona had made contributions to the PP of 90,000 euros in 2004 and another 150,000 euros in 2008, as indicated in the ledgers. Roig said that corruption undermines productivity. "Like all Spaniards, it worries us," he said. (El Pais)

Mercadona will also jump into the Basque Country for the first time in its history. The Valencian supermarket chain has informed the Department of Economic Development and Competitiveness of the Basque government, of its medium-term strategic plan for the Basque Country, which will initially open 25 supermarket stores in the next six years. It is expected to open its first store there in late 2014 or early 2015.

The Talking Clock

A habitual drunk was proudly showing off his new apartment to a couple of his friends late one night. When they made it to the bedroom, they saw a big brass gong next to the bed.

"What's a big brass gong doing in your bedroom?" one of the guests asked.

"It's not a gong. It's a talking clock," the drunk replied.

"A talking clock? Seriously?" asked his astonished friend.

"Yup," replied the drunk.

"How's it work?" the friend asked, squinting at it.

"Watch," the drunk replied. Picking up the mallet, he gave the gong an ear-shattering strike, and stepped back.

The three stood looking at one another for a moment.

Suddenly, someone on the other side of the wall screamed, "You asshole, do you realise it's three o'clock in the morning!"

(Pete Dudman)

Ferran Adrià & El Bulli.

Some of you may have heard of El Bulli. In issue no.21 of The Dream Scene, November 2008, I included a report on the famous restaurant. You can still read it on page 4 here - <http://www.heddon.co.uk/dhills/scene/ds21.pdf>

El Bulli (photo) was probably the most famous restaurant in the world and was run by chef Ferran Adrià (photo below) for 27 years. A Michelin 3-star restaurant on the coastline near the town of Roses in Catalonia, it drew people from all around the world and was described as "the most imaginative generator of haute cuisine on the planet." The restaurant was also associated with molecular gastronomy and was judged by Restaurant Magazine as the Number One of its 50 Top Restaurants in the World on five occasions; four times on consecutive years!



Then, to everyone's surprise, Adrià announced that the restaurant was to close on July 30, 2011. As a *Tasting Menu* meal with wine at El Bulli would cost one at least €250, this surprised many. The restaurant, which was only open for six months of the year, accommodated around 8,000 diners a season, but got more than two million requests for a table! However Adrià reported that the restaurant was operating at a loss since the year 2000. In April 2008, the restaurant employed 42 chefs! Any operating profit came from the sale of El Bulli books and lectures by Adrià.

Ferran Adrià has come up with conflicting statements as to what he is going to do now. These range from setting-up a foundation to promote culinary creativity to compiling *La Bullipedia* which he describes as "A Western haute cuisine Wikipedia."

But the great chef, now 50, needs to raise some money and Southeby's are to auction 8,800 bottles of wine from the cellar at El Bulli together with kitchen/restaurant equipment and memorabilia. The auction are to be held in Hong Kong and New York, where it is hoped that the sale of the wine alone could reach one million dollars. Also being auctioned is the chance to sit at one of two dinners with Ferran Adrià himself. There will be only four guests at each of the meals, to be held in his brother's restaurant in Barcelona. The auctions for the dinners are to be held in Hong Kong on April 3 and New York on April 26, with the bidding starting at \$5,000 for a seat at the table. (I wonder if the water is extra?) But of course Adrià also has his critics. Another Michelin 3-star chef, traditionalist Santi Santamaria, described Adrià's dishes as 'pretentious' and 'unhealthy.' Certainly some of the dishes are outlandish - white garlic and almond sorbet, tobacco-flavoured blackberry crushed ice and Kellogg's paella (Rice Krispies, shrimp heads and vanilla-flavoured mashed potatoes). A German food critic has described Adrià's recipes as containing risky additives such as colourants, gelling agents, emulsifiers, acidifiers and taste enhancers which should carry a health warning.

Adrià once described his dishes as a 'trip to the theatre or cinema.' Probably correct, but with the price of a meal with him starting bidding at \$5,000, 'being taken to the cleaners' is what I had in mind!





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Anniversaries.

A farmer and his wife are preparing their wedding anniversary dinner. The wife says, 'Should I go out and kill a chicken?' The husband replies, 'Why blame a bird for something that happened twenty years ago?' He asked how they should celebrate their twenty years of marriage. She suggested a two-minute silence.

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David, whose advert appears above, has a short e-book entitled 'Why are we always late in Spain?' You can get a free copy by just registering at his web address above; the book is enjoyable and informative.

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Bob's earring.

One day Tom notices that his co-worker, Bob, has started wearing an earring.

'Hey, Bob,' says Tom, 'I didn't know you were into earrings.'

'Yeah, sure,' says Bob.

'So how long have you been wearing one?' asks Tom.

Bob replies, 'Ever since my wife found it in our bed.;

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Two Good 'Uns.

Manuel's & Alingui.

The recession has brought little comfort to anyone. However, it has encouraged most restaurateurs to 'up their game' a bit and offer nourishing fairly priced fare. Gone are the days when the a-la-carte menu was shoved under the nose of the expat' or tourist and the menu del dia reserved for the locals. Now, any business is good business and business owners are trying harder.

Several years ago the Filton Centre in Los Balcones was buzzing, with the Filton Restaurant bursting at the seams. Now, in a totally different and difficult business environment, this restaurant has lost its edge, its menu not having changed for years together with a noticeable fall off in diners. But others have grasped the opportunity, which brings me to Manuel's and Alingui at the Filton Centre.

Alingui has a successful sister restaurant in Torrevieja and the formulae is repeated here. There is an a-la-carte menu but the popular choice is the competitively priced menu del dia at €7.90 a head, not including drinks. This offers a reasonable selection of dishes in a pleasant atmosphere. The wood-fired grilled meat dishes are also very popular. A glass of wine here costs €2.20 and a coffee €1.30.

Manuel's, on the other side of the square, also offers a menu-del-dia at €7.90, but I have found the variety here better than in Alingui's. In Manuel's, the choice of dishes offered are much more diverse and the quality and presentation of the food is much better. Manuel's a-la-carte dishes are also superior to Alingui's, and on Saturdays Manuel's offer a steak meal for two, including a bottle of wine, for €12.95. I have had this special twice and found it to be faultless. Any fish dishes at Manuel's have also been excellent, even the traditional fish & chips, which has a light batter not the 'corn-flakey' batter of most 'chippys.' There is usually live entertainment with dancing at weekends. Drinks are cheaper at Manuel's, a good glass of house wine at just €1.30, a bottle selling for €5.50. Manuel & his staff are attentive and obliging hosts and are always receptive to reasonable requests or variations.

Both of these venues offer excellent value meals and are well worth a visit. Hopefully they will both breath some life into the Filton Centre.

Whenever I travel I like to keep the seat next to me empty. I found a great way to do it. When someone walks down the aisle and says to you, 'Is someone sitting there?' just say, 'No one - except the Lord.'

Carol Leifer



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Brand New!

A guy out on the golf course takes a high speed ball right in the crotch. Writhing in agony, he falls to the ground. When he finally gets himself to the doctor, he says, "How bad is it doc? I'm going on my honeymoon next week and my fiancée is still a virgin in every way." The doc said, "I'll have to put your penis in a splint to let it heal and keep it straight. It should be okay next week." So he took four wooden tongue depressors and formed a neat little four-sided bandage, and wired it all together; an impressive work of art. The guy mentions none of this to his girl, marries, and on his honeymoon night in the motel room, she rips open her blouse to reveal a gorgeous set of breasts. This was the first time he had seen them. She says, "You'll be the first, no one has ever touched these breasts."

He whips down his pants and says, "Look at this, it's still in the CRATE!"

People.



Four alleged neo-Nazi Russians are charged with almost kicking a beggar to death at 3am early one morning in August 2009. The beggar was sleeping in a photo booth when he was viciously attacked. He suffered a hemorrhagic contusion to his brain which took 541 days to heal and he now needs constant supervision. Yes, a horrible story, but what has caught the attention of the press is one of the defending lawyers, Pelluz Angel, on left of photo. Angel is 90 years old and is defending the accused *pro bono*. While being questioned by the media in the court hallway in Madrid, Angel stated that beggars 'are not human beings' and are 'cancers of society that should be removed.' He was nostalgic for the Vagrant's Act of 1933, which he said prohibited 'these beggars who plague our society. Maybe we should tattoo a number on their forearm, give them striped pyjamas to wear and send them to a 'holiday camp' as well, Angel?

'Old Sour-Puss' on the right recently failed an alcohol breathalyser test, registering 0.6 grams alcohol per litre of exhaled air. The limit is 0.25 so he was nearly three times over the limit. Not really major news you might say, but what made me chuckle was that this chap is none other than the president of the Royal Spanish Automobile Federation (RDEdA), Carlos Gracia Fuertes. Banned from driving until June, Carlos said that he only allowed a glass of champagne to wet his lips! (It never even touches my lips! Straight down!) Although Carlos was 'caught' in October last year, he managed to keep it out of the newspapers, the case only coming to light on Radio Zaragoza in March this year.



Maybe not Spanish but definitely *latino*, is Sofia Vergara (left), some welcome relief after reading about the two 'herberts' above. You may have seen Miss Vergara, a Columbian, in the very popular TV series, Modern Family. Vergara, who made a full recovery from thyroid cancer during the last decade, is now the highest-earning woman in US television, earning more than \$19 million in a 12-month-period according to Forbes.com The unusual attachments to her already ample bosom are featured in a new movie which is due out next autumn. When asked in a recent TV interview if 'blonds had more fun,' she replied, 'No! Ladies with the biggest boobs do!'

The Dribblers of Orihuela Costa by Lee B.

Most homes have two of them and they seem to be the cause of raised blood pressure and water bills - the leaky loos..... Or to be more correct, the cistern internals and malfunctions therein.

Inside your cistern, that's the rectangular thing above the toilet seat, live two main components, the filler valve and the flush mechanism. The first thing people generally notice is the water bill creeping up by €10, €20 or €30 a time, a judicious squirt of a coloured liquid around the bowl will often reveal the culprit - the dribble!

Next step is to identify which bit is the faulty one, and here's the trick. If the filler mechanism is at fault, water will be finding its way into the bowl via the overflow tube; if the water level is below the overflow tube the leak is on the seal at the base of the flush mechanism, easy eh?

Faults in the filler can often be remedied by servicing the needle valve saving the cost of replacement at the same time clearing the crud from the inline filter in the filler can reduce the cistern refill time from intervals measured with an egg timer to 20 seconds or so, useful when you've a houseful and they've all been to the boozier.... If you DIY, beware of the cheap replacement parts. Filler valves cost from €5 to about €19, the cheap ones are usually trouble and you'll be fixing it again in a few weeks. In bars (and probably in my own house if I needed one) I fit the expensive one, in the bars because the toilets can be flushed 100 times a day and need to be good quality to withstand that, in my own place, because I believe in "do it once, do it right" your choice though.

Faults on the flush mechanism can be a bit more entertaining, the Ideal Standard dual flush found on many houses on Dream Hills and other urbanisations, can be a bit temperamental and spares usually tricky to find, the neoprene seal (a big black washer) on the bottom of the flush stem fails and funnily enough, no one stocks the 50 cent seal, preferring to sell you a whole replacement unit for €20 or more. Strange that! And you usually need to remove the cistern from the pan to change the part and getting a watertight seal between the cistern and pan can be challenging.

And don't forget the check valve in the wall and the hose from the valve to the cistern; the wall valve will often seize up and the hose can become blocked with the same scale you would have found in your tap filters if you followed last months tip and cleaned them out!

(Lee has set-up a Facebook page Dream Hills - Costa Blanca)



Just the tonic!

A man goes to the doctor with a long history of migraine headaches. When the doctor does his history and physical, he discovers that the poor guy has tried practically every therapy known to man for his migraines and STILL no improvement.

"Listen," says the doc, "I have migraines, too and the advice I'm going to give you isn't really anything I learned in medical school, but it's advice that I've gotten from my own experience. When I have a migraine, I go home, get in a nice hot bathtub, and soak for a while. Then I have my wife sponge me off with the hottest water I can stand, especially around the forehead. This helps a little. Then I get out of the tub, take her into the bedroom, and even if my head is killing me, I force myself to have sex with her. Almost always, the headache is immediately gone. Now, give it a try, and come back and see me in six weeks."

Six weeks later, the patient returns with a big grin. "Doc! I took our advice and it works! It REALLY WORKS! I've had migraines for 17 years and this is the FIRST time anyone has ever helped me!"

"Well," says the physician, "I'm glad I could help."

"By the way, Doc," the patient adds, "You have a really nice house."



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What was that?

Man goes to doctor. "Doctor" he says, "I am concerned for my wife. We're both getting older now but I think her hearing is going. She'll be distraught about this if I suggest that she comes to you for tests. What can I do?"

The Doctor suggests that when he gets home to look for opportunities to test her hearing. Situations when she can't see him but he can call out her name or ask a question. If she does not answer, to then move closer and try again. Repeat until he has a distance when his wife responds and to let him know.

A few days pass until the man gets his chance. But one evening when he returns from work. He opens the front door and can see through the lounge into the dining room and then beyond that into the kitchen. His wife has her back to him and is cooking at the stove.

"Agnes, it's me, I am home. What's for supper?"

Nothing. No movement, no suggestion she has heard him. He moves through the lounge into the dining room.

"Agnes, it's me, I am home. What's for supper?"

Again nothing. He walks across the dining room and stands at the kitchen door.

"Agnes, it's me. I am home. What's for supper?"

Again nothing and so he walks across the kitchen to stand right behind her.

"Agnes, it's me. I am home. What's for supper?"

This time Agnes shrugs her shoulders, sighs out loud and turns to face him and says "For the fourth time of asking, it's f***ing Shepherd's pie, you deaf bastard!"

A closer look at the lost generation

A new study highlights the plight of young Spaniards – and their attitudes.

By Guy Hedgcock

This article was originally published by Iberosphere.

Link: <http://iberosphere.com/>

On a day when Spain's unemployment figures have once again broken records, I was drawn to another set of data which may be equally bleak, but which offers a more subtle insight into how the country functions.

A poll commissioned by Cadena SER looks at the attitudes of Spaniards aged between 22 and 30, the so-called "lost generation" who, we have been repeatedly told, can't find a job, can't buy a house and hate their politicians.

All of that is confirmed in this study, but a breakdown of the figures makes for fascinating reading. The most shocking finding for me was that only 38 percent of young people live exclusively off their own revenue; 21 percent survive with the help of family or friends, 19 percent combine their salary with family help to get by. Another 13 percent get by on a mysterious category called "other help", and eight percent live off unemployment benefit.

This obviously ties in with the well-documented lack of independence of young Spaniards and the poll goes on to show that half of them would like to stop being dependent but can't. A quarter say they would like to have children but can't, also for financial reasons.

Attitudes to work were also telling. Roughly equal numbers of interviewees expressed a preference for having a salary (47 percent) and having their own business (44 percent). "The enterprising spirit is quite common among young people," remarks Cadena SER.

Or is it? A preference for having your own business if given the choice isn't the same as starting your own business. A recent article by Smart Planet took an in-depth look at this aspect of Spain's business world, drawing the conclusion that there is a massive entrepreneurial deficit among young people.

The sons and daughters of the post-Franco world aren't living to make ends meet, but are simply waiting for their ideal job or are *opositando*, the truly Spanish phenomenon of studying for the highly competitive civil service exams. Many, on their parents' dime, study nine hours a day, six days a week for these exams, for one to five years at a time, while some of these jobs-for-life can see 1,000 applicants for only three spots.

As one entrepreneur at a networking event recently said, "You're 23 years old with your whole life ahead of you and all you can dream of is to be a public servant?"*

All of which may sound a little tough on the "lost generation". But the article does pull out a stunning and disturbing fact to back up its overall theory that young Spaniards have the entrepreneurial spirit squeezed out of them throughout their formative years: a head of the MBA program at the Complutense University explained how students' "entrepreneurial behaviour" was actually higher when they started the course than when it finished.

"The university was deterring them from starting their own business," the program head said.

As Spain's politicians, business leaders, academics, teachers, parents and youngsters survey today's unemployment figures, and a jobless rate of over 55 percent for the under-25s, they might all consider what can be done to change this tragic situation.

*Link to article: <http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/global-observer/why-the-spanish-arent-entrepreneurs/9312>

NATURAL GAS COMES TO DREAM HILLS BACKED BY AN INCREDIBLE OFFER.

It is proposed to install a natural gas supply to Dream Hills in the coming months. A gas line will run past Via Park III in Los Altos and a branch gas line will also be placed down Calle Lagunas de Ruidera providing the demand is there. The natural gas supplier is *gasNaturalfenosa* and the researcher and installer of the pipeline infrastructure for this area is Elecnor.

Elecnor is one of Spain's leading companies in engineering, development and construction of projects relating to infrastructures, renewable energies and new technologies. With 12,000 employees and a presence in over 30 countries worldwide, Elecnor, a publicly quoted company, is now recognised as an internationally prestigious and highly rated organisation with experience ranging from the laying of gas pipelines in Mexico to establishing wind farms in Canada and Brazil. Their representatives researching in this area are Virginia and David, and they carry identification; contact details below.

The Offer: The basis of the offer from Elecnor is that they will bring natural gas to this area if sufficient households sign up for it.

What will it cost you? There are two cost options.

Option 1: Elecnor will install natural gas in your property and waive the normal installation charge of €1,089. They will connect the natural gas supply to up to two devices for you, say if you have a gas boiler and a cooker or a gas fire, for just €18.98. Although the main and side roads will have to be dug-up to cover the natural gas pipelines, the supply line within your property will be over-ground so there will be no need to dig up your drive-ways or tiled patios. This one-off connection fee of €18.98, together with a regular monthly standing charge of €2.25, will be debited from your bank account around two months after the actual installation.

Option2: Elecnor will install natural gas to a connection in your garden or patio and cap it. The normal installation charge of €1089 will be waived and approx. two months after the installation, a monthly standing charge of €2.25 will be applied to your bank account.

Property owners of course have a third option which is to do nothing. Personally, I believe that the question of having the natural gas installed or not is a 'no-brainer.' The bottom line is this. You can have a cost-effective energy source - a natural gas supply - brought to your property for just €2.25 a month! Even if you do not have any gas appliances, this keeps your options open and it will be a major advantage if you wish to sell your property in the future. It's a 'Win, Win' situation, and no! I am not on commission!

If you already have gas appliances or or possibly plan to get them in the future, connection to natural gas offers many advantages over bottled gas and electricity, not the least of which are cost and convenience. The brief comparison of costs outlined above clearly indicate the saving that can be had using natural gas are substantial. A brief check of your electricity bills over the last few years and their upward trend will shock you.

If you do not sign-up to the scheme, trying to get connected at a later stage would be expensive and would probably incur the full cost. That is of course if the contractors were to re-visit the area, which is unlikely.

But a word of caution. Don't rush out to buy new heating systems and equipment on the basis that you have signed up for the gas supply. If sufficient owners don't sign-up for the system, it may never happen.

Should you wish to know more about the scheme, Virginia and David, who are representatives of Elecnor and speak perfect English, would be pleased to meet with you and answer any questions you might have. They can be contacted: Virginia on 645 113 316 and David on 685 610 553 – to visit you in your home. They can also be contacted at comercialelecnor@gmail.com

There is no pressure to sign-up to the scheme, but if you do sign-up (as we did) you will need the following from one of the property owners: NIE certificate and copy; passport and photocopy; bank account number (for direct debits) and copy of paid bill showing bank account number; e-mail address and brand name and model of gas boiler (if you have one).

I really believe that this is an excellent opportunity to upgrade to efficient and cheap energy supplies at minimum cost.

The Test Results.

A man goes to the Doc's worried that his wife has been acting peculiar. "Ok" says the Doc, "If you can get me a urine sample I might be able to determine the problem."

The chap goes home and manages to convince his wife to pee into a jar for him and takes it back to the doctor who says to come back in seven days for the results. The following week he returns and asks the Doc what he discovered.

"Well", he said "It's very perplexing and the results are a little inconclusive, but we think it's either Alzheimer's Disease or AIDS." "Holy hell!" The poor fellow replies, "What should I do?"

"No problem, when you get home send her for a walk around the block. If she comes home, don't screw her."

The Budgie.

Mrs Evans can't tell which of her two budgerigars is the male, so a friend suggests waiting 'till they are 'doing the business' then putting a collar on the bird on top. The idea works and the male budgie is collared. A few days later, the priest comes round for tea. The budgie eyes him and says, 'Caught you as well did they, mate?'

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Top left shows Merkel with Rajoy and others making cuts. On the left Queen Sofia and King Juan Carlos next to PM Rajoy 'tarted-up' as a flamenco dancer.



The above falla was saved from burning at the request of the Hindu community and donated to them.

The *Falles* (or *Fallas*) is a five-day continuous fiesta held annually in the city of Valencia, in honour of St. Joseph. Most neighbourhoods in the city construct *ninots* of firecracker-filled cardboard and paper-mâché creations which make up the *falla* display. These *fallas* are always very witty, satirical and topical. But, at the end of the fiesta, they are all burned except for one prize-winning display. This year around €8 millions' worth - 800 large *ninots* - went up in smoke!



I couldn't resist including these images taken from *La Ofrenda* (Offering to the Virgin) which took place during the *fallas*. The outer covering to the Madonna is made up of red and white carnations.

Note the crying-baby bottom left and the child with the 'dummy' in her mouth, bottom right!



(Images from El Mundo, Efe, Informacion.)



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KEV & JULES

The Couple.

The marriage got off to a bad start during the wedding service. The vicar said, 'You may now kiss the bride.' And she said, 'Not now. I've got a headache. After several month of marriage he said to her , 'After I shave in the morning I feel ten years younger.' She said, 'So why not try shaving before you go to bed.'

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Gerry Okstain would like to thank all who donated to the MABS Cancer Support Group following the tragic departure of his beloved Jean. €132.39 was raised for the charity.

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I put on my spectacles for the first time and the insults started - 'Four eyes! Goggle eyes! Joe 90!' To which I replied, 'Look, you're not the only optician round here.'

Harry Hill

I was walking down the street wearing my glasses when all of a sudden my prescription ran out.

Steven Wright.

So I went to the dentist. He said, 'Say Aaah.' I said, 'Why?' He said, 'My dog died.'

Tommy Cooper

I said to my dentist, 'My teeth are going yellow.' He said, 'Wear a brown necktie.'

Rodney Dangerfield

After two days in hospital, I took a turn for the nurse.

W.C. Fields

A male gynaecologist is like an auto mechanic who has never owned a car.

Carrie Snow

If it's wet, dry it. If it's dry, wet it. Congratulations, you are now a gynaecologist.

Peter Murray

I was under the care of a couple of medical students who couldn't diagnose a decapitation.

Jeffrey Bernard

The reason doctors' prescriptions are impossible to read is because they all have the same message to the pharmacist: 'I got my money, now you get yours.'

Jackie Mason

Jewish Alzheimer's is when you forget everything except a grudge.

Jackie Mason

A teacher was struggling to teach arithmetic to a young boy. So she said: 'If you reached into your right pocket and found five euros and you reached into your left pocket and found another five euros, what would you have?'

The boy thought for a moment and replied: 'Someone else's pants.'

Remember, you can have a colour copy of the Dream Scene sent to you by email each month for just €5 for one year. Black & white hard copies can be delivered to your postbox for the same amount.

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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at mick.dreamscene@gmail.com or at 586 Dream Hills.

You can find archived copies of The Dream Scene together with lots of helpful info, at Pat Farnaby's website - <http://www.heddon.co.uk/dhills/>

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