

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

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

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the May 2022 edition. Issue No.175

Soaring energy prices push inflation in Spain up to 37-year high. The rate jumped to **9.8%** in March from 7.6% in February, its highest level since May 1985, according to a preliminary estimate from national statistics institute INE.

Like the rest of Europe, Spain has been struggling since last year with **soaring energy prices**, with households and businesses struggling to pay electricity bills. The Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, has announced a package of economic support measures worth **€6 billion in direct aid, tax breaks and fuel subsidies**, plus a further €10 billion in loans for families and businesses affected by the fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Until June 30, the Spanish government has cut the price of petrol and diesel by **20 cents for every litre** of fuel, 15 cents will be financed by the government and five cents by the oil companies. The government has said that the measure could even be extended beyond the end of June, if necessary.

Foreigners bought more than **100,000 homes in Spain** in 2021 in the best year since the runaway boom year of 2006, according to the latest data from the Spanish government, with non-European foreigners buying 18,156 homes in Q4, 2021.

Congratulations to **JB's Bar** in Lago Jardin 2 and **Silvia W** for organising the fundraising event for the **Ukraine**. Many thanks to all who subscribed. **The funds raised €700**, which was passed on to the **Ukraine Association in Torrevieja**.

If you are a regular reader of the printed copy of the Dream Scene, you will notice that from last month, the **quality of the paper** we have used is not as good as normal, the photos in particular are not as sharp. Unfortunately, this is all the paper our printer can get at the moment as prices and availability are now very problematic.

Thanks to **Ulf & Stina** for the donation.

Keep safe & well,

Mick, Tid & the Dream Scene team

Angela's Cartoon

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LOCAL



**When I said 'Fancy some sport tonight?'
This is not what I meant!**

Doing some family research, my Great Great Grandfather was on the Titanic.....
I suppose he still is!

The **storm** on the early morning of April 20



brought not only some heavy rainfall but also 400 lightning strikes in the province of Alicante in just four hours. The storm also brought a massive water spout (photo) off the coast of Torrevieja, which lasted for about 15 minutes.

Two Russian interpreters were arrested in Alicante **for defrauding Ukrainians** with residence procedures. Police accuse a mother and her daughter of obtaining 5,000 euros paid by eight families for speeding up requests for temporary residence protection. They solicited Ukrainians who were queuing outside police stations. After pretending that they worked for the police, they assured that the procedures would go faster if they paid 250 euros per adult and 150 per minor. The two Russian women have been arrested for crimes of fraud, threats and coercion and after testifying before the National Police they have been released with charges.

The **relaxing of Covid hygiene measures** like hand washing and mask-wearing means that the common flu is now making an uncommon comeback. Normally, the flu experiences its peak in December, January and February, but this year has rebounded later than that: between March 21 and 27, the rate of transmission of the flu was still at 36.8%, compared to just 5.3% of coronavirus.

However, this flu is much less severe than coronavirus, causing the usual symptoms such as fever, sore throat and muscle pain and only leading to hospitalisation in “very occasional, exceptional” circumstances.

Susan Boyle is an important weapon in the war on terror. Young extremists are thinking twice about blowing themselves up now because they now know what a virgin looks like.

Sean Lock, 8 Out of 10 Cats

Meanwhile in Orihuela Costa.....not only are **the roads full of potholes** and in a dreadful condition, but the local councillors are fighting amongst themselves like cats and dogs!

Although the Ciudadanos (Citizens) Party have been supporting the Partido Popular (PP) in a coalition council, there has been ‘bad blood’ between both parties for quite some time. The mayor of the municipality, Emilio Bascuñana (PP), announced that he is now breaking up with Ciudadanos and removing them from their council responsibilities of Infrastructure, Human Resources, Urban Planning, Education and Culture. Meanwhile, Ciudadanos are now joining with the PSOE and Cambiemos Orihuela to obtain a motion of censure to remove Bascuñana from the Mayor's Office. But Ciudadanos have ignored the instructions of their national leadership which was to not make the socialist, Carolina Gracia, the new mayor! This would not be the first time that municipal or regional Ciudadanos defied their own national leaders to secure some local victories. There are many who believe that Ciudadanos will be wiped off the political map in next year's general election.

The regional government of Valencia has decided not to introduce the much criticised ‘**Tourist Tax**’ until 2024, the year after the 2023 elections. The tax which is supposed to be voluntary in that it will be the mayors of the individual municipalities who will decide whether to introduce the new tax or not. The tax rate will be between €0.50 to €2 per night, depending on the type of accommodation and there will be exemptions.

(The city of Edinburgh in Scotland looks likely to follow Paris and Venice to become the first city in the UK to introduce a “tourist tax”. Visitors to the tight-arse Scottish capital will pay a £2-a-night room surcharge for the first seven days of their trip if the SNP holds on to power in the city chambers.)

The Beauty Lounge

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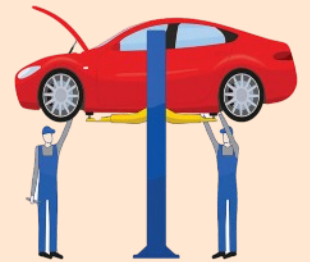
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On a recent visit to Benjdorm on arrival I asked a lady for directions to my hotel, she said it's only a stones throw away. I said will I recognise it? She said it's the one with all the broken windows

EU leaders have given Spain and Portugal special permission to present a plan to temporarily manage their own electricity prices. The EU president said this was possible because the two countries were '**an Iberian energy island**', both with a relatively high share of renewable's in their energy mix and very few interconnections to other parts of the EU grid. However, the measures adopted by these two countries must be communicated to the European Commission for validation, in order not to distort competition.

OUCH! Bad news for second home owners in Wales, who now face soaring council tax bills. As part of a drive to make housing more affordable for locals, the Welsh government is increasing the maximum possible council tax premium on second homes from 100% to 300%. I don't think the Spanish would dream of doing this! The EU would surely declare it discriminatory.

Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium was packed out as a **world record 91,553 fans** watched the home team beat Real Madrid 5-2 in a Women's Champions League semi-final in late March. The previous record for a women's game was 90,185 at the 1999 World Cup final between the United States and China at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

Malaga man arrested twice in a week for trying to steal ham. The thief was caught red-handed both times with legs of jamón under his arms. Police in Malaga have arrested the 52-year-old man **for the second time in a week** after he was caught trying to break into a market in the city centre to steal Spanish hams. The first time he was arrested was on March 22, when he was found carrying two jamones that he had allegedly just stolen from one of the stalls of a municipal market in the western part of the city. He appeared in court on March 25, and went straight back out and tried to rob the market again, this time accompanied by a woman to act as lookout. His latest robbery occurred at around 1am. It was raining but a

neighbour saw him on the roof of the market and alerted the police.

When the police turned up, the man's accomplice, who was crouched between two cars, warned the man but police caught him anyway. He was wearing the exact same clothes in which he was arrested the last time.

Police have nicknamed the man the 'Spider' because of his modus operandi of climbing over an adjoining traffic signal to access the marketplace. The Spider was already known to police for his part in **six robberies in the same market**. In total, his criminal activity has caused economic damage to store owners of 10,000 euros.

The PP & Vox

The largest region in Spain, is situated in the north west and is called Castilla and León.

The conservative PP has been in power there for 35 years but has now swapped coalition

partners from the centrist Citizens party to the far-right Vox party. Already they have

conceded some ideological ground to Vox, which wants to replace the controversial Law of

Democratic Memory relating to the civil war, arguing that it is biased towards the losing Republican side.

In June it is expected that regional elections will be held in Andalucia, where the PP government is presently supported by Vox from outside government. This will be a first test for PP to halt Vox's dramatic rise in popularity while sharing power in another part of Spain.



Just my luck- -a day after winning the Nigerian lottery, someone's robbed my bank account!

Questions for the Local Fuzz!

There are ructions at present in the Alicante City Council, part it seems due to the selection process for the Policia Local. An anonymous 16-page PDF document has been circulated online, complaining about nepotism and a number of unacceptable practices in the selection process. The "*Mantecado*" (a biscuit similar to shortbread) document, which has been circulating from cell phone to cell phone in Alicante for several weeks, also alleges bribery, embezzlement, talk of meals 'bribes', removing fines and removing vehicles from the municipal deposit at no cost, together with the auction of abandoned vehicles. The last seven pages of the document allege that two thirds of the successful applicants for posts have a relationship with members of the Local Police and with political parties and trade unions. What! In Spain? Never!

Several investigations have now been launched to determine if there has been fraudulent behaviour but also to find out who compiled and circulated the report.

Heavy Metal!

Metal theft is skyrocketing in the province, with a 40% increase in metal and aluminium thefts. All kinds of cables, doorknobs, grilles, doors, windows, handles, railings, mailboxes, street signs, stopcocks and even irrigation sprinklers in public gardens have disappeared to be sold to metal dealers. Clean copper, for example, has nearly doubled in price in less than a year. In 2021 it fetched 5 euros per kilo and now, 9 euros is being offered to sellers. Two cemeteries in Elda and Petrer have had scores of brass ornamental candleholders and planters stolen.

Perv' Nabbed!

A 61-year-old man has been arrested at Murcia's Corvera airport for trying to leave the country with an underage girl. The youngster told her mother and father that she planned to flee her home and fly abroad. When she vanished, her parents contacted the police. The man was arrested just minutes before boarding a plane to Morocco and the child returned to her parents.

Home Grown!

Police in Alicante province managed to shut down a trafficking operation in nearby Rojales in which three Britons have been charged with growing marijuana and sending it in parcels to Ireland (Honest, we thought it was shamrock!) and Holland. The two men and one woman, aged 26, 30 and 32, were eventually rumbled after the strong smell from the contents of the packages raised eyebrows and suspicion at a transport office in Almoradí during February. It turns out the trio were allegedly attempting to mail six kilos of marihuana, with one of the men posing as a parcel delivery man.

Consequent raids at two properties in Rojales unearthed more than 500 marijuana plants, 200 branches laid out to dry and an array of items used for cultivation. The Brit's were released on charges and banned from leaving the country ahead of a court hearing in Orihuela.

Drugs & Schools.

A boy aged 16 who was forced by his parents to sell drugs at his school in Alicante tipped the police off. Now his mother and father have been arrested after a police raid and found two pistols, ammunition, tasers, balaclava's, two kilos of marihuana buds and other drugs. The National Police say that the youngster had faced a barrage of threats and violence every time he refused to sell drugs. He finally decided to take samples of hashish he was supposed to sell and turn them in at his local police station.

The boy told officers his parents had for some time been forcing him to deal drugs – mainly hashish – at his school. Police raided the boy's Alicante city home the same day. The detainees, aged 34 and 36, both of Spanish nationality, were handed over to the Examining Magistrate's Court in Alicante, which ordered the father to be remanded in custody.

A restraining order was also granted against both parents, banning them from approaching both their sons.



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VIA PARK III

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Hangovers installed.....and serviced.

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Lovely bloke - terrible anaesthetist.

Price List

Issued April 2022



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400mg/40%	58 euros
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Pet Products - 10ml

Pet Calm	22.50 euros
Early Years Pet CBD	15.00 euros
Junior Pet CBD	24.00 euros
Senior Pet CBD	33.00 euros

CBD Vitamins

10 capsule trial pot	12.00 euros
30 capsule pot	34.49 euros

CBD Pain Cream

High Strength 25ml	40.00 euros
High Strength 50ml	70.00 euros

CBD Tea

Morning/Evening Pot	10.00 euros
Health Tea Pot	12.50 euros

Beauty Products

Lip Balm	3.50 euros
Skin Repair Oil 10ml	13.00 euros
Skin Repair Oil 50ml	39.00 euros
Vitamin Eye Oil 10ml	22.00 euros
TRU Box Set	149.00 euros
TRU Refresh/Restore	62.50 euros
TRU Calm	55.00 euros

Natural Organic Products

Aloe Vera Gel 250ml	7.50 euros
Essential Oils 10ml	4.95 euros
Hand Soap 500ml	2.99 euros
Organic Bath Bomb	1.20 euros
Room Diffuser 50ml	4.95 euros

I just got back from the funeral of my 82-year-old neighbour who died after falling off his roof when fixing his satellite TV dish. The funeral was very sad, but the reception was excellent.

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TRAVEL AGENCY



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Went round the neighbours last night, had a lovely meal, 3 bottles of red wine and a big cigar. They'll go mad when they get back from Tenerife tomorrow.



JJ's

Café  Bar

VIA PARK V.

**Kitchen closed
Winter Hours
Now in Operation.**



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1pm - 10pm

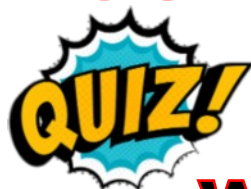


WEDNESDAY FUN DARTS 7pm

FRIDAY QUIZ WITH SUE 6.30pm



SUNDAY AFTERNOON QUIZ



& STANDUP BINGO

with John - 3pm start.



JILLY'S SLIMMING CLUB

THURSDAYS 4pm



New Members Welcome!

ALL SPORTS SHOWN

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JJ, Rob & Bobby

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TWEET!

TWEET!



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PIES OF ALL FLAVOURS,

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MONDAY - SATURDAY

11am - 5pm



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VIA PARK V

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Quiz & Race Night

Fridays 8pm Karaoke.

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Diana Diaz



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*You can find our south-facing bar
 opposite Mercadona in Los Balcones*

CASH & SPAIN

Carrying cash on you.

The law on the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing sets the maximum amount of cash that you are allowed to carry with you at €100,000.

If for some reason you do need to carry this amount, you can do so, but the Treasury must be notified using the S1 form, which notifies the Tax Agency of the declaration of the movement of money.

There are also limits as to the amount you can pay for something in cash in Spain. During 2021, this amount was changed from €2,500 to only €1,000. This means all amounts above €1,000 paid to builders, decorators, strippers/escorts etc., have to be paid by card. This includes publican's payments to the brewery companies and restaurants to suppliers.

Travelling with cash.

The maximum amount of cash you can take with you travelling from Spain is €10,000, with the same amount if you are entering Spain. If the amounts equal or exceeds this amount the form S1 needs to be completed.

Paying into a bank.

The maximum amount you can deposit in a bank without having to declare it in Spain is also set at €10,000. However, if your deposit exceeds €3,000 the bank does have an obligation to notify the authorities of your operation.

Keeping cash in your property.

There is no limit to the amount of money stored at home as long as it has been obtained legitimately and is declared to the Tax Agency.

Failure to apply these rules can result in draconian fines from €600 to double the amount of cash found on you and/or confiscation of the whole lot!



HELP VEGA BAJA DIABETES SUPPORT

Following many years running a local Diabetic Support Group, friend of the charity, Oscar, has kindly agreed to join the team and offer one to one support on all aspects of living with, and preventing diabetes. This is a free service.

To find out more, please contact our San Miguel Centre on 966 723 733 or email office@helpvegabaja.com



Importing a Car to Spain

If importing a UK-plated vehicle you are allowed six months before registering it on Spanish plates or returning it to the UK. Fines may be applied unless a justifiable reason for non-registration can be given. The re-registering of the vehicle can be costly because the amount charged is based on its value in Spain (second-hand cars are much cheaper in the UK), not what you actually paid for the vehicle.

Customs duty will be charged at 10% of the vehicle's value plus 21% of the value in tax. This will apply even though VAT will have been paid in the UK, so it might be more economical to sell the vehicle in the UK and then to buy a vehicle here.

Besides, a right-hand-drive vehicle makes you a target.....



There are some Russian soldiers marching... they hear a voice shout from over a hill.... "I bet one Ukrainian can beat ten Russians!!!"

The Russian commander, thinking that it would be easy, sent 10 men over the hill to fight... they heard a fighting and noise... No Russian soldiers came back.... after a minute they heard the voice again..... "I bet one Ukrainian can beat 100 Russians!!!"

The commander, getting more annoyed now, decided to send some more of his men over, to finish this Ukrainian off....

After a period of noise, shooting and boom, no Russian soldiers came back, and the voice shouted again.... "I bet one Ukrainian can beat 1000 Russians!!!"

The commander, thinking that one soldier could not possibly beat 1000, he sends a whole brigade of his troops over.... Again, there was lots of noise, but then, silence.....

One Russian soldier returned this time, bloody, bruised, barely walking, the soldier says, "Don't send any more men over; The Ukrainians are lying, there's actually two of them."

During March 2022, Spain finally approved its promised €400 Culture Voucher for the young who may have missed out in the pandemic.

Who can apply? Only those who turn 18 years old in 2022 will be able to access the grant. It's open to those with Spanish nationality, as well as legal residents and refugees. All you will have to do to prove you qualify is to show a document that includes your date of birth and residency status, such as a DNI, TIE or green residency document.

What can you spend it on? Your grant must be distributed and diversified across three different cultural sectors, meaning that you can't just blow it all at once on one big purchase. In each of these sectors, a limit will be set.

A limit of €200 can be spent on performing arts, cultural heritage and audiovisual productions. This includes items such as theatre tickets, live music concerts, cinemas, museums, libraries, exhibitions, as well as music and literary festivals.

A maximum of €100 can be spent on physical cultural products. This will include products such as books, magazines and periodicals, as well as video games, vinyl records or any other physical form of music and movies such as CDs and DVDs.

A maximum of €100 can be spent on digital or online culture. This includes subscriptions to companies such as Netflix and Spotify, digital music, audio and e-books, as well as podcasts, online video games and digital subscriptions to newspapers and magazines. Keep in mind that any subscriptions will be limited to a maximum of four months.

Items such as computer hardware or software, textbooks, musical instruments, gastronomy, sports equipment or tickets and fashion will not be included.

Where can you use it? The grant can only be used in establishments or institutions which have signed up for the program and which operate within Spain. You will be able to find a full list of places once you have been approved for the voucher.

How can you apply for it? The Spanish government is set to launch a special website for the culture voucher, where you will be able to fill out an online form to request the grant. The website will also be available for companies to sign up and offer their cultural products and services.

Once approved for the grant, you will receive the money in one lump sum put onto a virtual prepaid card. You may also request a physical card if your phone is not compatible with the virtual one. It will be linked to your name and identity, so you will be the only one able to use it.

Finally, you will have a total of 12 months in which to spend the money from the time you receive it.

The Spanish government **hopes to repeat the aid program in 2023**, so if you're not old enough to receive the grant this year, then you may be able to try next year.

In total, this aid represents €210 million of Spain's General State Budget and it's estimated that almost 500,000 young people throughout Spain may end up benefiting from it.

(I am sure that as there will be another general election due in 2023, the largesse of the current government has nothing to do with the fact that there will be at least half a million new voters in Spain next year.)

Awe!

I'll never forget how happy I was when I saw my missus walking down the aisle towards me.

My heart was beating fast and the excitement was unbearable.

It seemed to take an age, but eventually there she was, standing beside me.

I gave her a loving smile and said, "Get that trolley over here, Love.

They're doing 3 cartons of beer for the price of two!!"

Barry & Sue
Welcome you to
LAS OLAS

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 And we are about 150 metres on the left!

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 lovely charity shop
 on the lower ground floor
 in Via Park 5.

Lots of lovely bargains including new and
 nearly new clothes
 at very reasonable prices
 and much, much more....

Why is it, when girls wear skimpy, revealing bikinis
 on holiday, they don't mind you staring at them?
 Yet if you catch them wearing only their bra and
 knickers, they scream and shout and cover
 themselves up with a towel?

Sort it out Ladies. I don't climb up this ladder
 for the good of my health you know.

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Spanish Bread

Are you finding Spanish bread a bit bland? This may be down to a lack of salt in the bread. Spain's Ministry of Agriculture has established a maximum amount of salt content for bread, a rule which came into effect on April 1st 2022. The Ministry seeks to offer "healthier products and with the maximum guarantees" for consumers.

The new rule establishes that the maximum content of salt allowed in "common bread", must be 1.31 grams per 100 grams of bread, if analysed by chloride determination. Or, 1.66 grams of salt per 100 grams of bread, if analysed by total sodium.

Spaniards consume an average of 34.12 kilos of bread per person per year.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), recommends a salt intake of less than 5 grams (approximately 2g sodium) per person per day. According to the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (Aesan), Spaniards consume an average of up to 9.8 grams of salt per day. High sodium intake can contribute to high blood pressure and increase the risk of heart disease and strokes.

This might be addressing the 'salt problem.' However, Spanish bread also contains a lot of sugar. Many northern Europeans consider Spanish bread to be far too sweet.

*I went to watch Spurs at White Hart Lane last week.
I stayed until the very end of the game to avoid the traffic.
Frank Skinner*

"Waggy Tails"

In San Miguel de Salinas

DOG
GROOMING
PARLOUR



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672 326 979

MASK WEARING - NEW RULES

From Wednesday April 20th 2022, masks are no longer required in the majority of indoor public settings in Spain.

Spanish authorities have named three indoor public settings where masks will still be required after April 20th.

Hospitals and other health-related establishments (dental clinics, pharmacies, physiotherapy practices etc)

Care homes, for visitors and workers

All forms of public transport (airplanes, buses, trains, metros, taxis and ferries, the latter if a 1.5 metre distance can't be kept indoors.)

However, it is no longer necessary to wear a mask inside bars, cafés, restaurants, nightclubs, cinemas, theatres, sports stadiums, concert halls, shopping centres, supermarkets, gyms and schools.

In workplaces, it will be employers who decide whether staff should continue wearing masks, although the "general rule" is that face coverings are no longer mandatory. If staff can't keep a 1.5 metre distance from other employees or customers, the recommendation for businesses that operate indoors is to keep masks on.

Spain's Health Ministry recommends that those over 60, immuno suppressed people, pregnant women and people in their company continue with "responsible use" of face masks indoors. Spanish health authorities are planning to soon offer a second booster (fourth vaccine dose) to people over 80 and those in care homes.



TAVERNA
BURGER
BURGER
and CHIPS
CHIPS
EGG

**I wanted somewhere in England,
but in Spain!**

The government will use **€11 billion of EU funds for Spain** to become a manufacturer of microchips, key components in the digital world and an element of "global geostrategic importance". Until recently, the bulk of microchip and semiconductor production was in Asia. The problems of production and capacity issues has forced a rethink of locations for future manufacture, to allow production quantities to increase and meet worldwide demand.

Taiwan dominates the world's production of semiconductors, the data-processing "brains" in everything from smartphones to cruise missiles. The island of 24 million people produces more than **half the world's chips** — and a single company, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), makes 92% of the most sophisticated designs.

China also has great ambitions of becoming a world leader in chip manufacture. Although they have poured \$100 billion into the project over 20 years, its ventures have flopped after wasteful investments and poor top-down decisions. China is now increasingly turning to cyber espionage to try and gain what president Xi Jinping so desperately covets, by infiltrating the industry and poaching experts. However, China's investment still remains massive.

The problems with delayed supplies from Taiwan and others has now encouraged a number of other nations to invest heavily into their own microchip and semiconductor

research and production. These include the US, Japan, India, South Korea and the EU.

Last year, South Korea announced a 10-year **multi billion plan** to strengthen the country's microchip sector and boost its competitiveness. The money will come from 152 companies, with the government offering substantial tax credits for R&D investments and new facilities.

The US House of Representatives passed a legislative package that includes \$52 billion (€45.5 billion) in grants and subsidies to boost America's chip production.

Under the name EU Chips Act, the European Commission plans to allocate €12 billion in public funds for the research, design and manufacturing of semiconductors, with the goal of mobilising a total of €43 billion of public and private investment until 2030.

Spain's proposed investment is interesting in that the country has no previous history or experience in producing microchip or semiconductor products on any scale. With a general election due some time next year, is this all pie-in-the-sky and wishful thinking?



NAIR!

My neighbour found out that her dog could hardly hear, so she took it to the veterinarian. He found that the problem was hair in its ears so he cleaned both ears and the dog could hear fine. The vet then proceeded to tell the lady that if she wanted to keep this from re-occurring she should go to the store and get some "Nair" hair remover and rub it in its ears once a month.

The lady goes to the farmacia and gets some "Nair" hair remover.

At the register the druggist tells her: "If you're going to use this under your arms don't use deodorant for a few days."

The lady says, "I'm not using it under my arms."

The druggist says: "If you're using it on your legs don't shave for a couple of days."

The lady says, "I'm not using it on my legs either; if you must know, I'm using it on my schnauzer."

The druggist says: "Stay off your bicycle for a week, then."



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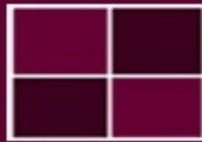
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Airport Chaos to Come?

For several weeks now, passengers at many UK airport have been complaining about huge queues and long delays due to the shortage of staff and complicated security controls.

However, Spanish airports also felt pressure over Easter week when **3,000 travellers missed** their flights at Madrid Barajas airport due to lack of personnel.

More than 18 million UK passengers travelled through Spanish airports in 2019, and with a relaxation of Covid rules the tourists are expected to return en masse this summer.

The airlines have repeatedly asked the government to add more staff to airport passport control and security checks but the matter remains unresolved, and the president of ALA has warned that this ongoing situation will surely have "a negative impact on the international image of Spain."

The issue is made all the more critical by the plans to install a **new air traffic control system over French airspace**, a task which several airlines have already warned will lead to severe delays and disruptions over the summer.

Spain is preparing for a strong summer season and the airlines currently have 212 million seats scheduled, which is just 0.6% fewer than in 2019.

SNOB!

A woman goes to the doctor looking fantastic: hair and makeup done by a professional, Gucci heels, Versace dress, and Prada purse.

"I've been stung by a nasty insect of some kind," she tells the doctor, "...but I'm ashamed to tell you where."

"It's okay," says the doctor. "Our communication is privileged; I won't tell anyone."

"Okay," says the woman. "It was at Poundshop."



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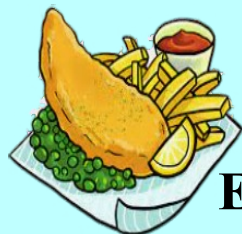
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WiFi

LIVE RACING DAILY!

I had an interesting morning. I got into an argument with my Rice Krispies.

I distinctly heard, 'Snap, crackle, fuck you!'

George Carlin

Mar Menor

The **environmental catastrophe of Mar Menor** continues without any positive action as the lagoon continues to deteriorate.

It has now been decided to ‘inspect’ 360 farms in the area, but this will take two years, giving those who caused the pollution plenty of time to hide and cover their tracks. The Region of Murcia is one of the top areas in all of Europe for the number of pigs reared and contributes heavily to the amount of pork exported outside of Spain, but it carries a price.

Macro-farms are undoubtedly big business in the Region, but activists are concerned that the animals are frequently abused and living in cramped conditions while the waste they produce is washing detrimental chemicals into the Mar Menor and surroundings.

But the Mar Menor has fared much worse after the recent spell of stormy weather. In just two weeks, more than 21 cubic hectometres of fresh water have entered the Mar Menor causing an imbalance in the pH levels and threatening the ecosystem further.

In fact, much more than the politicians, the only ones who seem the least bit bothered about making any headway to protect the Mar Menor are, surprisingly enough, **supermarkets retail giants** like Tesco, Lidl, Aldi and Sainsbury’s, who have threatened to boycott fresh produce grown in the Region of Murcia if authorities there are too lenient on illegal irrigation practices in the Mar Menor, claiming that their customers will refuse to buy fruit and vegetables from areas where intensive agriculture is so obviously damaging the ecosystem.

They’ve said the same about the Doñana National Park in Andalucía too, which is another natural area suffering the consequences of human intervention.

A man walks into a bar in Ireland and says to the barman: ‘What’s the quickest way to Dublin?’ Barman says, ‘Are you walking or driving?’ ‘Driving,’ says the man. Barman says, ‘That’s the quickest way.’

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calle laguna de ruidera

I went to the music store at the weekend and asked if they had anything by The Doors...
The guy behind the counter said; “Yes, a fire extinguisher and an umbrella stand”

U.K. Social Welfare Information - Advocacy Costa Blanca.

Benefit Rates 2021/2022

Pension & Benefit Rates - 2021/2022

State Pension – (Full) £185.15.

Sickness Benefits (Attendance Allowance, DLA, PIP.) - High Rate - £92.40. Low Rate - £61.85



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David, you are a highly valued professional who people have come to respect and rely on. Your personal integrity and knowledge are highly valued by myself and others who endeavour to support those who have none.

SC. Royal British Legion, Orihuela Costa Branch

David visited us in Catral as we couldnt find anyone to visit us so far inland. You certainly get what you pay for. B&P W. Catral

David helped me when moving my Husband to a care home in the UK. His knowledge of the UK care system is amazing.

The amount of time he gave to us was fantastic.

We couldn't have done it without him.

GD-Torrevieja

I contacted a group for help with welfare and care They gave me some forms and advice. I didn't have the time or energy & a friend recommended David. He visited and helped me with the application & is also helping with the Spanish care. Yes he charges but his knowledge and help makes it so worth it.

MT. San Miguel.

David just helped me claim £47389 back from unpaid state pension.

All for free!!! IL- Catral.



0034 602465565



advocacycostablanca@gmail.com

Advocacy Costa Blanca is operated by David Minto, a UK registered Social Worker.

This includes UK benefit applications (Attendance Allowance/PIP) or support to return to the UK with care.

I am registered with the UK professional body for Social Work & every year must provide proof & evidence that my experience, knowledge and skills are up to date.

As a self-employed Social Worker in Spain I am required to provide Professional liability and indemnity insurance.

The registration requirements plus insurance means that I am always up to date with latest changes in UK social care & welfare law and my practice is fully indemnified.

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Wi-Fi

I'm not saying the lady in front of me at the checkout in Consum had bad teeth but when she smiled, the barcode scanner picked it up as a set of saucepans.

The Prize!

Bert and Mabel were a week away from their wedding day. Bert was beginning to get major stirrings so he decided to chance his arm. "Er, Mabel, as it is only a week to the big day, how's about a quick screw?" said Bert. Mabel's answer as expected was, "No Bert, it's only 6 days to go, however you can have a look at your prize."

The next night Bert again pesters Mabel. Being an understanding sort, Mabel gives in and says, "It is still 5 days to go and as you've been a good fellow, I'll let you have a little feel of your prize." It only makes matters worse for Bert and by the next night he can hardly contain himself. Seeing his obvious predicament Mabel greets Bert and whispers in his ear, "I can see what your problem is but you've still got 4 days to go. I will however let you have a good sniff of your prize." Not being bashful, Bert lifts Mabel's skirts and sniffs.

After a minute he comes up for air, "Mabel, do you think it will keep 'til Saturday?!?"

WATCH OUT FOR.....

Sometimes I wonder just how effective the large multinationals are in protecting your data.

Spain's energy giant Iberdrola has suffered a cyber-attack which has affected 1.3 million customers, although the company has reassured that the hackers were unable to access "sensitive" information such as bank details. The attackers did however manage to infiltrate the system to glean data like **names, DNI/NIE identification numbers, addresses and telephone numbers.**

Company representatives have, however, recommended that its customers be especially cautious of any emails or communications purporting to be from Iberdrola. (What? Like their bills!)



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I had the central heating engineer round this morning and while he was working away he said, "I see you're a darts man, like myself." I asked how he worked that out and he replied, "That photo on the fireplace of you and Jocky Wilson." I replied, "That's my wife, mate."



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Wi-Fi



MASK WEARING - NEW RULES.

Okay, most of you will now be aware that after two years the ruling on wearing masks indoors has been relaxed considerably in Spain. However, masks will remain mandatory on public transportation, in hospitals, health centres, nursing homes and pharmacies.

Supermarkets are one place where not everyone will be going mask free. Although customers are no longer required by law to wear a face mask, some supermarkets have determined that staff should keep them on for the time being. While Mercadona leaves it up to individual staff member to decide whether to wear one or not, Consum insists that all of its store workers must continue to wear them 'as they are in direct and continuous contact with food and customers'.

The same decision has been taken by Carrefour, which is also keeping screens at customer service points and hygiene gel dispensers at the door.

El Corte Ingles is also keeping masks but only for employees who work directly with food and drink.

In addition, masks must be worn by those who are unable to keep a safe distance for long periods of time, such as make-up artists.

However, for customers, mask wearing is no longer compulsory indoors although Spain's Health Ministry advises and encourages 'responsible use' in these places.





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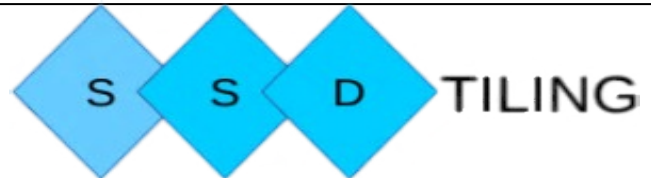
Applying Online for a Padron Appointment In Orihuela.

Many of us who have been over here for some years will only be too aware of the many, many hours of seemingly endless queues while waiting to register for Padron, Residencia, SUMA - in fact most things. The bureaucracy in Spain teaches us all patience.

Fortunately the local council have come up with a very welcome efficiency, where one can now register online for an appointment. On this website you can choose day, date and time for your appointment, subject of course to availability. The web address is located below and is, helpfully, also available in the English language. When you first try to access the site, you may get a warning saying that this particular website does not have a security certificate. I just ignored it. Aside from the appointments facility, the website also contains information relating to participation, transparency etc. <https://orihuela.governalia.es/en/>

HOWEVER! When I went to book an appointment online during early Sept' 2021, the earliest I would get was October 1! I called in to the Ayuntamiento in Orihuela Costa the following day and collected my new padron just three days later!

User: the word that computer professionals use when they mean 'idiot'.



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I stayed at a hotel in Blackpool a few years ago. It overlooked the sea. Unfortunately it also overlooked hygiene, good service and edible meals.

Spain Announced €6 Billion Support Plan In Direct Aid, Tax Breaks & Fuel Subsidies

The Spanish government's plan announced by Prime Minister Sánchez will give 'approximately €6 billion in direct aid and tax rebates, plus a further €10 billion in state-guaranteed loans to cushion the impact of the crisis on families and businesses'.

The plan has included 'a minimum reduction of 20 cents per litre of fuel', Sánchez announced. Of that reduction, 15 cents is being financed by the government and five cents by the oil companies.

Previously, the government announced a similar reduction but only for truck drivers, with the new measures to now benefit everyone.

The reduction may be extended beyond June. The plan also extends until the end 30 June tax cuts already in place such as the reduced rate of IVA (VAT) on energy and a suspension of tax on electricity production.

It also includes a €362 million aid package for the agriculture and farming sector, €68 million for the fishing industries, a 2% cap on rental increases and a 15% increase in the income support to help the most vulnerable.

In total, an investment of €16 billion to 'ease the impact on families and businesses', Sánchez said.

- Why do Morris Dancers wear bells?
- So they can annoy blind people as well.

LOCKSMITH

CERRAJEROS - SCHLOSSER
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607 493 118

Antonio
LOCAL

(Cut out & keep.)



Brit's now in Spain - More or Less?

In the aftermath of Brexit, it was widely reported in the British tabloids that there would be a mass exodus of Britons from Spain.

A combination of Brexit red tape and notoriously difficult Spanish bureaucracy would, the story went, force Britons from the Costa Brava to the Costa Blanca out in droves.

In fact, according to recent data of foreign residents in Spain from the Spanish Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Immigration, the number of Britons resident in Spain increased by 7% in 2021 compared to 2020.

By December 31st 2021, there were 407,628 UK nationals **officially living** in Spain. In the previous year's report, the number was 381,448 Britons, and in 2019 the figure stood at 359,471.

This comes as part of a broader trend in Spain's population. The number of foreign residents in Spain stands, officially, at a whopping 6 million, a figure which represents an increase of 3.6 percent (equivalent to 207,093 people) in the last year alone.

The average age of the resident foreign population is almost 40 years old and there is, generally speaking, slightly more men than women. The sociological profile of British residents in Spain may be unsurprising to many. The average age is 54 years old, considerably higher than other non-Europeans migrant groups, like Pakistanis and Moroccans (both with median ages of 33 years).

According to the data, 44% of Britons resident in Spain have made the swap and now have TIE cards (approximately 179,000), while 55% (226,000) are still using their old green residency documents.

Interestingly, the migration stats show that 2,467 Britons who haven't been able to get Withdrawal Agreement protection either because they arrived in Spain after Brexit, or because they didn't register previously and haven't been able to prove they were living in the country before December 31st 2020. For this group, non-EU rules apply and access to Spanish residency can depend on work, marriage or financial means.



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QUIZ COMING SOON!



National holidays across all of Spain in 2022

Saturday, January 1st (New Year's Day)

Thursday, January 6th (Epiphany)

Friday, April 15th (Good Friday)

Monday, August 15th (Assumption of the Virgin)

Wednesday, October 12th (National Day of Spain)

Tuesday, November 1st (All Saints' Day)

Tuesday, December 6th (Spanish Constitution Day)

Thursday, December 8th (Immaculate Conception Day)

Valencian Region Holidays: March 19th, April 14th, April 18th and June 24th.

YEEEEEEHAAAAAAAAA!

A woman from New York was driving through a remote part of Arizona when her car broke down.

An American Indian on horseback came along and offered her a ride to a nearby town.

She climbed up behind him on the horse and they rode off.

The ride was uneventful, except that every few minutes the Indian would let out a Ye-e-e-e-h-a-a-a-a!' so loud that it echoed from the surrounding hills and canyon walls.

When they arrived in town, he let her off at the local service station, yelled one final 'Ye-e-e-e-h-a-a-a-a!' and rode off.

"What did you do to get that Indian so excited?" asked the service-station attendant.

"Nothing," the woman answered "I merely sat behind him on the horse, put my arms around his waist, and held onto the saddle horn so I wouldn't fall off."

"Lady," the attendant said, "Indians don't use saddles."



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A cyclist in London (pictured) caused a stir recently by riding through rush hour traffic in



nothing but socks, trainers and a helmet. Although **naked**, the man made sure to respect traffic lights. James Reynolds, the construction worker who

took a picture, was initially “flabbergasted”, he said. “But this is London and I’ve worked in the city for ten years and nothing really surprises me anymore. So I thought, ‘Well, fair play to him’, and walked on.”

A Brazilian singer has revealed she was hospitalised because she was **too embarrassed to fart** in front of her boyfriend. Viviane de Queiroz Pereira, 27, recounted the ordeal on Instagram, where she said she’d woken up at 5:30am with “severe stomach pains” and had to seek medical attention. “Girls, don’t be ashamed to fart in front of your guy,” she wrote. More embarrassing than farting, she added, was “going to the hospital with your guy, and the diagnosis being ‘trapped farts’.”

When a 21-year-old who led police on a 35-mile car chase from London to the Kent coast was finally pulled over, he produced a driving **licence from Legoland**. Police officers clarified online that the Legoland licence was “not the reason for the driver’s dangerous driving”, but that the “large amount of cannabis” in his car was.

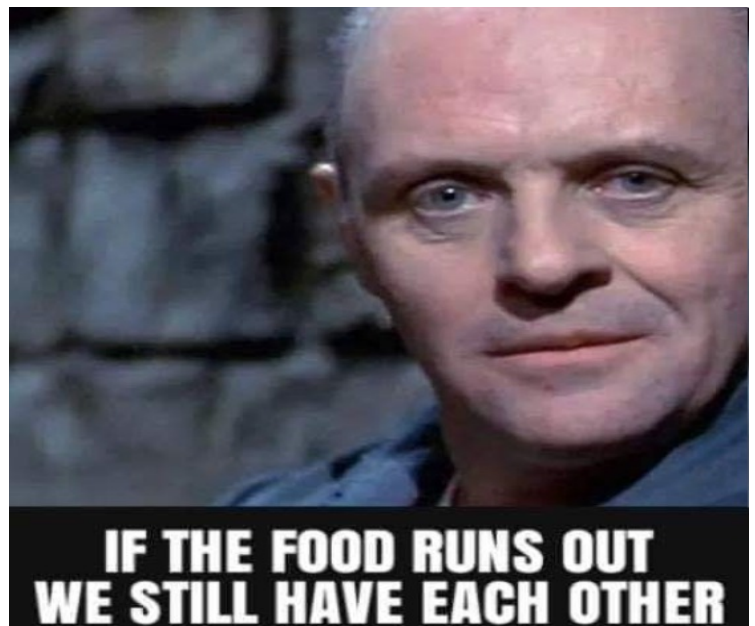
A 30-year-old man has been charged with smuggling after being arrested on the US-Mexico border with **60 reptiles hidden** on his body. The animals included dozens of horned

lizards and nine snakes. Border patrol agents said they had found the reptiles “inside his jacket pockets, pants pockets, groin area and pant legs,” and that when asked to account for the animals, the man had insisted they were “his pets”.

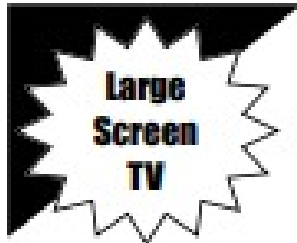
One of Spain’s most celebrated chefs has defended a dish that simulates a **human embryo** floating in its amniotic fluid after coming under fire from anti-abortion groups and the Catholic Church.



Andoni Luis Aduriz, who runs the two Michelin-starred Mugaritz restaurant near San Sebastian, was targeted after pictures were put on social media of the dish, which is known as Origin. The dish is made from a gelatine from the paste of broad beans that is moulded to look like an embryo. The “amniotic fluid” in which it floats is made from a broth of ham and broad beans. Aduriz said that he decided to use broad beans because in ancient times they were often used to represent embryos because of their shape.



The phone rang for the fourth time that night and the husband picked it up in a rage. He listened for a moment and then bellowed, ‘How the bloody hell would I know? You want the weather centre, you berk!’ ‘Who was that, darling?’ asked his wife, innocently. ‘I don’t know, some twerp asking if the coast was clear. Bloody pest, that’s the fourth time tonight.’



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The General Directorate of Traffic (DGT) in Spain is determined to come down hard on motorists caught breaking the rules and the fines are many.

According to data from the DGT itself, the authorities collect around 400 million euros each year in traffic infractions, with drivers in Madrid and Sevilla being the worst offenders.

So, what are the most common infractions that lead to fines in Spain?

Speeding

You probably guessed it: speeding is the most common cause for road traffic fines in Spain, and the latest data from insurance compare website Acierto.com estimates that up to 7 out of 10 fines each year are handed out to speed fiends. To counteract this growing problem, which contributes to a huge number of accidents each year, the amount of radars, cameras and drones has been considerably increased in Spain in 2022

In addition, according to data from Formaster, the Professional Association of Training Companies in Logistics, Transport and Road Safety, in a 6 year period, between 2015 and 2020, up to 2.8 million speeding tickets were issued in this country, 65 % of the total. Of these, the highest percentage, up to 70%, corresponds to fines logged by fixed speed cameras on the road.

No ITV or insurance

Every year it is estimated that almost half a million sanctions are imposed by the DGT to drivers without a valid ITV for their vehicle, which represents 11% of all fines.

Driving without insurance has become another major problem in Spain: it is believed that up to 2.65 million vehicles currently circulate on the road without insurance, and these penalties account for 3% of the total.

Alcohol and drug use

After speeding, the consumption of alcohol and drugs at the wheel are the next most common infractions in Spain.

Up to 1 in 3 road fatalities involves one of these substances and in recent years, more than 100,000 sanctions have been imposed.

Seatbelts

The new Traffic Law has increased the number of penalty points that can be deducted for incorrectly wearing seatbelts so be careful, because 2.3% of fines in Spain are for driving without a seatbelt or for travelling with minors without their mandatory child restraint system.

In one year, seatbelts accounted for more than 18,000 fines.

Mobile phones

This is another practice that the DGT is cracking down on: from March 21, even holding a phone in your hand while behind the wheel will result in an automatic 200 euro fine and the loss of 6 points from your licence! There's good reason for this, as using a mobile phone while driving is one of the most common infractions on Spanish roads, with a 2.15% share of the total.

Other frequent penalties

Driving with tyres in poor condition accounts for around 27,000 fines each year.

Reckless and negligent driving is responsible for 1.45% of all sanctions.

More than 11,000 fines are doled out annually for improper overtaking.

Driving with headphones generates more than 13,000 penalties each year.



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THE 'SICK' HOSPITAL.

There has been no shortage of problems coming from the Torre Vieja University Hospital since the change of operational management of health services in the area since October 2021. Nothing appears to have improved and much has deteriorated in the local health service. Since the change in management, many nurses, doctors and specialists have left the hospital, several before the take-over.

I was surprised to read in an article in Informacion dated April 20, that the trade unions are now beginning to demand immediate improvements. The massive CCOO union has warned that the emergency service in the hospital 'has been collapsed for days.' Only two doctors were scheduled to work in the A&E Dept., on Saturday April 23, when the scheduled number of doctors should be eight! There is also no medical chief in the area as the last one resigned and has not been replaced. I did report previously how at one stage there was only one doctor present in the department and he was so worried he called the police! The CCOO trade union has asked the

Directorate of Human Resources of the Ministry of Health to " make an active and constant search", both for medical personnel and for other deficient categories, through the improvement of working conditions.

The lack of radiologists has also paralyzed the diagnostic tests of the rest of the services, with special emphasis on oncology. This has resulted in many patients being sent to other hospitals for their scans and x-rays.

A triage system operates in A&E. Patients with mild or moderate pathologies waiting to enter the A&E to be examined can wait throughout the day or night for many hours in the two entrance hall waiting areas near the Emergency room door. At the time the newspaper did its enquiry, of the 27 of the 35 beds available in observation A&E were occupied by patients waiting to be admitted to the ward. At least a dozen of them have been waiting for that entry between 25 and 60 hours.

Both the CCOO & UGT unions have also raised questions about the long delays in obtaining mammogram tests.

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She said, "It's natural."

"Natural?" I replied, "She was giving him crisps."

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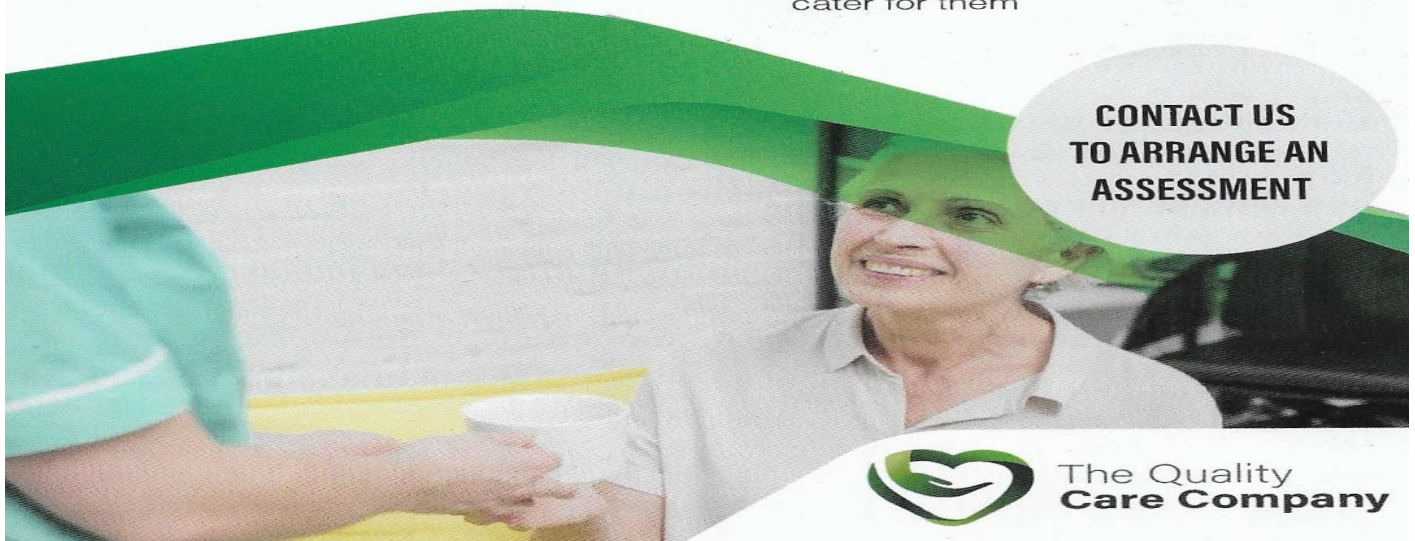
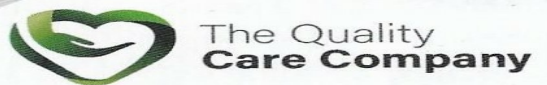
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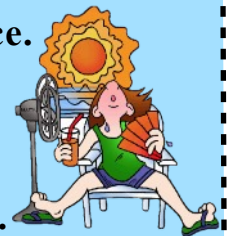


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Lime Bar Fishing SUNBATHING Club

As the Segura had flooded at the beginning of the month (the banks are still muddy and slippery), we fished the winter final at El Bosquet. With even more rain earlier that week, we were surprised to find the venue wasn't a quagmire.

Rather than fish the "known" best pegs and to give everyone an even chance, the final was fished on the old back stretch 17 to 24. It was very peggy and yet again, the fish would not feed. BFC and I were in pegs 20 & 21, where we both had lots of line bites from small mullet and lost a few fish, as they were really hard to hook. 3 Rods & Fagin drew what I thought were the best pegs (17 & 18) but they both blanked.



BFC caught 7 carp or mullet, I had 3 mullet, Old Bill only had 1 bite all day but managed to catch a carp, and Ball Boy caught 1 carp. That was it!

Well done BFC winning with just 5.15 kilos and I was 2nd with a paltry 2 kilos.

We were thin on the ground for the monthly meeting. As it was raining some were sat at home watching fishing videos on the telly and forgot! They didn't miss much though, all we sorted out was the April match and drew

our 1st round opponents for the summer KO.

Again, due to more rain, the monthly match was held at El Bosquet but this time we fished the back stretch including pegs 26 and 40 (as these are usually prolific) so as not to repeat the final of the week before where everyone struggled. At least 2 anglers should have a good day!

We arrived to glorious sunshine, the water was warm and conditions were good, which we hoped would bring the carp out of their hibernation / hidey holes. The Cat & Yorkshire Mick drew the 2 best pegs and the Cat took full advantage of the draw launching his "grenade feeder" into the reeds to the side of peg 26. He won easily with 11 x carp for 15 kilos (including 2 clonkers). In the next peg and coming 2nd was Old Bill with 3 carp for 3.8 kilos.

Sweeney came in 3rd with 4 fish for 3.1 kilos. The rest of us struggled being plagued by tiny mullet rattling the line but not taking the bait.

A week after this match, Sweeney and I found a dry patch of bank near Bigastro tennis courts. The fish are now spawning in the reeds & thrashing about all over the place. Hopefully a sign summer is coming.



Conditions were excellent and we had a cracking day. Sweeney had 9 x carp for between 33 to 40 lbs, including a 7 pounder & this 12.05 lb beauty. Not to out done, BFC heard and went to the same stretch a few days later, he landed another 10 pounder and a whopper of 14.12 lbs to stay at the top of the biggest carp list. Well done sir!

Perhaps the next match might be here!

.The next meeting bun fight is at The Lime Bar on Tuesday 3rd May

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There are three mandatory documents that must be present in the vehicle at all times. Drivers can carry the originals in the car or a copy on their mobile phone, but failure to provide them can lead to fines of up to 500 euros.

Driving licence

The least serious fine for not carrying a driving licence is as little as 10 euros, but this can be hiked up to 80 in case of any of the data being incorrect.

Motorists driving on expired licences will be fined 200 euros, and in the event that the driver has had his licence revoked, the penalty goes up to 500 euros.

Technical Inspection Card (ITV)

Another mandatory document is the technical

inspection card. The fine for not carrying it in the vehicle is 10 euros, but if it has expired, drivers will have to pay 200 euros.

Vehicle registration certificate

Similar to the previous two, not carrying this document will cost motorists just 10 euros but if the driver is driving without authorisation, this penalty will increase to 500 euros.

Documents on a mobile phone

All of these documents are equally valid in digital format once uploaded to a mobile phone.

This must be done via the DGT app, which can also be used to check penalty points and pay any fines accrued.

(Odd how insurance is not mentioned.)

I went to the Jobcentre yesterday to see if they had anything for me.

The advisor said, "There's a position in Data Entry available."

I replied, "Sorry, but I can't use a computer."

She said, "You can't use a computer? In this day and age? Do you have learning difficulties?"

I replied, "No, it's one of my bail conditions."

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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at mick.dreamscene@gmail.com (Or in some Bar!)

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The Gatekeeper

A lovely woman from the countryside died. She found herself outside a beautiful garden with splashing fountains and bright flowers; but she was alone and the gate was locked.

When St. Peter finally came by, the woman said to him, "This is surely a wonderful place, It must be heaven. How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word," said the saint. "What word might that be?"

"Love." said he. Well, she spelled it all right and was admitted through the Gates of Heaven.

About a year later, St. Peter asked this woman if she would mind guarding the Gates a short while for him as he had to go 'point Percy at the porcelain.'

While she was waiting, her husband arrived at the gate! "How've you been?" she asked.

"Oh, not bad," he said. "I married the pretty nurse who took care of you, and then I won the lottery. I sold our little cottage and bought a lovely mansion.

My wife and I travelled around the world. Today I was skiing and broke my neck and.....here I am. How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word."

"What word?"

""Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis.""

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