



# THE DREAM SCENE

## NEWSLETTER



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

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the March 2024 edition. Issue No.195

Sumar is a left-wing political party that is part of the coalition government here in Spain. Its leader, Yolanda Díaz, who is also a vice president in the government, is now proposing **to charge 21% VAT** on private healthcare and private education. The current rate is 0%. This is part of the general budget negotiations at present. If the Ministry of Finance agrees to this it will have dramatic economic ramifications throughout Spain.

A total of **242,342 foreigners** obtained Spanish nationality by residence in 2023, a figure that doubles that recorded the previous year and has considerably reduced the pool of applications pending study, although there are still more than 200,000. By country, the largest group of beneficiaries comes from Mexico (23,571), followed by Colombia (18,343), Venezuela (9,129), Argentina (5,137), Israel (3,935), the United States (2,322), Panama (2,053), Ecuador (1,217), Brazil (1,099) and Turkey (1,014). The year ended with 218,237 pending cases, some of them filed eight years ago!

Ryanair is set to inject **€5 billion** into Spain over the next seven years, demonstrating its commitment to the country. This includes the addition of 33 new aircraft and the establishment of five new bases which includes Corvera.

The theoretical probability of getting married **before the age of 30** in Spain has fallen from around 90% in 1976 to less than 20% in 2022, according to the report Transformation and Crisis of the marriage institution in Spain, prepared by the Demographic Observatory CEU. According to the study, 48 years ago the majority of Spaniards married before the age of

30 (85% of men and 90% of women), compared to a current figure of less than 20% (8% and 14%, respectively, in 2022).

The study also highlights that the average age at first marriage has risen by more than 10 years from 1976 to 2022, with Spaniards being among Europeans who marry for the first time at a later age, 34.9 years for women and 36.8 for men in 2022, compared to 24.1 and 26.7 years, respectively, in 1976), only surpassed by the Swedes. The data also shows that around half of marriages end up divorcing.

**Late News!** The political councillors, left and right, in San Miguel de Salinas, have voted unanimously to suspend photovoltaic licenses to stop the solar park of the Torre Vieja desalination plant. The solar park planned by the State would cover 200 hectares of the best soils in agricultural production in the municipality. See Page 2 re planned solar park.

Have a great month!

Mick, Tid and The Dream Scene Team.



*Life is like a doughnut. You're either in the dough or in the hole.*

Torrevieja once again exceeds **100,00 registered inhabitants** and consolidates itself as the third city with the highest number of inhabitants in the province of Alicante and the fifth in the Valencian Community, only behind the three provincial capitals, Valencia, Alicante and Castellón, and from Elche. The city currently has a total of 100,421 inhabitants registered, coming from no less than 122 countries in the five continents.

According to data provided by the Department of Census and Statistics at the Torrevieja City Council, the total number of foreign residents in this town in Alicante province is 49,944 compared to 50,477 Spaniards. This means that out of the 100,421 registered on the Padrón, **almost half or 49.74% are foreigners.**

It is worth highlighting the significant growth in registered people throughout 2023, a total of 8,690 from January of last year to today citizens from Ukraine (7,650), Russia (5,837) and Great Britain (4,912) consolidate themselves in the top three positions of international residents in the city. The Brit's used to be the majority foreign residents. Since January 2023, an additional 1,879 Ukrainians and 905 Russians have been registered in the city, Colombian residents currently stand with 4,360 registered residents, which for the fourth consecutive year surpass the stable and historic Moroccan population of Torrevieja (2,473 ); followed by Swedes (1,677), Romanians (1,604), Bulgarians (1,524), Belgians (1,474), Italians (1,246), Germans (1,159), Algerians (982), Poles (909), Chinese (830), Brazilians (803 ), Argentines (777), Norwegians (667), Venezuelans (664) , Finns (622), French (621), Belarusians (582), Lithuanians (559), Indians (533), from the Netherlands (529), Cubans ( 447) and Irish (384). the number of children and young people under 20 years of age amounts to 18,536 .

And there are 22,435 people in Torrevieja between 20 and 40 years old; From 40 to 60 years old there are 30,513 registered; from 60 to 80 years old is a total of 23,485; and from 80 to 100 years old the number of those registered is 5,431, so that's **almost 30,000 over the age of 60!**

## **Don't forget the St.Patrick's Day Celebration Parade at Cabo Roig, Spain on March 17.**

On Wednesday, February 14, the President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, paid a **surprise visit** to the desalination plant in Torrevieja. There, he announced the expansion of the water production of the Torrevieja desalination plant and also the start-up of a photovoltaic solar plant elsewhere that will reduce the cost of production per cubic meter of desalinated water. This photovoltaic park, which is in the drafting phase of the project, "will make its facilities more sustainable and will allow the price of desalinated water to be reduced by around 4 cents per cubic meter ," said the head of the Executive. The state-owned desalination plant, managed by the state company Acuamed, has an energy cost of 55 million euros per year . The expansion of the plant is budgeted at 108 million euros and in the award phase, will mean adding another 40 more to the current maximum annual production capacity of 80 cubic hectometres. But this will take at least another four years. (See front page Late [News]) Of the 80 hectometers per year that the Torrevieja desalination plant is capable of producing annually, only 13 will currently be allocated to irrigation communities in the province of Alicante. 63.8 will go to the Region of Murcia and 3.5 to Almería. To date, irrigators in the province do not receive even 20% of the water production from the plant. The PP mayor of Torry was not invited to the event. They favour the water transfer from the Tajo-Segura. After the current de-sal plant was built, a previous PP mayor held up the access of the plant to the sea for at least two years. Water, or the lack of it, is still a major political issue in this province.

The **lack of pruning** of palm trees in Orihuela Costa is causing a weevil infestation and widespread deterioration of the trees. Coastal residents are collecting signatures to demand urgent intervention after two years without maintenance. The OC continues to be overlooked by the council and services.



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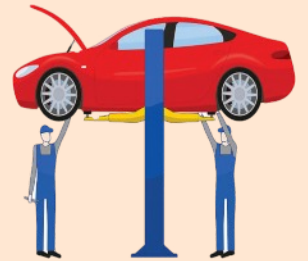
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## SPEAK UP!

The University Hospital of Torrevieja has incorporated a video-interpretation service in sign language, through a tablet, aimed at people with hearing disabilities. This is a service available in most public centres of the Ministry of Health.

This new service will allow deaf people to communicate effectively with doctors, nurses and other hospital staff through sign language interpreters available in real time via video conferencing. The initiative reflects the hospital's commitment to inclusion and equal access to health care for all people, regardless of hearing ability.

## ANOTHER MURDER BY PUTIN?

Russian Maksim Kuzminov pulled off a daring escape last summer when he defected to Ukraine and handed his military helicopter over to Ukrainians in exchange for half a million dollars. Ukraine trumpeted the defection as a major coup. But in Vladimir V. Putin's Russia, he was guilty of the most grievous sin anyone can commit:

Treason.

Ukrainian intelligence officials warned Mr. Kuzminov that his life was in danger and urged him not to leave the country.

But he ignored them, and was believed to have moved with his money to a small resort town of pastel houses on Spain's Mediterranean coast near Benidorm.

Now Mr. Kuzminov, 28 at the time of his defection, appears to have met the harsh fate Ukrainian officials warned about. Two Spanish police officials with knowledge of the case said the body of a man found riddled with bullets last week in the coastal town of Villajoyosa belonged to Mr. Kuzminov.

Since the invasion of Ukraine, Spain has become a haven for disenchanting Russians, many of whom have moved to the warmer coastal areas, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics about 20% live in the province of Alicante with many in Torrevieja.

Ukrainian authorities said the pilot's family had been extracted from Russia to Ukraine before his defection.



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Bring several, swop several!*

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**10:30am - 12:30pm**

According to Eurostat, 1,040 British citizens were ordered to leave EU countries as well as the Schengen area nations of Norway and Switzerland, during the first nine months of 2023.

The EU countries that issued the largest number of orders to leave to UK citizens in the first nine months of last year were the Netherlands (275), and Sweden (135). It would appear from the statistics released that there were no UK citizens deported from Spain last year, although this does not count at least two individuals, one the case of a 54-year-old Brit in Alicante who was found guilty of starting a wildfire in a protected natural area, and had his three-year sentence exchanged for a ten-year ban from Spain and the second in July 2023 when a British man living in Tenerife was expelled as he had a criminal record and was unregistered.

So, is it really possible that of the 400,000+ UK nationals residing in Spain not a single one has been ordered to leave the country in 2023 aside from the aforementioned?

Well Spain doesn't publish information on the specific nationality of foreigners it sends a letter of expulsion to. It has been reported that Spanish judges have tended to favour financial penalties over marching orders in recent years, when the only issue is the lack of person's

Spanish residency papers. If it's a case of considering that the reason for the expulsion of a UK national is that they don't have their Spanish residency documents in order since Brexit came into force, it's key to factor in that this is considered an 'administrative infraction' by Spanish law, a non-serious offence in the eyes of most judges, and not a reason for deportation.

One investigative reports noted that there has been a dramatic drop in expulsions since PM Sánchez has been in power in Spain. 140,000 non-EU citizens have been given their marching orders by Spanish authorities over the last 18 years, but since Sánchez became PM in 2018, there have been 'just' 12,700.

It is worth noting that in 2023 Spain's Immigration Observatory reported that 928 UK nationals with EU green residency certificates who applied to exchange it for a TIE either had their application filed or rejected, whilst 8,924 Brit's with no pre-Brexit documents had their Spanish residency applications archived or rejected.

Crucially, if a Brit's residency application is rejected and they appeal, then they have the right to remain in Spain during the appeal process.

## PETITION SIGNING:

**VENUE:** La Casita, Dream Hills. (It is located between the swimming pools.)

**TIME:** Thursday, March 7, between 10.30am and 2pm.

**PURPOSE:** Petition to Orihuela council requesting return of 2nd green bin and also a Blue & Yellow bin to be located to Via Park 3.

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## SUPERMARKETS GETTING TOUGH!

Carrefour have been flexing their purchasing muscle with some of their suppliers. It started with Carrefour in France where the company divested itself of all Pepsicola stock. Carrefour felt that Pepsi were increasing their prices excessively and would not pay them. This has now spread to Carrefour in Spain.

Here, Carrefour have not only removed Pepsicola from its shelves but also Matutano, Lay's, Ruffles or Doritos.

The supermarket chain Dia have now jumped in to the ring and taken Bimbo sliced bread and its other products off the shelves in some stores and is waiting to run out of stock in other stores and in the online store. Bimbo has already closed two of its factories here. It is one more blow for manufacturers, who are being forced to reduce their presence in distribution due to the impossibility of reducing their prices even further.

But this is nothing new. In 2008, due to the increase in prices, which were much smaller than the current rises, Mercadona put its entire line, 9,000 items, under review. After the review, they decided to withdraw 800 brands, half of them their own, half other manufacturers. The chain later stated that it had managed to reduce the price of its customers' shopping basket by up to an average of 10% in the last four months after the implementation of this "plan to optimise costs".

SEWAGE LEAKS LATEST



*'They're anglers, but I don't think they're discussing fish'*

## Miss Beatrice

Miss Beatrice, the church organist, was in her eighties and had never been married. She was admired for her sweetness and kindness to all. One afternoon the pastor came to call on her and she showed him into her quaint sitting room. She invited him to have a seat while she prepared tea... As he sat facing her old Hammond organ, the young minister noticed a cut glass bowl sitting on top of it. The bowl was filled with water, and in the water floated of all things, a condom! When she returned with tea and scones, they began to chat. The pastor tried to stifle his curiosity about the bowl of water and its strange floater, but soon it got the better of him and he could no longer resist. 'Miss Beatrice', he said, 'I wonder if you would tell me about this, pointing to the bowl. 'Oh, yes,' she replied, 'Isn't it wonderful? I was walking through the park a few months ago and I found this little package on the ground. The directions said to place it on the organ, keep it moist and that it would prevent the spread of disease.

Do you know I haven't had the flu all winter.'



# RH



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## SPAIN TO BAN SHORT HAUL FLIGHTS

Spain's ruling parties, PSOE and Sumar, have agreed to reduce domestic flights on routes that have a rail alternative lasting less than two and a half hours, in order to reduce carbon emissions. The government agreed to "promote the reduction of domestic flights when there are rail alternatives of less than two and a half hours, and **as long as they are not connected to airports that link with international routes**". The agreement on the restriction of short flights signed by the government states that it cannot be carried out if it negatively affects tourism and if it is not guaranteed that there is a railway network "that is on par".

The PSOE deputy for Barcelona Arnau Ramírez praised the deal promoting the use of more sustainable transportation but has made it clear that he **won't do "anything" that affects Spanish tourism** or destinations such as the Balearic and Canary Islands, where people are "very dependent" on air transport.

Both right-wing parties, Vox and the PP, have rejected the agreement describing the initiative as "ineffective" because it would only mean a 0.06% reduction in emissions, according to data from the College of Aircraft Engineers.

They also argued that it could mean a reduction of 4.5 million tourists per year.

According to government calculations conducted end of 2023, however, eliminating short-haul flights would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to two million tonnes.

**It is also not yet known when the ban will come into force** as it is likely it will go through various stages of proposed amendments before being approved by the Senate and then finally being published in the Official State Bulletin or BOE, before it becomes law.

Back in May 2023, the French government also officially banned domestic flights for journeys possible in less than two-and-a-half hours by train.

Between 2013 and 2019, domestic air operations in Spain increased by 27%, a figure much higher than that of European neighbours such as Germany, France and the UK, which maintained or reduced them by up to 8%.



## CIRCLE FLIES

After pulling a farmer over for speeding, a state trooper started to lecture him about his speed, pompously implying that the farmer didn't know any better and trying to make him feel as uncomfortable as possible. He finally started writing out the ticket, but had to keep swatting at some flies buzzing around his head.

The farmer said, "Having some problems with circle flies there are ya?"

The trooper paused to take another swat and said, "Well, yes, if that's what they are. I've never heard of circle flies."

The farmer was pleased to enlighten the cop.

"Circle flies are common on farms. They're called circle flies because you almost always find them circling the back end of a horse."

The trooper continues writing for a moment, then says, "Hey, are you trying to call me a horse's ass?"

"Oh no, officer." The farmer replies. "I have too much respect for law enforcement and police officers for that."

"That's a good thing," the officer says, then goes back to writing the ticket.

After a long pause, the farmer added, "Hard to fool them flies, though."





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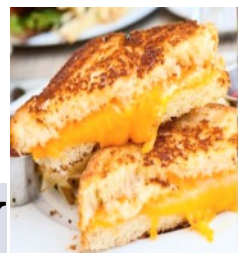
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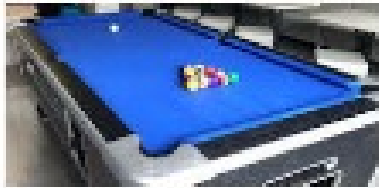



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*Man "I've got a cricket ball stuck up my arse"*

*Doctor "How's that?"*

*Man "Don't you you fucking start!"*

French farmers accuse Spain of flooding the French market with low-cost products using large quantities of pesticides. French farmers have been attacking Spanish lorries, notably at the Boulou tollgate, a few kilometres from the Spanish border, and their cargo of fruit, vegetables and wine destroyed, while the French police looked on!

Ségolène Royal, a former environment minister and former presidential candidate. "Have you tasted the so-called organic Spanish tomatoes? They're inedible!" she said during a television interview. "Spanish organic is fake organic," she added. "Spanish fruits and vegetables do not meet French standards and should not be on [supermarket] shelves".

Spanish farmers have dubbed her words "drivel" and "shameful" & "that lady has a palate problem", adding: "Unlike in France and elsewhere, we have sun all year round. And that's why our tomatoes, in addition to complying with all the strict regulations, have the flavour they have."

The Spanish professional association for organic production (Ecovalia) said that the same rules applied in France and Spain. Spanish organic farming is governed by exactly the same regulations throughout Europe.



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## SQUATTING - THE LUNACY CONTINUES!

There are, unfortunately, no reliable current statistics for squatting in Spain, other than it continues to be a growing problem, which the regional and national governments and of course the police, seem unable to address.

El Mundo stated in 2018 that there had been over 12,000 reported squats in that year, up from 7,739 in 2013. Barcelona had the most reported squats, with 17,465 reported between 2013 and 2018. During the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain, around 600 Roma people squatted properties on the Costa del Sol. (I would guess that squats now exceed 30,000.

### **Just one recent case -**

Siarhei and Aleh, from Belarus, have owned two flats in the same apartment building in the Barcelona neighbourhood of El Raval since 2018.

On December 31, 2023, Aleh's flat was successfully occupied by squatters, whilst attempts to squat Siarhei's apartment proved unsuccessful.

After police were called, the squatters promised the pair that they would leave the following day. Despite this, the next day the brothers claim they were attacked with knives by the group on the staircase of the apartment complex.

The altercation left Aleh with a small gash on his face caused by a knife, and a broken nose which required medical attention.

According to the brothers, Barcelona's police force, the Mossos d'Esquadra, were uninterested in the attack, instead informing the duo that they should head to a police station in order to press charges.

Although they had keys for the flat, they were unable to gain access as the gang of squatters had changed the door. In fact the front door had been removed, with the bathroom door of the property put in its place, ensuring that the brothers could not use their own key.

One week later, having found a time when the flat was unoccupied, the Pakrouski's were able to recover possession of the property.

When the squatters returned, they tried to get inside the property, albeit to no avail as the brothers had changed the lock.

However, officers from the Mossos d'Esquadra arrived shortly after.

A video obtained by the Olive Press shows Mossos officers entering the flat despite being informed by the brothers that they are the property's owners.

### **The brothers were subsequently arrested!**

A source from the Mossos stated that the pair were only arrested because they caused a minor injury by attacking one of the squatters with a hammer, an allegation which the brothers deny.

The source also stated that disputes over possession of a property are a judicial matter instead of a policing matter, and that who owns the property is of no interest to the police. A Mossos officer also stated: "We are entering because this is the residence of other people. It is not your residence. We have been called because other people live here. The people that live here are a man and a pregnant woman and even though you may be the owners of the property, this is the home of those who have occupied it".

The brothers, who spent **two days in a police cell**, stated that the police used excessive force arresting them, being struck in the back by knees and elbows, choked, and had their wrists damaged by extremely tight handcuffs.

"It still makes me sick to remember sitting inside the police car handcuffed and bleeding, whilst watching the cops helping those scumbags carry their things back into our flat", said Siarhei.

**But then things got much worse.** While the brothers were in jail, keys to the second flat were in a pocket in the occupied flat. When the brothers returned to the second flat, they found they had been robbed! Given that the apartment had no signs of damage or forced entry, the pair suspect that the squatters in Aleh's flat used the keys to gain entry before stealing the items.

The original flat is still occupied and it may take a year to gain possession. The squatters were invited to testify over alleged minor injuries inflicted by the duo, but failed to turn up.

Other than the owners, no one has been arrested yet! (Abridged from The Olive Press.)





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Two crocodiles were sitting at the side of the Thames at Westminster, (they were officer crocs, they were lost!) The smaller one turned to the big one and said "I can't understand how you're so much bigger than me, we were the same size as kids, I just don't get it!"

"Well," said the big croc, "what have you been eating?"

"Politicians, the same as you," said the small croc.

"Well where do you catch them?"

"Down by Parliament on the other side of the river."

"Same here, how do you catch them?"

"Well I crawl under their car and wait for them to unlock it, then I jump out, grab them by the leg, shake the shit out of them, then eat them!"

"Aah," said the big crocodile, "There's your problem, you're not getting enough nourishment. See, once you shake the shit out of a politician there's nothing left but an arsehole and a briefcase!"

### A Nice Surprise!

Or was it... for Whitegates Care Centre Surrey residents, after their delight at being sent Valentine's Day cards, it turned to dismay when they saw the sender!

It turned out to be a local chain of undertakers. Angry relatives told The Sun that the stunt was an insensitive attempt by Surrey's T.H. Sanders & Sons to woo new customers.

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**CODERE BETTING MACHINE!**





# BAR DOMINO

LOS ALTOS

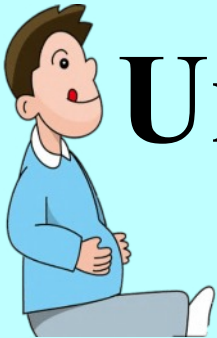
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**CODERE BETTING MACHINE!**

Woman goes to the doctor, shows him two green coloured rings at the top of her legs on the inside of her thighs. "Doctor I'm worried, I don't know what to do"

"Tell me, is your boyfriend a gypsy?" "Yes"

"We'll tell him he's earrings are not real gold"

## UPDATED - TORREVIEJA / ALICANTE AIRPORT BUS SCHEDULE

| DEPARTS<br>TORREVIEJA | DEPARTS<br>ALICANTE A'PORT |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 07:00                 | 08:00                      |
| 09:00                 | 09:30                      |
| 10:00                 | 10:00                      |
| 10:30                 | 10:30                      |
| 11:00                 | 11:00                      |
| 12:00                 | 11:30                      |
| 13:00                 | 12:00                      |
| 14:00                 | 13:00                      |
| 15:00                 | 14:00                      |
| 16:00                 | 15:00                      |
| 17:00                 | 16:00                      |
| 18:00                 | 17:00                      |
| 20:00                 | 18:00                      |

Ticket price: €7

Children under 4 years old free (ID required)

Pensioners: 30% discount. Requires accreditation by presenting a Social Security card. This discount only applies to pensioners residing in the Valencian community.

To prove that you are a pensioner, you must be over 65 years old and present your NIE, DNI or residence card, where you must confirm that you are a resident of the Valencian community.

Accessible for the disabled: YES

Free Wi-Fi: YES

Luggage space: YES

Ticket sales in Torreveija: Torreveija bus station (Calle de Mar, 50) and on the same bus at the airport.

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I didn't think it was possible to travel 20 years back in time.  
Until I got into an argument with my wife!

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

### Benefit Rates 2024/2025

Sickness Benefits (Attendance Allowance, DLA, PIP.) - High Rate - £108.55.

Low Rate - £72.65



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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. We couldnt find anyone to visit us so far inland. You certainly get what you pay for.  
No such thing as a free lunch as they say. 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-Torre vieja*

*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.*



0034602465565



advocacycostablanca@gmail.com

Advocacy Costa Blanca is operated by David Minto, a UK registered Social Worker. Get in touch if you need advice or guidance related to UK and Spanish welfare support.

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 (Autonimo) social worker in Spain I am also 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. This means that if things do not go as expected or planned, you have professional and financial protection. Reassuring for you and costly for me.

**Can any other social care advisor offer you the same???**



## PROPERTY SALES DOWN BUT STILL GOOD!

There were 640,000 Spanish homes sold in 2023, down 11.3% compared to year 2022, although Q4 was the third-best for sales during the last 16 years.

Looking at regions of most interest to foreign buyers, sales fell the most in the Balearics (-20%), followed by the Canaries (-16.8%) and Madrid (-16.2%). Then came Andalusia (-12.5%), Catalonia (-12.8%), the Valencian region (-7.8%), and Murcia (-5.5%).

The figures show that, for the country as a whole, last year's sales only look disappointing compared to the boom that followed in the wake of the pandemic.

Compared to any other year before the pandemic, 2023 was an excellent year for the Spanish housing market.

The 2022 boom was still the best year for more than 15 years when compared to the years before the pandemic distorted the market.

## QUICK THINKING!

A man in a London supermarket tried to buy half a head of lettuce. The very young produce assistant told him that they sold only whole heads of lettuce. The man persisted and asked to see the manager. The boy said he'd ask his manager about it.

Walking into the back room, the boy said to his manager: "Some idiot wants to buy half a head of lettuce."

As he finished his sentence, he turned to find the man standing right behind him and added: "And this gentleman has kindly offered to buy the other half."

The manager approved the deal, and the man went on his way.

Later the manager said to the boy: "I was impressed with the way you got yourself out of that situation earlier. We like people who think on their feet here.

Where are you from, son?"

"Glasgow, sir," the boy replied.

"Well, why did you leave Glasgow?" the manager asked. The boy said: "Sir, there's nothing but prostitutes and footballers up there."

"Really?" said the manager. "My wife is from Glasgow!"

"No way!" replied the boy. "Who'd she play for?"

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### Novel Uses for Olive Oil? Maybe!

If you only ever use extra-virgin olive oil in savoury dishes, "you're missing a trick", says Sarah Rainey in *The Times*. For as well as being good for you, olive oil is extraordinarily versatile: it "makes the creamiest cheesecakes", the "fluffiest sponges", and even the most "deliciously drinkable" cocktails. Chefs have recently cottoned on to this "untapped potential", and are using it in ever more inventive ways. Fast becoming a "staple of modern menus" is olive-oil ice cream, which is renowned for its velvety consistency. Other chefs drizzle olive oil over fresh or poached fruit, or add it to mousses and truffles. Ferran Adrià, formerly of *El Bulli* (considered the world's best restaurant until it closed in 2011), suggests combining it with grated chocolate on bread for a "surprisingly tasty" snack. According to chef and food writer Ursula Ferrigno, the versatility of olive oil results from the fact it contains so many phenolic compounds, which act as flavour-enhancer. Cutting-edge mixologists now use olive oil to jazz up cocktails, and there are non-alcoholic options, too: try "adding it to your morning smoothie, blending it into coffee", or using it to enrich hot chocolate.

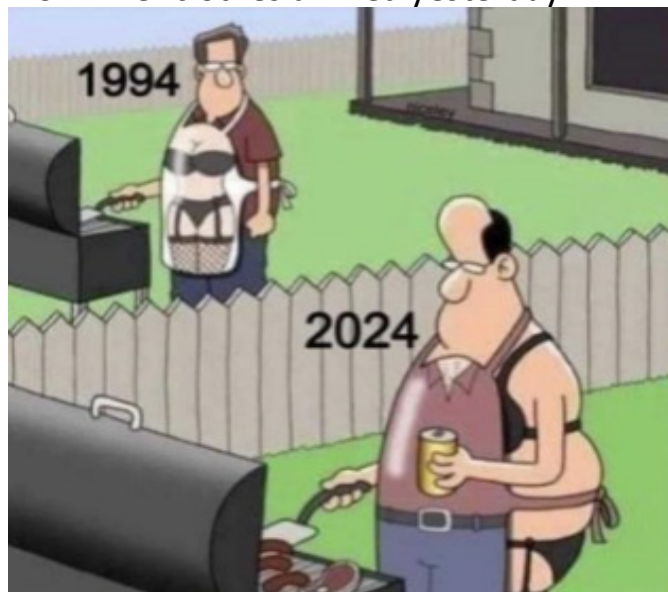
### Mail Order Brides?

Two Kerry men were looking through a catalogue.

Paddy says "Look at those gorgeous women! The prices are reasonable too." Mick agrees. "I am ordering one of them right now."

Three weeks later, Paddy asks "Has your woman turned up yet?"

"No," said Mick. "But it shouldn't be long now. Her clothes arrived yesterday."



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As with my first tip on Routers, people don't realise that if you power your phone off once a month it will work a lot better.

A great tip is every time you nip into a Cafe or bar ask them for their Wi-Fi code, even if you are not planning to use your phone whilst there, your phone will retain the password for subsequent visits (unless they change it).

A big question I get asked is 'How much data do I need?' Well, this is a "how long is a piece of string" question but just follow these points.

If you have the internet at home and log-in to Wi-Fi whilst you are out you will probably only use a small amount of data over a month.

I've known people to pay €30 a month for 50GB data and when they checked their phone they could see they only used under 5GB a month, saving over a year over €240 on a €10 sim only deal.

If you have family or friends coming over to visit make sure they activate roaming and check they have a roaming deal.

## NOCTURIA

Nocturia is defined as the need for patients to get up at night on a regular basis to urinate. A period of sleep must precede and follow the urinary episode for it to count as a nocturnal void. Nocturia is often described as the most bothersome of all urinary symptoms and is also one of the most common. Nocturia, caused primarily by nocturnal overproduction of urine, or nocturnal polyuria, is primarily a kidney-driven urine production disease, as opposed to a bladder-driven urine storage disease. It is the

underlying cause of nocturia in the majority of cases. **BUT!** A study in the Neurourology and Urodynamics journal found that people who spent at least five hours watching TV each day had a 48% higher risk of needing nocturnal loo breaks than those who watched less than an hour.

So all along you thought it was the seven pints of San Miggerys you consume each evening might be the cause of your regular nightly treks to the smallest room in the house!

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**From 3pm €5 per ticket**



**DISCO - FOOD - FUN & GAMES - FANCY DRESS**

**Checkout our Facebook Page JB'S Bar - New Page**

## **VOLUNTEER VACANCIES**

### **HELP VEGA BAJA**

(registered charity CV-O4-047761-A)

We are currently recruiting to various volunteer positions within HELP Vega Baja. If you would like to find out more, call Richard on 966 723 733 or email [office@helpvegabaja.com](mailto:office@helpvegabaja.com)

### **WELFARE TEAM**

Following a review of this service, we would like to appoint volunteers to assist our Welfare Officer offer information and assist in the completion of Attendance Allowance applications. If you have experience in either the care or benefit service or simply an interest in finding out if your experience is relevant, please call Richard.

### **EVENTS TEAM**

With restrictions being eased we are once again looking at organising fundraising events. Under direction of an Events coordinator, we wish to appoint a team of volunteers. We are keen to hear from anyone who is interested in helping the charity to raise funds – events, raffles, donation boxes etc.

Fundraising is crucial to the charity and volunteers must be committed to the role.

**HELP Vega Baja – supporting people in the community**



Charity No 2985

## THE SPANISH TOWNS WHERE IT WAS ILLEGAL TO DIE!

When cemeteries were filling up in towns around southern Spain a few years ago, some mayors turned to extreme measures to keep their towns alive.

In 1999 in the Andalusian province of Granada, the mayor of **Lanjarón**, José Rubio, issued an order banning his 3,870 residents from dying.

The reason? There was no room for anyone else in the cemetery. As you might imagine, this strange decree got a lot of attention, and even made the pages of the New York Times as the news went around the world.

However, just a week later, a neighbour broke the rules and died.

The offender was a 91-year-old man (and rather awkwardly, a friend of the mayor) so they were forced to bury him in the already overflowing Lanjarón cemetery. Fortunately, there were no repercussions for the dead man or his family, nor for the rest of the locals who eventually 'broke' the ban on dying.

Then a few years later, in July 2002, Manuel Blas Gómez, the mayor in **Darro** (also in Granada) pulled a similar trick made a public order: "Prohibido morirse" ("It is forbidden to die"). He had only been mayor for a few months, and he took the decision to veto death in this town of 1,500 locals.

The bizarre order was made for similar reasons as in Lanjarón, namely that the town's cemetery had no more usable land and although local government had found a plot of land to build a new one, the municipal coffers did not have the money needed for the construction works.

Since 2012 it's has also been illegal to die in the Italian town of Falciano del Massico in **Campania**, about 30 miles north of Naples.

Mayor Giulio Cesare Fava banned the village's residents from going "beyond the boundaries of earthly life, and... into the afterlife" after the town's cemetery reached full capacity.

Again, as in Spain residents were ordered not to die at least until Falciano's administrators had time to construct a new cemetery that could house their earthly remains.



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A Chinese woman has opened a hotel that looks **like a mausoleum**, to give guests a foretaste of being dead. The hotel, in Jiangsu province, is located in a field full of ancient graves, and the beds in each room are shaped like coffins. Staying at the Mausoleum Inn, owner Jiao Meige brags, is uncannily like being dead. “There are no services at night,” she says, “and the guest can go nowhere, since outside is just a vast graveyard.”

Police have busted a **Valencia body-snatching gang** that removed corpses from hospitals like La Fe and nursing homes to sell them for up to €1,200 each to university-based medical schools. The Montesinos funeral home in Benicalet is accused of running the racket and targeting dead people without family members and who preferably were non-Spaniards. The four suspects, two owners and two employees, also helped the universities dispose of the bodies they had been studied by incinerating them or disposing of their dismembered parts **in other coffins** slated for cremation. The home produced fake documents to remove bodies from hospital morgues in order to make money out of them. The two owners of the Montesinos funeral home have been arrested along with two employees for fraud and forging documents.

Sculptors at Britain’s legendary **Madame Tussauds wax museum** are busy repairing the statues of George Clooney and Brad Pitt, which were badly damaged by sex-crazed female gropers on their first day on display. Clooney’s cheeks were marred with lipstick, whereas Pitt’s double had suffered serious pinching damage to the buttocks. To say they were popular with women is an understatement, said a spokesman for Tussauds. Brad’s bum in particular was in a bad way.

An Indian holy man who claimed his right leg had magical powers has had **the limb amputated and stolen by thieves**. Yanadi Kondaiah, 80, always insisted that his leg could grant wishes to anyone who touched it. Police say this may explain why two strangers recently arrived in Kondaiah’s village, plied him with

liquor, hacked off his leg with a sickle, and made off with it. Passing villagers found him and took him to a hospital. “I have always been good to others,” a distraught Kondaiah said. “Why has this been done to me?”

A Vietnamese man who had been suffering from violent headaches for five months was found to have **a pair of chopsticks lodged in his skull**. The unidentified 35-year-old seems to have been stabbed with the chopsticks when he became involved in a drunken brawl. He sought medical treatment at the time, but had no memory of chopsticks being shoved up his nose, and they were not detected. When he began suffering from headaches, vision loss and fluid discharge, however, he got a CT scan – which revealed the chopsticks. They have now been removed.

A veteran Ohio attorney has been suspended for **defecating into a Pringles can**, and tossing it into the car park of a crime victim advocacy centre. Ohio’s supreme court found that Jack Blakeslee, 75, had “deposited his faeces into an empty Pringles can” in 2021, driven 20 minutes from his home “with the open can of faeces” in the car with him, and thrown it out. Blakeslee explained that he regularly pulled such stunts to “blow off steam”, and said that he “got a kick out of” imagining the “look of surprise” on people’s faces when they found the cans.

An inspector who **sold his police trousers for £4 online** has had his rank reduced after being found guilty of gross misconduct at a hearing. Owen Hurley of Hertfordshire Police admitted he sold the item on Vinted, a second-hand selling app. He told the misconduct hearing the trousers had been in his wardrobe at home for "a long time" and he wanted to "make space" after redecorating. Mr Hurley, who has served for 15 years, was reduced to the rank of sergeant, effective immediately. It seems that a member of the public complained after seeing the advert online. That member of the public who complained and Chief Constable Charlie Hall, who demoted the policeman are in this column because they are both ‘dicks.’





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**Full menu available 9am - 6:45pm Mon - Sat**

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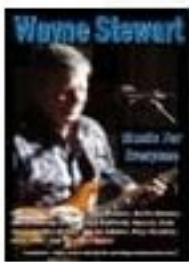
### **Live Music & Entertainment**

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**Thursday: Simon Morton - 3pm - 6pm**

**Friday: A Las Raices - 3pm - 5:30pm**

**Tuesday: Wayne Stewart - 3pm - 6pm**



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**Keep an eye on our Facebook page for regular updates.**

I'll never forget the look on the cashier's face, when she scanned the packet of bird seed and I asked her how long does it take for the birds to grow once I plant them.

# DALJIT

## MINI SUPERMARKET



Via Park V  
**OPEN 365 DAYS**  
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**Indian Spices - Vast Range**  
**Frozen Food, Milk, Bread,**  
**Sweets & Cards and much, much more!**

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# DALJIT

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Via Park V

**OPEN 11am - 11pm DAILY**  
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**LIVE  
WORLDWIDE  
RACING  
COVERAGE**

Most people have heard of Karl Marx, but few know of his sister, Onya, an Olympic runner. Her name is still mentioned at the start of every race.



### SHARING!

An elderly couple entered a McDonald's and sat next to a table where some young people were having dinner.

The old man walked over and placed an order for himself. He unwrapped the burger and cut it in half and put the other half next to his wife. Carefully he counted out the fries and gave her half. He put two straws in a drink and put it between him and his wife.

The old lady began to eat her half of the burger, whilst people stared at them compassionately.

A young man approached them and offered to buy them another meal. The old woman replied, "Do not bother, we are used to sharing everything."

Everyone realized the old man had not eaten, he only watched as his wife ate. The young man approached and offered again.

This time it was the old man who explained, "It's okay, we are used to sharing everything."

The young man then asked the old man, "What are you waiting for then?" He said, "She has the teeth."

### Down the Drain

An intruder entered a Valladolid winery on Sunday, Feb' 18, and emptied three tanks containing maturing premium wine with a retail value of around €2 million. The Guardia Civil is searching for the hooded person that appeared to have expert knowledge of how to turn on the taps at the Ceba 21 winery in Castillo de Duero. Over 60,000 litres of high-end wine was poured out on the floor with security cameras capturing the man who emptied out the contents of three tanks containing the Horcajo and Malabrigo brands which are sold at over €90 a bottle. Winery owner Jose Moro said the security footage shows the person entering through a door that gives access to the engine room where he began to quickly empty three tanks. Moro said the intruder knew the system to be able to open the tanks- something which is not straight forward. He accessed two other tanks but fortunately for Ceba 21 they were already empty. Of the 60,000 litres of wine spilled, 20,000 were Horcajo brand and was all of this year's production, while the remaining 40,000 were under the Malabrigo name, accounting for a third of stocks.



# AQUAQUEST

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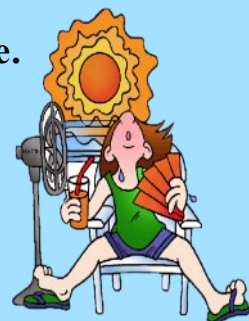


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## Lime Bar Fishing SUNBATHING Club

Considering February is normally one of the colder months of the year, we have had some fantastic weather. We have had glorious sunshine and temperatures up in the mid 20s! I think this has thrown the wildlife a wobbler though. The pine processionary caterpillars were down on



the ground in Jan (2 months early) and although the fishing is still very hard, the big carp have started to feed already. 3 Rods has lost a couple of "big" fish at the net, but did manage to land an 8.5 pounder (see photo). He did net a biggy but as he was manoeuvring it for weighing, the carp flipped, he lost his footing, fish and the net into the river. The carp was seen



swimming off but he lost his net in the flow. Just John lent him a "monster" net, but that didn't work either. A few days later, another huge carp had him walking down bank with his pole elastic at full stretch. He shouted Daffy, who followed him towards the bridge with the landing net. He managed to get the carp to the "monster" net, but it took another

lunge and spat his hook out. The air was blue.

Big Fish Chris, not to be outdone has also landed a few biggies on the Segura at Bigastro, the best a 10.5 pounder. See photo.

These carp are put to shame though by the Antique Man, who after a 15 minute battle landed a 6.29



kilo carp (13.8 lbs) from his favourite haunt at El Bosquet. The tackle shops are happy. As he hoisted this big fish in, his net snapped at the handle. The carp was unharmed. (See photo). He did his back in and spent the following day in bed. The wussy!

The following may be a sign that "hopefully", the river is getting cleaner!!!! On Facebook, an angler has reported landing a 12.5 lb zander (I have never seen one). Several barbel have also been turning up in the last few months. I had a session on peg 1 at the tennis courts and had 5, including 3 over 3 lbs. They go like torpedoes on a pole with light elastic! As it had been fishing so well, the monthly match was fished at Bigastro tennis courts. Not my fault, honest! On a rare cold blustery day, 6 of us turned up. When I drew peg 1 (the 5 x barbel peg) I was as happy as a pig in s\*#t. Unfortunately, it was not to be. Bites were very few and far between. I fished exactly the same spot, same bait, tactics etc. I had 1 small carp, 3 terrapins and 2 bleak. I was pulling my hair out.

Sweeney won with 3 x carp for 2.5 kg, I was 2nd with 1 kg and the Old Bill also caught 1 carp for 3rd with 0.9 kg. That was it! 3 rods lost yet another carp at the net. What is he doing?

The next meeting bun fight is at The Lime Bar on Tuesday, 5th March.

Stay safe.

Fishy fingers,

The Ghost



## ARE YOU ON A VERY LOW INCOME?

Spain's Ingreso Mínimo Vital (IMV) is an allowance available to low income vulnerable households to provide them with a minimum monthly income. It is a tiered system, and the amount depends on the number of people in the family.

To meet the eligibility requirements you must live and be legally resident here and the family unit you are claiming for have lived together for more than six months.

The income of all the family members living together will be reviewed, as well as their assets, to make sure that only the most vulnerable families receive the IMV.

The monthly IMV amounts have been increased by almost 7% this year. I list below just a handful of monthly amounts awarded which depend on each situation and each family, their circumstances and number of dependents.

One single adult: €604.38 per month

One adult and one child: €785.7 per month.

One adult and two children: €967.01 per month.

One adult and three children: €1,148.33 per month.

One adult and more than three children: €1,329.65 per month.

Two adults: €785.7 per month.

One single-parent adult and one child: €918.66 per month.

One single-parent adult and two children: €1,099.90 per month.

Spain's Social Security system has set up a page specifically for requesting the IMV, and there's also a handy simulator tool on the site too so you can have an idea of how much you could be entitled to.

It takes about 16 minutes to complete.

You will find that here - <https://imv.seg-social.es/>

You can also access the Social Security site in

English here - [https://sede.seg-](https://sede.seg-social.gob.es/wps/portal/sede/sede/Inicio?changeLanguage=en)

[social.gob.es/wps/portal/sede/sede/Inicio?changeLanguage=en](https://sede.seg-social.gob.es/wps/portal/sede/sede/Inicio?changeLanguage=en)

When you have the online screen

Press Citizens... then Family... then Minimum

Vital Income and choose what section you want.

You may or may not need an electronic signature.

## Asset Declarations Deadline and Fines

The Modelo 720 is a form that must be completed by all residents of Spain and submitted to the tax authority if you hold assets overseas over a certain amount in certain financial categories. Here are some of the details.

The Modelo 720 states that all individual assets with a value of over €50,000 located abroad as at 31st December each year must now be declared to the Spanish tax authorities. This includes all accounts with financial institutions, custodian accounts, real estate, assets held in companies abroad, shares, trusts, etc.

There are three asset classes - Immovable property (real estate), Bank Accounts and Investments. If the value in any category exceeds the €50,000 threshold as at December 31st (or on average over the three preceding months for bank accounts) then a declaration must be made. 50,000€ is the total for any one asset class, so for instance if you have five bank accounts overseas and the total value between them all is €50,000 or over each account must be reported. The same applies to all the asset classes. If you have assets in joint names the assets must be reported if they are 50,000€ or over. If income or assets abroad are not declared to the Spanish taxman between January 1st and April 1st, they will be treated as an unjustified capital gain.

Spain has eased the fines for wrongdoers from 150% of the value of the undeclared amount down to a maximum of 50% following staunch criticism from the Court of Justice of the European Union, whose judges referred to Spain's penalties as "extortionate" and in breach of EU rules.

You are not required to complete the Modelo 720 every year but you will need to complete it again if your assets have changed during the course of the last calendar year. The value of the assets reported is at 31st December each year.

**Always seek professional help.**





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## The Family

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

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

One day her “little” sister called and asked me to come over to check the wedding invitations. She was alone when I arrived, and she whispered to me that she had feelings and desires for me that she couldn’t overcome. She told me that she wanted me just once before I got married and committed my life to her sister. Well, I was in total shock, and couldn’t say a word. She said, “I’m going upstairs to my bedroom, and if you want one last wild fling, just come up and get me.”

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

I opened the door, and headed straight towards my car. Lo and behold, my entire future family was standing outside, all clapping!

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

And the moral of this story is: Always keep your condoms in your car.

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