

Costa Weekly News tm

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Torre Vieja puts green heart into city

Torre Vieja is to have an urban park designed for family leisure, as a community meeting place and somewhere connect with nature. The Alto de la Casilla park, a space of more than 30,000 square metres, with a planned investment of 11.9 million euros, will become one of the main green areas in Torre Vieja. The city council plans to complete the work in just 8 months, 20 years after first starting the project, and is looking to May as a provisional start date.

The park will be an open, accessible space strongly linked to the landscape, equipped with shaded areas that cater for use throughout the year. The park will feature a wooded picnic area, two large children's play areas, a café, parking for vehicles and bicycles.

It has been designed for people to enjoy the natural environment and the views. From various areas visitors will be able to see the Laguna Salada de Torre Vieja, the Laguna Salada de La Mata and the Mediterranean Sea, reinforcing the connection between the urban space and the natural environment.

Landscaping plays a key role in the park. In total, 537 trees will be planted, such as Aleppo pine, cypress,



araucarias or jacarandas, accompanied by a wide selection of plants. The project includes the planting of more than 12,000 units of shrubs such as hibiscus and phitosporum, as well as aromatic species such as lavender, rosemary and thyme. In total 1,540 plants, which will occupy more than 10,000 square meters, will create a diverse, sustainable green space with 5,000 square metres of lawn areas throughout.

Childs Play

One of the great attractions of the park will be its recreational benefits, especially those designed for children and families. The space will have 37 children's games, distributed in two large, themed areas, conceived as differentiated but complementary areas. These will be integrated into the landscape and adapted to differ-

ent ages, with the two areas accommodating 400 children.

The first, Laguna Rosa or Pink Lagoon, is inspired by the local salt flats and includes elements such as the Salt Tower and Mountains, Mining Wagons and large hexagonal 'salt molecules' with slides. It has 22 games and capacity for 230 children.

The second area, Mundo Náutico or Nautical World, pays tribute to Torre Vieja's maritime traditions with features such as the Torre Vieja Boat, the Shark and the Lighthouse, an iconic structure more than 13.6 metres high, destined to become one of the park's visual landmarks. This area will be able to accommodate up to 164 children.



WELCOME! 

Welcome to the first edition of The Costa Weekly News. Published every Tuesday and initially covering the Southern Costa Blanca, the newspaper will focus on a wide range of international, national, regional and local news. In addition, we have included sections and features we know you'll all enjoy such as a pullout TV Guide, puzzle page, recipes and horoscopes. Whatever your interest is: sports, health, cars, showbiz or travel, we've got it covered. We hope to hear from our readers, local businesses and potential advertisers as we evolve the newspaper over the coming weeks to meet the needs of the community. Our email address is above on the masthead. Costa Weekly News is part of the STO Media Group, which includes Spain Today Online Today – home of Murcia Today and Alicante Today news portals - TKO Radio and Home & Living Magazine and Indalo Restaurant Guides and Fitness Guides ...so whether you're on air, online or in print we've got you covered.

We hope you enjoy reading today's paper as much as we have enjoyed creating it.

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Illegal tobacco factory worth over €3 million uncovered in Alicante

A major clandestine tobacco operation has been dismantled in the Alicante province after the Guardia Civil uncovered an illegal factory producing cigarettes for the black market, with seized goods valued at more than three million euros.

The discovery was made in the town of Muro de Alcoy, where officers arrested two men and seized more than 300,000 packs of cigarettes that were ready to be distributed illegally. Industrial machinery, along with several large trucks and vans believed to have been used to transport the products, was also confiscated.

According to the Guardia Civil, the investigation began in early November last year, when agents from the Organised Crime and Anti-Drug Team, known as EDOA, noticed suspicious activity at a warehouse in the Canaleta industrial estate. Officers reported that "the facility remained hermetically sealed during the day" and that loading and unloading took place "hastily and at unusual hours", raising immediate concerns.

{image2}Those suspi-

cions were confirmed when a trailer leaving the premises was intercepted. Inside, officers found tobacco production machinery, loose tobacco and screen-printing plates for well-known cigarette brands. Investigators later confirmed that the warehouse was functioning as a fully operational industrial facility dedicated to

ing to a criminal organisation and offences against industrial property. Both were brought before the courts in Alcoy, which ordered their pre-trial detention.

The Guardia Civil has stressed that the investigation remains open and that further arrests or actions linked to this operation cannot be ruled out.

The discovery comes amid growing concern over the rise in illegal tobacco across Spain, as higher prices push more smokers towards the black market. It also follows earlier large-scale seizures in Alicante province, highlighting the scale and organisation behind counterfeit tobacco distribution.

The Guardia Civil has confirmed that the investigation remains open and that further actions linked to the operation are not ruled out. The case will now continue through the courts in Alcoy, while officers pursue any additional leads connected to the dismantled factory.

image: Guardia Civil

the illegal manufacture of tobacco products.

During a full search of the site, officers uncovered evidence suggesting that up to 12 people may have been working inside the warehouse for long periods, in unsanitary conditions. The two men arrested, aged 22 and 51, now face charges including crimes against public health, smuggling, belong-



Spain will not join Trump's Board of Peace says PM

Spain has ruled out joining the 'Board of Peace' initiative unveiled by US President Donald Trump, saying its refusal reflects Madrid's continued commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations system.

'We appreciate the invitation, but we decline,' Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez told reporters following an EU summit in Brussels.

The United States says the proposed body would play a role in negotiating and supervising cease-fires, coordinating security frameworks and overseeing reconstruction efforts in post-conflict regions. The initiative is rooted in Trump's Gaza peace plan.

Noticeably absent from the board's launch ceremony at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Thursday were many of Washington's longstanding allies. Canada, the United Kingdom and all European Union member states - with the exception of Hungary and Bulgaria - did not attend.

Sánchez said Spain's decision was guided by consistency with international law, the United Nations and a multilateral approach to global governance. He also pointed out that the Palestinian Authority is not included in the initiative.

Israel has signed on to the board, which has also received backing from several major Middle East-

ern states, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Qatar. In contrast, most European countries and Canada have either declined to participate or remain undecided.

Trump formally presented the 'Board of Peace' appearing alongside a number of world leaders who have agreed to join. The initiative is expected to focus initially on rebuilding Gaza.

The announcement coincided with the launch of the second phase of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, which ended Israel's war on Gaza. That conflict has killed more than 71,000 people since October 2023. The board forms part of a 20-point proposal put forward by Trump and later adopted by the UN Security Council in November 2025.

Several countries have confirmed receiving invitations but have yet to make final decisions. Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Moscow is 'ready' to allocate \$1 billion to Trump's Board of Peace, adding that he would discuss the use of frozen Russian assets during talks with US envoys in Moscow later the same day.

China acknowledged receipt of an invitation but did not clarify its position. Germany said it is reviewing the proposal, while India and Brazil stated that any decision would follow internal consultations. The

Vatican confirmed that Pope Leo XIV had received an invitation.

Canada has taken a guarded stance, with Prime Minister Mark Carney yet to announce a decision. Later on Thursday, Trump said he was withdrawing Canada's invitation to join the board. Ireland said it would give the proposal 'careful consideration'. Invitations have also been sent to Romania, Finland, Greece, Cyprus, Japan, Austria, Australia, the Netherlands, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore and New Zealand, none of which have announced final positions.

Several European governments have already declined participation, citing legal and institutional concerns. The United Kingdom said it would not sign up at this stage due to worries about potential Russian involvement. France said it does not intend to join 'at this stage', warning that the board could be granted powers that undermine existing UN mechanisms.

Norway and Sweden issued similar rejections, arguing the initiative is incompatible with international law and established multilateral structures. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said Italy needs more time to assess the proposal, pointing to possible constitutional implications.

Europe closes ranks to defend Greenland

Donald Trump's shock threat to impose tariffs to seize Greenland prompted a frantic race against the clock to avert the collapse of the transatlantic alliance. Though bruised and battered, the bond between Europe and the United States that has endured 80 uninterrupted years lives to see another day.

That was the message that visibly relieved European leaders conveyed at the end of an extraordinary week that brought the two sides of the Atlantic dangerously close to an all-out trade war over the future of Greenland.

For a total of five days, Donald Trump kept the continent on tenterhooks with his shock threat to impose an additional 10% tariff on eight European countries, all NATO members, in an attempt to strong-arm the acquisition of the mineral-rich, semi-autonomous island that belongs to the Kingdom of Denmark.

"This Tariff will be due and payable until such time as a Deal is reached for the Complete and Total purchase of Greenland," Trump wrote in his now-infamous message.

The outrage was deafening. Presidents and prime ministers came forth in unison to support Denmark's sovereignty and denounce what they saw as blatant blackmail from a president intent on reshaping the global order according to his own vision. "No intimidation nor threat will influence us," said French President Emmanuel Macron.

What followed that first wave of condemnations was a frantic race against the clock to convince Trump to abandon his annexationist agenda and salvage the transatlantic relationship - and to prepare to hit back should the worst come to pass. EU ambassadors met the day after Trump's social media message, to begin preparations for 1 February, the day on which the 10% tariffs were due to take effect.

France took the lead by publicly calling for the activation of the Anti-Coercion Instrument, which would allow broad retaliation across multiple economic sectors. Originally designed with China in mind, the instrument has never been used - not even

during last year's trade negotiations with the White House, when Trump continuously upped the ante to browbeat Europeans into wide-ranging concessions. Back then, member states had been sharply split on how to respond, with France and Spain advocating an offensive, and Italy and Germany urging a compromise. But this time, it was different.

Trump was no longer applying tariffs to rebalance trade flows and boost domestic manufacturing, the reasons he had cited on his "Liberation Day" in spring 2025. This time, he was seeking to apply tariffs to seize territory from an ally.

"Plunging us into a dangerous downward spiral would only aid the very adversaries we are both so committed to keeping out of our strategic landscape," Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, said in a speech in Davos. "So our response will be unflinching, united and proportional."

Diplomats in Brussels spoke of a collective determination to endure economic pain for the sake

of defending Greenland, Denmark and the sovereignty of the entire bloc. A detailed list of tit-for-tat measures worth €93 billion was put on the table to be introduced as soon as Trump's additional duties entered into force.

"We want a piece of ice for world protection, and they (Europeans) won't give it," Trump told the packed room in Davos. "They have a choice: you can say 'yes' and we'll be very appreciative, and you can say 'no' and we will remember."

Military Force

Yet Trump also said he did not want to use military force to accomplish his territorial designs, something which he had previously refused to rule out. The Europeans quickly caught on to the nuance and hoped that an opening was about to emerge.

The speech paved the way for NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, who had kept a low profile in the spiralling crisis, to meet with Trump in Davos and strike what the two men called a "framework deal" to enhance security in Greenland and the entire

Arctic region.

In parallel, the European Parliament, enraged by Trump's ultimatum, voted to indefinitely delay the ratification of the EU-US trade deal, blocking the zero-tariff benefits for American-made products that von der Leyen and Trump agreed on in July.

Europeans have spent the last year scrambling to contain Trump's unpredictable foreign policy, watching in disbelief as he floated business ventures with the Kremlin, sanctioned judges of the International Criminal Court, removed Nicolás Maduro from power in Venezuela, and expanded the Board of Peace ostensibly set up to manage post-war Gaza into a rival of the United Nations.

While those disruptive actions were, to a greater or lesser extent, tolerated, Trump's heavy-handed pursuit of Greenland proved to be too much to bear. For many, the tariff threat crossed a line and set a precedent, even if it was eventually withdrawn.

As von der Leyen said, it will only amplify calls for a more independent Europe with a wider net of partners to fall back on.

Cloe's ex-boyfriend sentenced to another three years for abusing her

The justice system returned this week to the case of Cloe, the 15-year-old girl murdered in Orihuela Costa, with two decisions that keep the legal future of the case open.

The girl's ex-boyfriend has been sentenced to another three years in prison in a closed juvenile detention centre and four more years of supervised release for the abuse he inflicted on her during their year-long relationship. Secondly, the Provincial Court of Alicante held a hearing on the appeal against the murder sentence, filed by the minor who collaborated in the crime. Cloe's family acted as the prosecution through their lawyer, Juan Carlos Fuentes.

The conviction for domestic abuse rests decisively on the analysis of Cloe's mobile phone, carried out by the Civil Guard after her murder. This revealed a relationship marked by extreme jealousy, constant control, humiliation, and threats. For months, the accused systematically checked the girls phone, read her conversations, demanded she delete contacts and forced her to uninstall apps like Snapchat. He even installed a system that allowed him to know her location at all times. The intercepted messages starkly reflected this climate of domination, with con-

stant warnings, explicit threats, and expressions of absolute control over her social circle and personal relationships.

The defendant, who is already serving an eight-year prison sentence and another five years of supervised release for Cloe's murder, has notified the court that he will appeal this new sentence for gender-based violence. Unlike the murder conviction, which he did not appeal, his lawyer, Encarnación Obdulia Martínez, has opted this time to appeal to the Provincial Court, aware that this new sentence could have a direct impact on the actual time he spends in prison. The ex-boyfriend admitted to writing the messages but tried to downplay their content, stating that they could not be considered abuse.

The new sentence would have little impact on the defendant's prison status, as he is already

over 18. He has already received the maximum sentence under juvenile law for the murder. However, the prosecution will request that the two sentences be added together, arguing that they are for separate offences. In their view, the crime of abuse was already fully completed when the mur-



der occurred. The prosecutor believes that, despite the maximum sentence for murder already being imposed under the Juvenile Justice Act, the new sentence can be added, although the Public Prosecutor's Office acknowledges that this is a legal matter that will be analysed when the time comes to carry out the sentences.

The climate of control, threats, and humiliation became evident during the trial, where investigators explained what they found on the victim's phone. The Civil Guard officer who examined the chats explained in court that what was reflected in the report was only the tip of the iceberg of what the phone contained and that many more messages of similar content existed. In her analysis, the relationship followed the classic pattern of gender-based violence, with a succession of episodes of jealousy, possessiveness, remorse, and reconciliation within a clearly toxic dynamic. She also emphasized that the young woman began to gain resolve when she decided to break up with him. In the months leading up to the murder, the defendant's messages alternated between threats and pleas for her to resume the relationship.

Court Review

While the appeal against the new conviction for domestic abuse is being processed, the Provincial Court held a hearing this week on the appeal against the murder sentence. In this case, the appeal is brought solely by the other young male who collaborated in the crime, represented by lawyers Iván Rodríguez Lorente and Gregorio Gotusso Fantini. His defence argues that this young man received the same sentence as Cloe's ex-boyfriend, maintaining that the primary criminal responsibility should have fallen on the latter. Although he has admitted his participation in the events, he maintains that he acted under the influence of the main defendant and that the latter tried at all times to use him to lessen his own criminal responsibility.

The victim's ex-boyfriend, for his part, did not appeal the murder conviction, which now remains pending only the outcome of the appeal filed by the accomplice.

The final decision will determine the criminal future of the main defendant, but it will also set a relevant precedent on how the justice system addresses the accumulation of sentences in extreme cases of gender-based violence among minors.

Spanish and UK police concerned for man missing after Cabo Roig shooting

Investigators in Spain and the UK are probing the disappearance of a Merseyside man believed to be an associate of a victim of a botched assassination attempt. Spanish sources have told the Liverpool Echo that the 28-year-old man is thought to have disappeared from the Costa Blanca area between late December last year and early January.

It is believed that The National Crime Agency is facilitating Merseyside Police's enquiries with Spanish authorities who are conducting the investigation and have offered the family of the man specialist support.

He is believed to have been living in Spain for a number of years after leaving Merseyside. According to reports he comes from a prominent Liverpool family and has relatives in both Spain and Merseyside. It is also claimed that he has been subject to an extradition order following offences in the UK.

The man is supposedly linked to Sonny Redmond, the Liverpool man who survived a car park assassination attempt in Cabo Roig

in December. The violent attack left Redmond with gunshot wounds to his arm, leg and chest and he has been recovering in Torrevieja Hospital. Redmond is the allegedly leader of an armed gang that extorted cannabis clubs in the Vega Baja region to assume control and cream off their profits.

Redmond was in his car at an Orihuela Costa area car park at Lomas de Cabo Roig on 11th December when his vehicle was hit by at least 15 bullets. Police were alerted by a concerted member of the public.

UK newspapers believe that the shooting of Redmond is linked to the murder of a British man who was found dead in a housing development in the Campoamor area on 21st December. The currently unnamed man's body displayed several bullet wounds.

A spokesperson for the Spanish civil guard told press the victim was a 29-year-old man. Details about the investigation are scarce with a Spanish court ensuring there is a media blackout.



Missing Guardamar-bound yacht and captain rescued off Algeria



The sailor of the missing yacht 'Admirante' has been located alive and well, along with his vessel, in Algerian waters, just a couple of days after the search was officially called off.

The sailing boat disappeared on 15th January in the waters between Gandía and Guardamar del Segura but was then located by an aircraft belonging to Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

It was reported by the Alicante Harbour Master's Office that the sailboat and its occupant had been located in Algerian waters.

A merchant ship, Thor Confidence, has since picked up the bedraggled captain and taken him to the port of Algeciras.

The operation was coordinated with the Spanish Navy's COVAM (Maritime Action Operations and Surveillance Centre) and the National Rescue Coordination Centre, according to the Directorate General of the Merchant Navy.

The rescue comes after the search was called off on 24th January, following nine days of searching by Maritime Rescue in the Spanish SAR zone, with radio alerts and contact with the

Algerian authorities remaining active. After nearly two weeks of searching by sea and air, Spain's Maritime Rescue service called off the hunt for the vessel.

The yacht, 'Admirante', left the port of Gandía in the province of Valencia on Thursday 15th January, bound for Guardamar del Segura but never arrived. All contact with its skipper, the boat's sole crew member, was lost that same day.

The alarm was raised by the captain's wife, who reported that she had not heard from him since a phone call the previous evening,

during which he said he believed he was somewhere near Benidorm.

The search operation began on 16th January and quickly expanded into a large-scale effort. Maritime Rescue deployed planes and helicopters, while rescue vessels scoured the sea and the Civil Guard carried out radar monitoring along the route between Gandía and Guardamar.

At one point, hopes were raised when the skipper himself managed to call the 112-emergency number. During the call, he said he was adrift after losing engine power and had very limited re-

sources on board, including a phone battery that was close to running out. However, he was unable to give his exact location before the call ended.

Despite days of intensive searching, no trace of the boat or its skipper had been found. Leading Maritime Rescue to decide to suspend active operations, citing the lack of new information after over a week of concerted effort.

Skipper and yacht found alive and well after search was called off after going missing off the Costa Blanca.

Image: Salvamento Marítimo

Torre Vieja awards two projects to renovate 543 streetlights

The Local Government Board of the Torre Vieja City Council has approved the award, through a simplified open procedure, of two projects aimed at improving the energy efficiency of public lighting, as reported by the Councillor for Public Lighting, Concha Sala.

The actions are divided into two lots and will allow the renovation of a total of 543 streetlights in different areas of the municipality, replacing the current lights with LED technology, more efficient and adapted to the current criteria of energy saving and consumption control.

Both lots have been awarded to the company Iluminaciones Futuros de LED, S.L., with a total amount of 283,745.00 euros (VAT included) and an execution period of three months, which will begin to count from the signing of the Act of Commencement of the works.

Lot 2 corresponds to the replacement of outdoor lighting luminaires with new LED technology lights and the expansion of circuits in the Nueva Torre Vieja neighbourhood,

an action that will allow the lighting network to be updated and its operation improved.

This lot was based on a tender budget of 281,288.72 euros and has been awarded for an amount of 165,770.00 euros (VAT included).



Within the framework of this action, 321 luminaires will be replaced, and the project management of the works will be assumed by the company Vielca Ingenieros, S.A.

Lot 1 is part of the project to adapt and improve the energy efficiency of public lighting on the CV-905 road and other streets in the municipality of Torre Vieja, one of the main access roads to the city.

The tender budget amounts to

162,855.00 euros, and the award has been made for a total amount of 117,975.00 euros (VAT included). The action includes the replacement of 222 lights, and the project management of the works will correspond to Inurbe Ingeniería, S.L.

The renovation of public lighting using LED technology will optimise energy consumption, improve the management of the lighting system and adapt the facilities to current standards, without altering the conditions of use of public space.

In addition, the award includes, among other commitments, the implementation of a fully operational point-to-point remote management system, as well as the extension of the warranty of the luminaires by five years, which reinforces the durability and control of the installation.

With these actions, the Torre Vieja City Council continues to develop projects to modernise municipal infrastructures, focused on improving public service and the efficiency of facilities.

Spain unemployment drops below 10% in first since 2008

Official data has shown that Spain's historically stubborn unemployment fell below 10% in the fourth quarter of last year, for the first since the 2008 financial crisis.

The jobless rate in the European Union's fourth-largest economy was 9.93% in the period, 0.52 percentage points below the preceding quarter, the National Statistics Institute said. It was the lowest reading since hitting 9.6% in the first quarter of 2008, at the onset of a global recession that left deep scars in the Spanish economy.

"For the first time since 2008, unemployment falls below 10 percent. Spain has almost 22.5 million people with jobs, a new record," Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez posted on X. The service sector, which includes the vital tourism industry that represents around 13 percent of annual economic output, accounted for the bulk of the fall, alongside agriculture and industry, the statistics office said.

Spain's economic growth has been consistently outperforming peers in the developed world, but its unemployment rate has been the highest in the European Union.

The rate peaked at around 27 percent in early 2013 in the wake of the economic crises but has steadily fallen in recent years as the tourism sector performed strongly after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The leftist government is aiming to bring it down to around eight percent by the end of its term in 2027, which it says corresponds to full employment.

Cabo Roig-based partner of murder suspect investigated after fatal crash

A 54-year-old British man has died following a traffic accident on the A-70 in El Campello. The crash occurred on Friday evening, January 16, at around 7pm, near kilometre 1.1 of the motorway heading towards Valencia, just past the Sant Joan tunnel.

A BMW collided from behind with a Nissan Qashqai carrying four British passengers, causing the smaller vehicle to leave the carriageway and strike the central barrier. One of the passengers, a 54-year-old man who was not wearing a seatbelt, was ejected from the vehicle and died at the scene. The other three passengers escaped unharmed, as did the driver of the BMW and her passenger. Emergency services attended promptly, but were unable to save the man.



The driver of the BMW, a 20-year-old British woman known as Madison V, tested negative for alcohol and drugs. She has been placed under investigation for alleged reckless homicide (homicidio imprudente), while authorities continue to examine the circumstances of the collision, including

how the vehicles were travelling and the conditions on the motorway at the time.

The case has attracted particular attention locally due to the people involved. The woman is the partner of a Northern Irish man who is under investigation in a

separate case relating to the fatal shooting of John George in Rojales in December 2024; he was later released on bail.

The woman has previously been detained in unrelated incidents. In September, she was arrested during a traffic stop in Torrevieja with almost a kilogram of methamphetamine, and in December she was detained in Orihuela Costa after authorities discovered two loaded firearms in a vehicle she was in. In both cases, she was released on bail.

The ongoing investigation into the El Campello collision is examining all details of the crash, including vehicle positions, speed and witness statements, as authorities work to clarify exactly how the accident occurred.

Nearly half of local visitors do not stay in hotels

Nearly half of all tourists visiting the province of Alicante are staying in second homes or with friends and family, according to new data that adds fresh context to the ongoing debate over tourist accommodation on the Costa Blanca.

A report presented at FITUR, the Spanish international tourism fair, by the accommodation association Aptur CV shows that around 44% of visitors in 2025 did not use hotels or regulated tourist rentals. In real terms, this meant approximately 5.13 million travellers staying with relatives or friends, while a further 2.13 million used second homes, together accounting for a significant share of the market.

The figures come at a sensitive time. Tourist accommodation has become a political and social flashpoint across the province, with housing supply under pressure and prices at historic highs. Several municipalities, including Alicante, have already moved to slow the growth of holiday apartments, arguing that the market needs tighter control.

Aptur CV, however, has

long defended regulated holiday rentals as a necessary part of the tourism ecosystem. Presenting the study, its president Silvia Blasco stressed that not all accommodation types contribute equally to the local economy. "Unlike second homes or staying with acquaintances, holiday homes and apartments do generate wealth," she said, pointing to the spending left by tourists using these options.



According to the report, tourists staying in holiday homes spend an average of 135 euros per day, totalling around 1,323 euros per trip. In 2025, 2.06 million visitors stayed in holiday homes and 1.6 million in holiday apartments, together accounting for more than 21 million overnight stays. Even so, hotels remained the single largest category, hosting nearly one in three visitors and generating more than 5.3 billion euros in tourist

spending, compared to 4.036 billion euros linked to holiday homes and apartment blocks.

The study also notes that while the supply of short-stay accommodation fell by 9.7% between 2024 and 2025, demand remained strong, underlining the complexity of the current debate.

All of this sits against a backdrop of strong tourism momentum. Record visitor numbers in 2025 in both Alicante and Benidorm have reinforced the Costa Blanca's position as a key Mediterranean destination, while towns such as Torrevieja and Orihuela have used fairs like FITUR to sharpen their profile.

Looking ahead, the focus is increasingly global. Provincial and local authorities are now actively targeting long-haul markets, including China, as part of plans to diversify and sustain tourism growth into 2026, even as the conversation around where visitors stay, and how that affects local communities, continues to evolve.

Image: Martijn Vonk/Unsplash

Train drivers strike following train accidents

The Union of Railway Drivers has warned of declining safety standards and announced legal action against those responsible for infrastructure and operations problems.

Train drivers across Spain have called a three-day general strike from February 9 to 11 in response to the recent rail accidents in Adamuz (Córdoba) and Gelida (Barcelona). The strike action has been announced by the Spanish Union of Railway Drivers (Semaf), which says the walkout will affect all companies operating within the Spanish railway sector.

In a strongly worded statement, Semaf said its members are "devastated" by the two incidents and accused the authorities of allowing a "constant deterioration of the railway". The union is demanding urgent measures to guarantee the safety and reliability of both the network and the trains that operate on it, warning that current conditions put both professionals and passengers at risk.

Semaf has also revised the number of train drivers who lost their lives in the two accidents, stating that three drivers were killed. Until now, official sources had confirmed two deaths, one of them a trainee involved in the second accident.

According to the union, a third driver died after travelling as a passenger on one of the trains. Semaf has announced that it will seek criminal accountability from those responsible for ensuring the safety of railway infrastructure and rolling stock.

Legal action

The union describes the accidents as a "turning point" and says they have prompted the launch of all necessary legal procedures to organise strike action across the sector.

"All necessary actions must be taken to guarantee the safety of railway operations," the statement said.

Semaf has also condemned the release of recorded conversations between the train driver involved in the Adamuz crash and the control centre. It said it will examine legal options to demand a judicial investigation into how those recordings were leaked.

As for the accident in Gelida, the union stressed the need to establish specific prevention protocols for weather-related emergencies, particularly in areas with a history of similar incidents, arguing that lessons must be learned to prevent further accidents linked to adverse weather condi-

tions.

Among its demands, Semaf insists that rail services in Catalonia should not resume until sufficient safety guarantees are in place. It also wants the same precautionary approach to be applied across the entire network in situations caused by severe weather or other exceptional risks.

"We are going to call a general strike across the entire sector to give legal standing and support to the mobilisations of workers and users, in order to demand that the safety and reliability of the network be guaranteed," the union said.

The statement adds that, before starting any service, train drivers from all companies will require assurances from the traffic manager that conditions along the route are safe. Where such guarantees cannot be provided, services will be adapted to the actual state of the infrastructure.

Finally, Semaf advised railway workers who feel unable to work due to the emotional impact of recent accidents to inform their supervisors, acknowledging the psychological toll the tragedies have taken on staff across the network.

Image: jose1997422



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Government announces aid for the Adamuz and Gelida accidents

Óscar Puente announced that the Council of Ministers approved a series of urgent measures in support of the victims of the railway accidents in Adamuz and Gelida. The National Court has opened preliminary proceedings against him. The unions call for three days of strike.

The Minister of Transport, Óscar Puente, announced on Tuesday that the Council of Ministers of the Spanish Government has approved a package of urgent measures in support of the victims of the railway accidents in Adamuz and Gelida, in which a total of 147 people lost their lives.

"We are not going to allow there to be victims who are waiting 10 years to receive compensation," said Puente during an appearance before the media, while detailing that the aid must be paid within a period of no more than three months.

The funds will come from a compensation mechanism, endowed with 20 million euros, for the victims of the accidents in Adamuz, in Andalusia, in which 146 people lost their lives; and Gelida, in Catalonia, where the driver of the Rodalies train died when the convoy collided with the remains of a wall that had fallen off the track. Of these 20 million euros, half will

be allocated to direct aid, while the other half will be used to meet insurance advances. Specifically, Puente explained, the amount per fatality will amount to 72,000 euros in direct aid and another 72,000 in advances – all tax free. In the case of the injured, the aid will be determined according to the severity of each case and based on an already established scale and will range from 2,400 euros to 84,000 euros.

The National Court has opened preliminary proceedings against Puente for the Adamuz accident, despite his condition of immunity, following a complaint filed by the Liberty and Justice Association, according to 'The Objective'. The magistrate Antonio Piña, who has agreed to the opening of the proceedings, has contacted the Prosecutor's Office of the National Court to determine the jurisdiction of this court. The ministers, in their capacity as immunity holders, can only be tried before the Supreme Court, so the complaint could finally not be admitted for processing.

Puente's appearance comes a day after the recent railway chaos, especially in Catalonia, claimed its first position, following the dismissal of Josep Enric García Alemany as operational

director of Rodalies.

"I have a very clear conscience that I do my job to the best of my ability, I am in my command post, not in the reserved one, and showing my face," said the minister, acknowledging that he had not been surprised that the Popular Party had demanded his dismissal. "I act according to my conscience, my sense of duty and I will make the decisions I have to make."

Puente, finally, promised to demonstrate, not "with words", but "with deeds", the government's commitment to the victims of the accidents. "Nothing to hide, nothing to fear, the whole truth ahead," he said.

The Government and the Generalitat have agreed to double the investment in the maintenance of the Rodalies infrastructure over the next five years, with around 1,340 million euros, within the Rodalies 2026-2030 plan. In total, between 2020 and 2030, 8,000 million euros will be invested in the service. After the revision of the plan for the period 2026-2030, the Government will increase investment by 1,691 million euros, which represents an increase of 21%.



Maintenance investment

As part of the Rodalies 2020-2030 plan, 2,243 million euros will be allocated to the asset replacement programme, focused on the maintenance and safety of the railway network. This figure practically doubles the investment planned for this item in the last five years, which was 1,018 million euros. In the last five years, the budget executed in Rodalies has been 2,666 million euros, 77% of the initial forecast.

The revision of the 2026-2030 plan includes the incorporation

of 53 new trains and 287 actions for the improvement of railway infrastructure. Among the investments are 444 million euros for safety in tunnels, 284 million for infrastructure actions and 215 million for the renewal of cabling. The plan also includes new actions in parking lanes and workshops, improvements in real-time information and accessibility, and an investment of 25 million euros for customer service over the next four years.

Image: DW.com

Benidorm to exceed three million tourists thanks to international markets

The city of Benidorm has surpassed the three million tourist mark and 16 million overnight stays, "thanks in large part to the boost from international markets."



This is according to the annual report of Visit Benidorm, which the city's Mayor, Toni Pérez, and the foundation's manager, Leire Bilbao, presented during the opening day of the International Tourism Fair of Madrid (Fitur)

2026.

According to the figures contained in the report, pending final information for December, Benidorm received a total of 3,058,623 visitors in 2025, 7.7 percent more than the previous year, as stated by the City Council in a press release.

However, according to the Mayor, "these are provisional figures, as the number of tourists will be even higher and will be updated once the National Institute of Statistics (INE) publishes the missing data for the final closing of the year."

In the absence of these latest figures, the city recorded 16,211,131 overnight stays, 3.4% more than in 2024. Of these, 11.6 million took place in hotel establishments, which ended the year with 4.3% more customers than the previous year, reaching 2.45 million, and with an average occupancy increase of 1.1%, reaching 82.2%.

During 2025, the average hotel stay was nearly five days, maintaining the figures from the pre-

vious year. Of the total overnight stays, 10.9 million were by international tourists, representing 67.7% of the total, an increase of 6.1% compared to the previous year.

Meanwhile, the domestic market recorded 5.2 million overnight stays, a slight decrease of 1.7%, representing 32.2% of the total. Regarding the distribution of travellers, 1.8 million were foreign tourists (59.7%), while Spanish tourists accounted for 40.3%, with 1.2 million.

Regarding tourist apartments, the number of overnight stays in this type of accommodation reached 2.56 million, a 20.3% increase compared to 2024, with a total of 483,516 travellers, 36.9% more than the previous year. The occupancy rate was 75.7%, while the average stay was 5.5 days.

The number of tourists staying in the city's campsites reached 124,443, totalling 2,018,422 overnight stays. The occupancy rate was 93.9%, while the average stay in this case reached 20.1 days.

Pérez highlighted that "the growth in activity has been global across all accommodation options in Benidorm, especially in tourist apartments, which have reached 77.7%, 4.3 points higher than the previous year."

Benidorm ended 2025 with an unemployment rate of 9.41%, 1.34 percentage points lower than the previous year, and "ranked as the municipality with the lowest unemployment rate in the entire Valencian Community."

All of this occurred "despite population growth during the same period, with 2,558 more people registered in one year, bringing the total number of officially registered residents to 77,221." At the same time, the number of people affiliated with Social Security increased by 787, reaching a total of 32,885.

Happy Holidaymakers

The mayor also referred to the overall satisfaction level of tourists regarding the destination, which stands at 78.8%, 2.1 points higher than in 2024. The Mayor

pointed out that "the very high rating that year after year presents such an important parameter for any tourist destination is safety, which is rated at 95 points out of 100" and surpasses the climate (93.4%), hotel satisfaction (61.7%) or the tourism product (74.9%).

The data on bookings for 2026 already points to an increase in bookings throughout the year: "If the forecasts we were able to develop and outline at the World Travel Market are confirmed, and which we will be confirming in these days with the main tour operators and with agencies and professionals who come to Fitur, we are going to have a very good year," the Mayor reported.

"Benidorm is a robust destination and also has a strength in the international market like few others. Everything points to 2026 being a good year, and we will continue to consolidate our role as a happiness industry and as a cutting-edge smart and the tourism product," he concluded.

Report estimates up to 840,000 undocumented immigrants in Spain

A report by Funcas estimates that up to 840,000 foreigners live without papers in Spain and points to a sharp increase in recent years. The Executive proposes a royal decree to grant permits to those who prove their stay and have no criminal record.

Hundreds of thousands of foreigners live in Spain in an irregular situation who sustain a large part of the informal economy, from domestic work and the countryside to construction. The Government is now preparing an extraordinary regularisation through a royal decree that must be approved by the Council of Ministers.

The measure will be aimed at those who can prove more than five months of stay in the country at the time of application, have not arrived after 31st December, 2025 and have no criminal record. The Executive estimates that the process could reach some 500,000 people, although other estimates raise the number to about 840,000, mostly from Latin America, especially Colombia, Peru and Honduras.

The sharp increase in irregular immigration in recent years is reflected in a Funcas report prepared with data from 2025. The analysis centre argues that the non-EU population without administrative authorisation has multiplied by eight since 2017, from about 107,000 people to about 840,000. The estimate is obtained by cross-referencing official population figures, such as the census, with data on valid residence permits.

Extraordinary regularisations are usually aimed at people who already live in Spain without access to basic rights. These are hundreds of thousands of people trapped in a situation of structural precariousness: without the possibility of working legally, with enormous difficulties in renting a home, registering or proving their continuous residence, essential requirements to aspire to ordinary regularisation. The consequence is a population that remains off the administrative radar.

Funcas stresses that the current legal framework pushes many

immigrants to remain for years in irregularity before obtaining a permit. This "long period of irregularity", the report points out, is accentuated when arrivals increase sharply, which causes rapid growth in the number of people without papers.



Spain has already resorted to this type of measure on other occasions. Between 1986 and 2005, nine extraordinary regularization processes were approved, which allowed more than one million people to be granted residence and work permits. The first was promoted in 1986 by the Government of Felipe González and only required proof of a stay prior to 24th July, 1985.

In the following years, new regularisations were approved that incorporated additional requirements, such as a stable job offer or family ties with people already regularized, and benefited more than 150,000 immigrants.

During the governments of José María Aznar, three more extraordinary processes were carried out, in 1996, 2000 and 2001. Together, these measures made it possible to regularize 524,621 non-EU immigrants, the highest figure recorded until then.

The last major regularisation took place in 2005, with José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero in the Government. The procedure, open for four months, required proof of stay in Spain before 8 August 2004 and the presentation of an employment contract of at least six months and full time. More than 576,000 people took advantage of this process.

Since then, the system has relied mainly on the different figures of roots, social, labour, family and training, as a way to access regularisation. According to Funcas, this model has prevented figures

as high as those prior to 2005 from being reached, but it has not slowed down significant increases in periods of greater migratory pressure.

Annual Increase

Before the announcement of the new extraordinary process, the centre's projections pointed to an annual increase of about 90,000 people in an irregular situation. If this trend continues between 2025 and 2027, the increase would have reached 270,000. Discounting the permits for rooting planned by the Government for that period, the result would be a stabilisation of the total number of people without papers, rather than an effective reduction.

As for the origin, Funcas data indicate that most of the migrants in an irregular situation in Spain come from the American continent, some 760,000. People of Colombian nationality stand out in particular, with nearly 290,000, followed by Peruvians, with almost 110,000, and Hondurans, with around 90,000. Far behind are African, Asian and European origins.

Spanish Prosecutor drops sexual assault complaint against Julio Iglesias

The Public Prosecutor's Office of the Spanish National Court has dismissed the complaint filed against Julio Iglesias by an NGO on behalf of two former employees of the singer, who accused him of alleged sexual assault and human trafficking, among other crimes. The Public Prosecutor's Office, which had opened pre-trial proceedings has cited the "lack of jurisdiction of the Spanish courts" to pursue the case, according to the recent ruling. According to the account of the complainants, the artist's alleged illegal actions took place in 2021 in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas.

"The National Court, following the criteria set by our Highest Court, has repeatedly interpreted that Spain does not have jurisdiction to investigate crimes committed abroad when there are no relevant links to our country," explains the ruling, which adds: "Especially when the victims are foreign nationals and are not residents of Spain; when the alleged perpetrators are also foreign nationals or are not in Spain (or, if they are Spanish citizens, are not in our country); and when the facts are being investigated or can be investigated in the State where they occurred."

In a seven-page document, the Public Prosecutor's Office emphasised that "there is no evidence" that the authorities of the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas "have waived their jurisdiction or are unable to exercise it."

The organisation Women's Link World-wide filed the complaint in early January on behalf of the two former employees (one Brazilian and one Colombian). The NGO stressed that it refused to go to court in the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas. It indicated that it had chosen Spain because

"it has laws protecting against trafficking and gender-based violence, through the international treaties to which it is a party and its legislative development, which can give these women access to justice." In an attempt to get the National Court to take on the case, the association pointed to Iglesias' Spanish nationality.

A former domestic worker reported that she was pressured to have sex with the singer. A physical therapist said she was touched inappropriately. Both said they were assaulted during their workday.

Alleged Crimes

According to the NGO, the reported incidents could constitute crimes of human trafficking for the purposes of forced labour and servitude, and crimes against sexual freedom and indemnity such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and injury. In its ruling, the prosecutor's office noted that it granted the two former employees protected witness status and questioned them remotely. However, after hearing their testimony and their first-hand account, the office concluded that it lacked jurisdiction to pursue the case.

Iglesias has denied the accusations. The singer hired one of Spain's most influential criminal lawyers, José Antonio Choclán, to counter the legal offensive against him. The lawyer, who unsuccessfully attempted to attend the pre-trial proceedings opened by the Public Prosecutor's Office, argued that the National Court lacked jurisdiction to take on the investigation.

This decision by the Public Prosecutor's Office does not prevent the NGO from now attempting to open criminal proceedings by filing a complaint directly with the investigating courts of the National Court.




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King of Spain defends ties with US



The Spanish monarch Felipe VI has emphasised to representatives of the diplomatic corps in Madrid that "Spain remains firmly committed to its strategic alliance" with the United States, and that the transatlantic link between Europe and North America "continues to be essential for global security and stability. Its weakening would have direct consequences for everyone's security. Ours and that of all our partners and allies."

However, the King also recalled that the relationship with Washington "has historically been built on the basis of trust and dialogue" and added that preserving this link "requires, more than ever before, greater adaptability and responsible pursuit of shared goals."

The 250th anniversary of U.S. independence, which is being commemorated this year, is, in his opinion, a good opportunity to highlight Spain's contribution to the birth of the most powerful country in the world and also to "reaffirm the desire to maintain, based on mutual respect, a constructive and forward-looking relationship."

Without mentioning U.S. President Don-

ald Trump, Felipe VI stressed that the world stage is undergoing "not just a transformation, but a real mutation," in which "the reference frameworks of the international community are continually being questioned."

He warned of the "disturbing spread of confrontation," not only due to the prolongation of conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East and the Sahel, but also due to the emergence of tensions "in Greenland and the Arctic region, which affects us all so much," he added.

He also referred to Iran and Venezuela and to "all political prisoners who have yet to be released," whom he referred to with this description for the first time.

Against this backdrop, he stressed that defending international law and the United Nations Charter, which was adopted 80 years ago, "is a moral and political imperative." It is not, he said, "one option among many, but rather the best collective response to global challenges," aware that its effectiveness requires not only defending it but also "making it evolve."

Police arrested phone theft gang

Four young men belonging to the same criminal gang have been arrested by the National Police in Alicante, after stealing mobile phones as people left bars. The alleged thieves then accessed their victims' bank accounts and made fraudulent money transfers and emptied their accounts. They defrauded more than €12,500 using this method.

The detainees took advantage of closing time at upscale establishments across Alicante Province to approach their victims. They did so without arousing suspicion, using a well-rehearsed modus operandi to defraud them all. They claimed to be disoriented and looking for directions to a hotel.

The victims all shared the same profile: people with high purchasing power. They were all asked for a hotel address, and the victims generously agreed to unlock their mobile phones to make the inquiry. Meanwhile, the would-be thieves carefully observed the unlock patterns on the devices.

They would then snatch the phones and quickly flee the scene. A getaway car was waiting for them just a few meters away, its engine running. This was how the gang operated, a gang that the National Police have dismantled after an investigation that culminated in the arrest of four men

between the ages of 20 and 34.

For the victims, the theft of their cell phones seemed like a simple robbery. Because of the time of day, most decided to report the crime the next day, unaware that the damage extended far beyond the loss of their phones. Meanwhile, the thieves were already at work.



Using the memorised code to unlock the phone, they manipulated the stolen phones and accessed online banking applications. From there, they made transfers, card payments, and transactions via Bizum. The time frame worked in their favour, since without their phones, the victims didn't receive bank notifica-

tions or alerts.

In many cases, the fraud was discovered hours later, when the victims alerted authorities to the fraudulent banking activity or when accessing accounts from other devices via the internet they saw the monetary theft. By then, the suspected thieves had already made numerous transactions.

The analysis of the operations allowed National Police officers to determine that the defrauded money exceeded 12,500 euros, through bank transfers, card payments and shipments through the Bizum platform.

Furthermore, the gang attempted additional transfers totalling €12,300, which were thwarted by the banks' anti-fraud systems. When the victims alerted their banks and the accounts were blocked, the alleged thieves were stopped in their tracks.

The investigations carried out by the National Police have made it possible to identify the alleged perpetrators and confirm that they acted in an organised manner, with a division of roles and logistical support to facilitate their escape.

The police operation has culminated in the arrest of four men as alleged perpetrators of the crimes of theft, fraud and belonging to a criminal organisation.

National Police dismantle narco-boat gang

Operation Black Shadow, carried out in two phases, has ended with the arrest of 105 people who made up a criminal organisation, operating from South America to Europe, allegedly responsible for introducing some 57,000 kilos of cocaine into Europe in the last year.

In Spain, the National Police has dismantled the largest network of cocaine trafficking organisations that dominated the Atlantic and the Spanish rivers with the use of narco-boats.

According to a statement from the National Police, the operation has carried 49 searches and 105 people who formed a criminal network have been arrested in an operation that had the collaboration of Europol and the authorities of countries such as France, Portugal, Colombia and Cape Verde.

The police have seized 10,400 kilos of cocaine, 70 vehicles, 30 boats, six buildings, three firearms, more than 800,000 euros, two hexacopters (drones with six arms), multiple bank accounts,

more than 150 mobile phones, various nautical equipment and numerous state-of-the-art electronic devices for maritime traffic valued at 2,500,000 euros.

After more than a year of investigation, last November the operational exploitation was carried out, managing to dismantle a criminal network specialised, allegedly, in the introduction of large quantities of cocaine into Spanish territory through high-speed boats known as narco-boats.

The boats departed from the Guadalquivir River and other rivers belonging to the provinces of Cádiz, Huelva, Almería, the Canary Islands, the Moroccan coasts and Portugal until they entered the Atlantic Ocean. There they met with mother ships in order to transfer the drugs for their subsequent return to the Canary Islands and the south of the peninsula.

The high speeds of the boats, sometimes exceeding 40 knots of speed and the use of encrypted communications, satellite ter-

minals, mobile phones that are difficult to trace or a coded language to avoid detection by the security forces, allowed them to operate during the night hours, making police work difficult.

In the operation, numerous state-of-the-art technological material has been seized, such as high-frequency jammers, WIFI amplifiers that were used to expand the signal on the high seas, satellite connections, more than 150 mobile phones, many of them of an encrypted nature, and nautical material.

Among all the searches, the largest distribution and money laundering centre in the Campo de Gibraltar has been attacked, in charge of supplying secure communication terminals to most of the drug traffickers in Andalusia and various navigation material for the crossings in the narco-boats.

The drug traffickers came to create real aquatic platforms where the pilots remained more than a month on board on the high seas carrying out several successive

operations. They arranged the exact moment for crew changes while they were in the water, they supplied these platforms with the goods and services they required.

They had their own fuel storage centres, and the use of more than 100,000 litres was estimated. Smaller vessels were in charge of supplying both gasoline and food, communication equipment or clothing for the notaries who accompanied the drugs from the mother ship to our country.

Other people from the organisation located at control points carried out surveillance work to determine the position of the maritime and air resources of the State Security Forces and Corps, covering a wide network of security points along the coast.

The agents learned that the organization paid 12 million euros to the family of one of the crew members who died in the delivery of a cache to guarantee their silence and thus avoid any link with criminal activities.

Collaboration

Thanks to the collaboration of agencies such as the National Crime Agency (NCA), the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Morocco's Directorate General for National Security (DGSN), Europol, the Centre for Maritime Analysis and Operations on Drug Trafficking (MAOC-N) and authorities from France, Portugal, Colombia and Cape Verde. In addition, it had the direct support of the National Intelligence Centre (CNI).

This operation has been carried out in two phases, culminating in the first of them in June last year and the second in November of last year, managing to dismantle this criminal network that operated in the Campo de Gibraltar. Investigations have made it possible to detect that this criminal organisation was responsible for the introduction into Europe of 57,000 kilos of cocaine in the last year.

Mushroom Street redevelopment

The redevelopment works of San Francisco street, known as Calle de las Setas (Mushroom Street) and much loved by visitors to Alicante, will start at the beginning of February so that they will be completed at Easter. The Councillors for Infrastructure, Cristina García, Commerce, Lidia López, the technician responsible for the work and members of Vox, with whom it was agreed to carry out this action, have held a meeting with neighbours and business owners to explain the planning of the work of the emblematic road.

The improvement works on San Francisco Street will be carried out in sections and will begin in the part closest to Calvo Sotelo. The first will go from there to the intersection with Jerusalem Street; the second from Jerusalem to Navas Street; and the third from Navas to Pascual Blasco/Castaños. During the meeting it was explained that at no time will the street be closed to passage since in each section work will first be done in the road area leaving the sidewalks free and then action will be taken on one of the sidewalks by putting walkways to enter the premises and portals of homes and then on the other sidewalk.



Nerco Infraestructuras is in charge of carrying out the redevelopment works that will consist of cleaning and repairing the pavement, painting the sidewalks and centre, as well as the dismantling, restoration and repair of the elements of the street (ten mushrooms and two houses) and replacement of the children's games (two slides), as well as hopscotch. The mushrooms will be dismantled and transported to the workshops for fine-tuning, while the houses will be repaired on site.

The councillors have agreed to point out that "the works are planned to affect neighbours and merchants as little as possible because we are aware that it is a very busy street, but we are convinced that despite the occasional inconvenience that may be caused, the work is worth it because it will improve the image of this obligatory passage for Alicante residents and visitors."

In this sense, they have added that "the action was a demand of neighbours and merchants with whom we have held meetings to provide their suggestions and needs and who will be kept informed throughout the weeks that the work lasts".

Opposition overturns Government's pension re-valuation

Congress has repealed the royal decree that contemplated the revaluation of pensions, an extension of the suspension of evictions and other measures. What was approved, despite the rejection of the PP, are the aid for public transport, as well as the creation of the single season ticket at the national level.

Congress has dealt a hard blow to Pedro Sánchez's government by overturning the so-called 'omnibus decree' that included the revaluation of pensions and the extension of social shield measures, such as the suspension of evictions for vulnerable groups. The law has fallen with the votes of PP, Vox, Junts and UPN, in a session that has been marked by the exchange of accusations.

The opposition has justified its rejection in the Executive's decision to include the increase in pensions in a package with other measures that they consider to be on the margins. PP and Junts have coincided in defending the revaluation of pensions in accordance with the CPI, but have demanded a "clean decree" that excludes issues such as the paralysis of evictions.

"There is a majority to re-

value pensions, but there is no majority to continue validating illegal occupation," said PP spokeswoman Ester Muñoz. In the same vein, the spokesperson for Junts, Miriam Noguera, summarised her group's position with the phrase that marked the day: "Pensions yes, squats no".

The Executive has denounced that the vote "harms millions of citizens". The Minister of the Presidency, Félix Bolaños, has accused the opposition of blocking a rule that would have protected the most vulnerable and recalled that a 2.7% increase in pensions has already been applied in January, so it will now be necessary to approve a new rule to maintain it.

After the vote, the exchange of accusations continued. Sánchez has pointed to the PP for taking pensioners as "hostages", while Alberto Núñez Feijóo has replied that it is the Government that uses them by mixing the revaluation of their pensions with other controversial measures.

The royal decree included, in addition to the revaluation of pensions, the extension of the suspension of evictions for vulnerable groups and other meas-

ures, such as the freezing of the contributions of the self-employed. After the rejection of Congress, these measures, which were in force since last December, will lapse once the result of this Tuesday's vote is published in the BOE.

Despite the rejection of the government's proposal, Congress did give the green light to the extension of public transport bonuses for 2026 and the creation of the single state pass. The measure went ahead with the support of the majority of the House, the abstention of the PP and the vote against Vox, and maintains discounts on state, regional and local tickets, with a special impact on young people and frequent users.

The Government defends that these aids have promoted a record use of public transport and stresses that, unlike previous years, the Ministry of Transport will assume the financing directly without requiring co-financing from autonomous communities or municipalities. The new single season ticket is proposed as an additional option and voluntary adhesion, respecting territorial competences.

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Spain considers a ban on children at bullfights as debate over tradition heats up



Spain's long-running conversation about bullfighting has flared up again, this time over whether children should be allowed through the gates at all. The government is considering a new law that would ban under-18s from both attending and taking part in bullfights and any other events where animals are harmed.

The proposal comes from the Ministry of Youth and Children, led by Sira Rego, and would form part of the reform of Spain's child protection law, known as LOPIVI. It's a move backed by the United Nations, which has repeatedly urged Spain to protect minors from exposure to animal violence. Back in 2018, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

advised Spain to keep children away from bullfights, warning of the potential "harmful effects" these displays could have on young minds.

Minister Rego confirmed last week that the government aims to act on that advice. "The law will prohibit both participation and attendance of anyone under 18 in activities or shows where violence is used against animals," she said, arguing that it's part of a wider effort to "strengthen protections for children and align with international standards."

Government sources say the proposal is based on research showing that early exposure to violence can affect how children

develop empathy and understand conflict. The explanatory text behind the reform states that such experiences "can desensitise minors to the suffering of others, normalise violence as entertainment, and have a lasting impact on emotional wellbeing."

While bullfighting is the main focus, the wording of the proposed law is broader and could extend to other events where animals are harmed. Officials have yet to clarify whether that might include traditional festivities such as bull runs, leaving questions still open about how far the rule would reach.

The debate has quickly grown beyond politics. Supporters of the

measure believe it's an overdue step to modernise Spain's laws and place child welfare first. Opponents, however, view bullfighting as an essential part of Spanish culture and family tradition, arguing that excluding children could sever a link between generations. Many local communities see bullfighting as part of their way of life, passed down through families over centuries.

The proposed reform doesn't stop at bullfighting. Other changes within LOPIVI would extend the statute of limitations for sexual offences against minors until the victim turns 45, legally recognise "institutional violence" against children, and ensure that every child has their own inde-

pendent legal representation.

The Ministry of Youth and Children is now waiting for feedback from other departments, including Justice, before the bill goes to the Council of Ministers and begins its parliamentary journey. If approved, Spain would become one of the first European countries to introduce a nationwide ban on minors attending bullfights.

For now, it stirs an age-old debate that continues to divide opinion: preserve tradition, protect children from harm, or is it time to rethink these events entirely?

Image: patrick gantz/Pixabay

Pace set for another busy summer at Alicante-Elche airport

Plans for summer 2026 are already pointing towards another very strong season at Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernández Airport, with airlines steadily rolling out bigger schedules and new connections as demand continues to grow.

British airline Jet2.com is the latest to confirm an expansion, announcing a 10% increase in seat capacity compared to last summer. In practical terms, that means around 560,000 seats on its routes between Alicante and the UK, some 53,000 more than in 2025. The growth is largely driven by a new connection to London Gatwick, where Jet2 has opened a base and will operate five weekly flights to Alicante.

With this addition, Jet2 will fly directly from Alicante to all 14 of its UK bases, including airports such as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds-Bradford, Liverpool, Bristol and, of course, London Gatwick, reaching a peak of 99 weekly flights during the summer season, up from 93 last year. According to company figures, the airline carried more than 655,000 British passengers to the province in 2025, and Alicante-Elche will now rank as its third busiest airport in Spain, behind only

Palma and Tenerife. That continued rise in British traffic builds on the airport's recent surge in passenger numbers.

Jet2 is not alone. Vueling, currently the second-largest airline at the airport by passenger numbers, has



also outlined ambitious plans. The airline, part of the IAG group, expects to offer more than 1.6 million seats this summer, an increase of 18% on the same period last year, across 16 routes, nine of them international.

The expansion includes a stronger base at Alicante, supported by an additional aircraft, and significant growth on several key routes. Connections to Amsterdam will see capacity rise by around 28%, reaching 212,000 seats, with up to three daily flights. London Gatwick will also see a boost of about 24%, taking

the route to 131,000 seats and 13 weekly frequencies, while Brussels, Paris-Orly and several domestic routes will also grow.

North Africa features prominently too, with increased services to Oran and Algiers, plus new routes to Tangier and Constantine. Within Spain, links to Santander, Bilbao, Tenerife North, Ibiza and Gran Canaria are all being strengthened, while routes to Barcelona and Mallorca will continue.

All of this follows a year in which Alicante and Benidorm celebrated record tourism figures and international promotion efforts intensified, including a clear push towards long-haul markets such as China.

More announcements are still expected. Ryanair and easyJet, the airport's first and third largest airlines respectively, have yet to publish their full summer plans. With slot requests still open, there is every chance the final picture will be even bigger, underlining Alicante-Elche's growing role as one of Spain's most important gateways.

Image: wikicommons

Zara closes the first store it ever opened

Zara, the flagship chain of the Inditex group, on January 30th, closes the first store once it opened, half a century ago by the founder of the multinational, Amancio Ortega, in La Coruña. The next day, he will open a Zaccaffé cafeteria in his establishment on Compostela Street in the same city.

Zara, the flagship chain of the Inditex group, closes on Friday, January 30, the first store opened half a century ago by the founder of the multinational, Amancio Ortega, located on Juan Flórez Street in La Coruña.

The closure of the store has been communicated both to the owner of the property where it is located and to the 11 employees of the store, which Inditex plans to relocate to other establishments of the firm in the city.

Zara opened that first store at numbers 64 and 66 of Juan Flórez Street on May 9, 1975, an establishment with more than five decades of sales. The store was refurbished last year to celebrate the company's 50th anniversary with a renovation in tribute to the Marina de La Coruña and which offered an exclusive collection.

However, it is a small space that does not fit with the model of large stores with technological innovations established by Zara, a firm established in some two hundred countries and territories.

The day after the closure of the

veteran store, on Saturday, January 31, Zara will open a Zaccaffé cafeteria in its establishment on Compostela Street, in the lower part of the commercial premises, with an entrance on Plaza de Mina.

This initiative already works in other establishments of the Zara chain, such as the one on Calle Hermosilla in Madrid or in large cities in China and Japan. Inditex maintains, however, La Coruña – the group's city of origin – is one of its main test centres for new projects.

Zara, founded in 1975, sells women's, men's and children's clothing and bases its model on rapid response to market trends. Currently, it is present in 98 markets with a physical store and 214 with online sales.

The company uses sales and trend data to adapt its collections, with the participation of its design and sales teams, and maintains occasional collaborations with designers. The Spanish company occasionally collaborates with external designers and creators.

In recent years, Inditex has carried out a reorganisation of its network of stores to integrate physical and online sales, with specific spaces and automated order picking systems. This process has led to larger premises, whose average surface area increased by 23% between 2019 and 2024.

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Orihuela Health makes changes and eliminates paper complaint forms

The General Union of Workers (UGT) has denounced that the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Management of the Department of Health of Orihuela, has introduced a change in the system of medical agendas, in such a way that with the excuse of the reduction of waiting lists, there are hardly any gaps to attend to emergencies. This change has left the monitoring of chronic and programmed pathologies, as well as community care and health promotion, to a minimum. As most of the slots are for appointments on demand – as if it were an emergency service – the time needed for the care of chronic patients and the development of other Primary Care programs is inevitably reduced. Added to this, as recently denounced by UGT, is the elimination of the prior telephone appointment.

The UGT insists that with the new system of medical agendas, the Ministry chaired by Marciano Gómez, prevents people's access to quality health care, since the time that each professional could dedicate to the care of users has decreased. According to the union, the objective of the Ministry with the new agenda is "to get rid of the waiting lists by any means

necessary, even if the attention is not the most suitable".

In addition, the union fears that the Ministry is facing a pilot project and that the changes in the Department of Orihuela will be extended to other departments. According to UGT, the changes have generated deep discomfort among professionals and the citizens themselves, who have also seen their right to complain limited.

The Ministry of Health has decided to eliminate complaint forms in health centres in this department and does not accept, as it has done until now, to register them. Likewise, UGT considers that this system forces people to travel to the hospital if they want to make a written complaint on the complaint form. The union also says that this means "hiding, silencing and obstructing the complaints of citizens and health personnel themselves.

The only option for users is to make the complaint through the website, but this system is only accessible to people with certain technological capabilities and leaves out older people or, in general, without internet access.



In addition, UGT adds that, in any of the cases, the rights of citizens set out in the General Health Law 14/1986, in the Basic Regulatory Law of the Patient Autonomy, in the Law 39/2015 on the Com-

mon Administrative Procedure, in the Law 40/2015, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector, in the Regulation (EU) 2016/679, are being violated. In Organic Law 3/2018 and in the regional

decrees on the rights and duties of the patient in the Valencian Community established by Law 1/2003 and Law 10/2014.

PSOE spokesperson under investigation in Orihuela

An Orihuela court is investigating whether the councilor and socialist spokesperson for Orihuela, Carolina Gracia, committed

a crime of disclosure of secrets by disseminating personal information obtained from access to a file of an official general coor-

dinator of the area of the City of Orihuela, which was then sent to the media with a press release.

The Court of Instruction Number 3 has decided to open proceedings after the presentation by the Prosecutor's Office of a complaint made at the request of an official, a freely appointed senior management position of the Orihuela municipality. The official's complaint letter motivated initial investigation proceedings by the Prosecutor's Office that have led to the filing of the complaint in court.

The technician, a career civil servant, had requested before the City Council, as is mandatory in such cases, compatibility for the performance of a second activity in the university field as an associate professor at a public university in the province.

According to the account of events that is now being investigated, on 8th October 2025, Carolina Gracia, spokesperson for the majority opposition of the PSOE to the PP-Vox government, accessed after a request made and

authorised by the mayor Pepe Vegara, to the complainant's employment compatibility file, obtaining data from it, with identifying information and personal data. Shortly after, on 16th October, Carolina Gracia, who was a provincial deputy and mayor of Orihuela, disseminated them through a press release to the media with express reference to the content and purpose of the request for compatibility data that, according to the complaint, are reserved information. The complaint highlights that it was Carolina Gracia herself who revealed in the press release what her source of information was and that she had obtained it from the file she had accessed after the authorisation of the first mayor.

The complainant's letter, the basis of the investigation that the court is following hand in hand with the Prosecutor's, points out that councilors have the right to access and know the information of the Entry Register of a City Council, as happened in this case, but maintains that its use should be limited to the legiti-

mate exercise of their institutional functions.

It maintains that the disclosure of data to the media constitutes a serious breach of the duty of confidentiality of public officials and a direct violation of the fundamental right to the protection of personal data. And it remarks that the spokeswoman made an access to the registry that was not accidental, nor anonymous, but was a deliberate act.

The same complaint also stresses that there was an alleged manipulation of information and damage to honour when the data was disseminated because the leak was not limited to revealing the existence of the request, "which would already be criminal", but was accompanied, in its opinion, by a narrative built on false or distorted data to generate public ridicule. He also maintains that the dissemination of the press release highlighted erroneous data such as that he was not a career civil servant or that he was paid one hundred thousand euros a year.



Schooner guided tours relive Torrevieja's salt past



The schooner Pascual Flores, “a true jewel of the floating maritime heritage and ambassador of Torrevieja for the seas of the world”, begins a new stage in its home port. Starting this week, the ship launches a calendar of special guided tours designed to bring the culture of the sea closer to citizens and tourists in an immersive and didactic way.

This new programme seeks to highlight the history of schooners, key vessels in

the economic development of eastern Spain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Pascual Flores is not just a boat; it's a floating museum that narrates the golden age of the salt trade and cabotage in the Mediterranean.

Guided tours will take place from Thursday to Sunday. On Thursdays and Fridays there will be a single pass at 5:00 p.m., and on Saturdays and Sundays there will be a double pass at 12:00 p.m. and another at 5:00 p.m. The ticket price is €8 and can be obtained on the boat or through the website: tickets.pascualflores.org

During the tour, visitors will be able to walk along the wooden decks, go down to the interiors to see the cabins and engine room, and understand first-hand how the crew lived on the long voyages. The specialized guides will explain the complex manoeuvres of its sails and the important role that this type of ship played in the export of Torrevieja salt to ports around the world.

The original Pascual Flores was built in 1917 on the beaches of Torrevieja. After a meticulous restoration and reconstruction to restore its splendour, today it sails as a training ship and tourist ambassador, participating in international maritime festivals throughout Europe.

Twenty years of Spain's smoking ban marked as new restrictions loom

Lighting up in restaurants, workplaces or even classrooms was once normal in Spain, but that reality has changed dramatically since the anti-smoking law came into force two decades ago. Introduced in 2006 after years of debate and concern from businesses, the legislation gradually eliminated indoor smoking areas and reshaped everyday life.

In the Comunitat Valenciana, health data show a clear impact. In 2001 around 32% of adults were regular smokers. By 2022 that figure had fallen to 17.6%, with a further 2.6% smoking occasionally. Despite the progress, tobacco use is still blamed for around 6,500 deaths a year in the region.

Medical organisations say the law has been crucial in reducing both active and passive smoking, and public acceptance of the measures has grown over time. However, they warn that many people remain exposed to tobacco smoke and related health risks.

Looking ahead, the Spanish government has approved draft legislation to extend restrictions further. Expected to come into force this year, it would treat electronic cigarettes like conventional tobacco and ban smoking and vaping in places such as terraces, swimming pools and bus shelters, as part of the national Tobacco Prevention Plan for 2024 to 2027.



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Buying a business could be a smart move for expats

A Different Kind of Fresh Start

For many expats, moving to Spain represents a lifestyle reset. Sunshine replaces grey skies, long lunches replace rushed routines, and the promise of balance begins to shape daily life. Yet once the initial romance settles, practical questions quietly emerge. How will income be sustained long term? How does one integrate beyond the surface level of being a visitor? For an increasing number of newcomers, buying a small local business offers an answer that blends financial stability with deeper belonging.

Income Beyond the Pension or Paycheque

Relying solely on savings, pensions or remote income streams can feel fragile in a changing economic climate. Exchange rates fluctuate, taxation evolves, and remote contracts rarely last forever. A modest business whether a café, rental operation, service company or niche retail outlet can provide diversified income anchored in the local economy. It creates a financial rhythm that adapts with inflation and local demand rather than external markets, offering a sense of control that passive income alone rarely delivers.

Faster Integration Into Local Life

Business ownership accelerates cul-

tural integration in ways social circles cannot. Daily interactions with suppliers, neighbours, town halls and customers quickly build language confidence and cultural fluency. Instead of remaining in an expat bubble, owners naturally embed themselves into community life. Trust develops through consistency, visibility and shared responsibility. Over time, relationships form that extend far beyond transactional exchanges, creating a sense of genuine belonging that many expats quietly crave.

A Platform for Residency and Stability

For non-EU citizens, business ownership can also support residency pathways, provided the structure meets legal and financial requirements. While regulations must always be navigated carefully with professional advice, operating a viable enterprise demonstrates economic contribution and local commitment. Even for EU nationals, owning a business anchors long-term stability, reducing reliance on volatile employment markets or remote employers whose priorities may shift without warning.

Lifestyle Design With Purpose

Contrary to outdated assumptions, many Spanish businesses can be structured for lifestyle balance rather than burnout. Seasonal trading, part-

time operations, delegated management and hybrid ownership models allow flexibility when designed intelligently. Rather than endless leisure, many expats discover that purposeful work enhances enjoyment of Spain rather than detracting from it. Structure gives rhythm to days, social engagement keeps the mind active, and contribution fosters pride in place.

Risk With Eyes Open

Of course, buying a business is not without risk. Due diligence is essential, financial records must be transparent, licences verified and local regulations respected. Cultural differences in business practice require patience and adaptability. However, these risks can be managed when approached methodically rather than emotionally. A well-chosen business should solve a genuine local need rather than rely on novelty or seasonal tourism alone.

Building More Than Income

Ultimately, buying a business in Spain is not merely a financial decision. It is an investment in agency, integration and long-term resilience. It transforms relocation from consumption into participation. For expats seeking not just a change of scenery but a meaningful new chapter, entrepreneurship approached thoughtfully can quietly become one of the most rewarding moves they make.



Companies prepare construction of private hospital in Orihuela Costa

Plans to build a new private hospital in Orihuela Costa's sector E3 El Barranco have been put on public display. The initial steps will see the preparing the land and installing the necessary services on a plot of 33,304 square meters on which the hospital and a small shopping centre will be built. A geriatric home was also proposed, but this has finally been discarded.

According to the forecasts from Espiral de Inversiones y Patrimonio and Inmuebles del Sol, the works would begin in April and once the streets are ready, at the end of the year, the construction of a private clinic would begin, including operating theatres. The developer is already in talks with two companies in the health sector to reach an agreement with one of them, which would be in charge of the construction of the centre and its management.

In the commercial area of La Zenia, the plot is located between Pimienta and Clavo streets, along the Villamartín road and the Los Dolses urbanisation. About 500 meters from the AP-7 and about 50 meters from the Cañada de las Estacas ravine. The plan proposes a building of two storeys

high.

Most of the land is intended for green areas, roads and sidewalks, while 16,000 square meters will be for commercial and mostly sanitary use. According to the project of the planning works, the execution period is twelve months for the clearing and cleaning of the land, the demolitions of existing enclosures and structures incompatible with the work, public lighting, paving, signage and the water, telephone, electricity, sanitation and rainwater supply networks.

Given the topography of the land and the environment that surrounds it, the waters will flow naturally through the existing streets. Thus, a vegetated ditch is proposed in the green area, which will act as filtration and accumulation so that the water generated by the development will not be discharged directly into the Villamartín road.

The green area will have a landscaped part for walking and resting, with benches, tables and two playgrounds. The project also analyses the impact it will have on traffic, where the main traffic route is the Villamartín road, concluding that the road infrastruc-



tures are sufficient to meet the forecasts, with a minimal impact. The objective, say the promoters, is to provide private health services to an area in which some 30,000 people live registered all year round with a notable presence of foreign residents among whom it is common to use private insurance. These population figures multiply in high season and holiday periods in an area dedicated to residential tourism that only has one health center with many limitations.

Lack of facilities

In fact, Orihuela Costa has been waiting for several years for the expansion of the Cabo Roig Health Centre, which has been discarded or the construction of a new one. Which is still a possibility given the City Council has assumed the competences to

execute the works with funding from the Generalitat, of about 8 million euros, in the area of Vila Rosa, between Beduinos and J'Alhamed streets.

The hospitals that the coast currently has are the University Hospital of Torrevieja, which is public, and the Quirón, also in Torrevieja and privately run. In addition, the Ribera health group has requested the Orihuela City Council for the concession of 33,400 square meters of municipal public land in Lomas de Cabo Roig, between Cabo de Peñas and Cabo Turiñán streets and next to the motorway toll Alicante-Cartagena in La Zenia, for the construction of a private hospital.

Go Ahead

After more than six years of processing the partial plan of the E-3 El Barranco sector, the project has already reached its final phase with the projection of the planning, after the mayor of the municipality himself, Pepe Vega, signed a favourable decree of the environmental phase.

The strategic environmental and territorial assessment considered that the site does not have significant effects on the envi-

ronment, although it introduced a series of conditions such as the protection of the cat's head jarilla and the Tudorela Mauretana snail, both endangered species. The protection of the sand plane (Riparia Riparia) must also be protected, given its regression situation and the proximity of the sector to be urbanised. In addition, the development plan must contemplate the identification and elimination of invasive plants, as well as selecting native species for the roads and the projected green area.

In line with the Ministry's report, the association Friends of Sierra Escalona already warned in its response that the reclassification of this sector, of almost 3.3 hectares of non-developable land, "could hardly have protection if the sustainability thresholds defined by the Territorial Planning Law and the Territorial Strategy of the Valencian Community were applied to the Oriolan territory, being more than likely that the application of these thresholds entails the obligation to declassify land without having a place, in no case, new reclassifications that increase the developable land".

Farmers protest with tractor drive through Alicante city

In an attempt to make their feelings clear to the Spanish government and Brussels, the main agricultural associations have called for simultaneous tractor drives in different provinces and they are proving to be a success due to the huge amount of support. The one in Alicante has even exceeded the initial forecasts and before leaving for the city many more tractors joined the ranks than expected.

European agricultural policies and the central government's axe blows to the Tajo-Segura transfer have once again put farmers on a war footing, and they have taken to the streets in an unprecedented tractor drive. In the absence of confirmation of official data, it is the largest agrarian protest of this type in the province, with 180 tractors and agricultural vehicles driving in a line in double file through the centre of Alicante.

The first farmers began to gather on Aguilera Avenue around 11am. These were those who had arrived independently, along with a block of beekeepers. Half an hour later, the Castalla detachment arrived with producers from the inland regions and Vinalopó. The contingent from Elche was delayed due to an incident involving the Civil Guard. It was not until 12.30pm that the tractors took position and formed two long rows.

The protest was organised by the Associa-



tion of Young Farmers (Asaja) of Alicante, whose president said he thought the day was a good day to express that we do not agree with these policies. He explained that the agricultural sector of Alicante is more united than ever and with enough strength to defend against these 'unfair decisions that are being taken from Brussels with the support of the Government'.

European agricultural policies and the central government's tough blows to the Tajo-Segura transfer have once again put farmers on the warpath, and they took to the streets in an unprecedented tractor drive to mark their disgust.

Torremendo protests against future waste plant

Those living in the Torremendo area of Orihuela have held a neighbourhood rally in which dozens of attendees unanimously expressed their opposition to the possible location of a new waste plant in La Pistola. The neighbours claim that the land "presents urban and environmental limitations" that make it incompatible. In addition, they pointed out that the population had already staged previous protests to prevent similar facilities in the past.

Víctor Valverde, Councillor for Maintenance and Infrastructure for Orihuela City Council, attended the meeting in support of the people of the town. The Councillor said that as long as the local government disagrees, the project will not be carried out: "If the population opposes the installation, the waste plant on the La Pistola estate will not be carried out, making it clear that the council is against the infrastructure being locat-

ed near Torremendo and supporting neighbourhood protests."

Other nearby municipalities attended the protest meeting such as Beniel, Zeneta and El Mojón, which would also be affected by the location of the waste plant. The neighbours and representatives stress "any solution to the problem must be consensual, transparent and respectful of the environment", demanding that a project is not imposed without the participation of local residents.

This project was proposed by the Vega Baja Sustainable Consortium to determine the most suitable location for the future Mechanical-Biological Treatment Plant (PTMB). The document places the Fuente Amarga site as the best valued option from technical, environmental and socioeconomic criteria, from the ten alternatives.



News in Brief

Used property prices rise sharply

New figures from Idealista show second-hand property prices jumped across both Alicante and Valencia provinces in 2025, with the portal warning that a shortage of homes is continuing to push values higher.

In Alicante province, prices rose by 14.4% over the year. In Alicante city, the average reached 2,508 euros per square metre after a 10.7% annual rise. Across the wider Valencian Community, the average hit a record 2,418 euros per square metre, up 17.3%, with Valencia province leading the gains.

Idealista says Spain is short by around seven hundred thousand homes, and that gap is making buying harder, particularly for younger and middle-income households.

Valencian Community records 65 drowning deaths in 2025

The Valencian Community has registered 65 drowning deaths in 2025, placing it third among Spanish regions for the number of fatalities, behind Andalusia with 81 and the Canary Islands with 75. The National Drowning Report says Spain saw 472 deaths in total last year, making it the second worst year since 2015. The figures represent only one more death than the previous year but continue a concerning long-term trend.

According to the report, more than half of those who died were over the age of 45, with the highest risk seen in people aged 62 to 74. Most incidents happened on beaches, followed by rivers, swimming

pools and other bodies of water such as reservoirs and ports. The report also highlights that 47 children lost their lives, reinforcing the need for constant supervision and better water-safety education.

Torrevieja population rises to 110,500 at the start of 2026

Torrevieja has started 2026 with 110,500 registered inhabitants, an annual increase of 4,150 compared with the beginning of 2025. The latest municipal census confirms the city's steady demographic growth and its position as one of the main population centres in the Valencian Community. The population is almost evenly split by gender, with 54,548 men and 55,952 women.

Both Spanish and international populations have increased, although most of the growth comes from abroad. The number of Spanish residents has risen by 335 to 5,295, while the international population has grown by 3,815 to 59,205. Ukraine remains the largest foreign community, increasing to 10,074 residents. Other sizeable groups include Russians, Colombians, Britons and Moroccans, alongside established communities from northern and central Europe.

Alicante-Elche Airport records nearly 20 million passengers

Alicante Elche Miguel Hernández Airport has closed 2025 with almost twenty million passengers, making it the busiest year in its history. Aena says 19.95 million travellers used the airport, up 8.5% on 2024.

Almoradí installs ten defibrillators through participatory budgeting

The council in Almoradí has installed ten automated external defibrillators across the town, officially making the municipality a cardio-protected city.

Following a preliminary study, the defibrillators have been installed in strategic locations with high footfall, including cultural venues, sports facilities, and educational centres. These include theatres, the municipal auditorium, sports complexes, secondary schools and primary schools across Almoradí.

Correos opens new 24-7 Citypaq locker in Orihuela Costa

Correos has launched a new Citypaq smart locker in Orihuela Costa, located at its Orquídeas Street office in Playa Flamenca. The installation is in a permanently accessible public space, allowing customers to collect, send and return parcels securely at any time of day.

The new Citypaq unit is made up of three modules with a total of eighteen lockers in different sizes, designed to accommodate a wide range of parcel formats. The system meets all security requirements and complements the services offered at traditional Correos counters.

Correos says Citypaq also allows private individuals to send parcels without visiting a counter and helps reduce delivery vehicle journeys by concentrating drop-offs in one location, cutting traffic and emissions. Most users collect their parcels within an average of eighteen hours after notification.

Science says human singularity is near

Humanity's countdown to a technological breaking point now has a startlingly specific number on it: 19 years. One of the world's most prominent AI futurists argues that by the mid-2040s, computers will not just match human intelligence but fuse with it, creating what he calls the singularity. I want to unpack what that claim really means, how it fits into decades of predictions, and why other experts say the future may be either closer, slower, or stranger than that neat timetable suggests.

When people talk about the singularity, they usually mean the moment when artificial intelligence surpasses human cognitive abilities and begins improving itself so quickly that ordinary life becomes unrecognisable. In that vision, human brains and machines do not simply coexist, they integrate, with neural implants, cloud-linked cognition, and AI copilots for almost every task. The American computer scientist Ray Kurzweil has spent years arguing that this transition will be driven by gains in computing power and algorithmic sophistication rather than a single breakthrough.

In his 2024 book he says humans will reach the singularity within 20 years, Kurzweil frames this future as an expansion of consciousness rather than a robot takeover. He outlines how he expects advances in AI to deepen human awareness instead of erasing it, a theme that runs through his broader predictions about 2045. Supporters of this timeline argue that the rapid progress of large language models, robotics, and brain-computer interfaces already hints at a world where the line between human and machine intelligence is starting to blur.



New Spanish chapter for Samantha Womack in Spain after cancer battle

Most of us will remember Samantha Womack as the troubled but much-loved Ronnie Mitchell from EastEnders, a role she played for a decade until 2017. But her career has stretched well beyond Albert Square. Since starting out as a pop singer representing the UK in Eurovision back in 1991, she's gone on to star in TV dramas, films such as Kingsman, and stage productions including The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe and The Girl on the Train.

Now, at 53, Samantha is turning the page on a new chapter: life in sunny Valencia. The move, she says, was inspired by both heartbreak and healing. In September 2022, just a month after being diagnosed with breast cancer, Samantha's rescue dog Lola died.

"She died on the same day as the Queen. I was devastated," she told interviewers. "It was one of the worst days of my life. I'd just been diagnosed with breast cancer and losing Lola was probably worse for me than the diagnosis. It made everything seem real."

Lola's death made Samantha stop and take stock. "That was when I decided to stop working and focus on getting better," she said. "If I hadn't lost Lola, I wouldn't have gone back to Valencia and taken a year off to really try to work on my body and get better. Lola changed the course of my life."

Samantha, who adopted Lola from Goa in 2019, now has five other dogs, including a podenco called Xena, her self-described "warrior princess".



"She came to me when I needed to be my own warrior princess," she says.

Her battle with cancer began quietly, after a routine check-up. "I didn't have any lumps or feel ill," she recalled. "During the ultrasound we saw this little black shadow that wasn't a circle. Everyone just went quiet."

It was later confirmed to be an aggressive stage three breast cancer. She underwent chemotherapy and radiotherapy and was given the all clear five months later. Looking back, she admits the disease could have been "a death sentence" if detected any later.

Today, Samantha is embracing a new pace of life in Spain, surrounded by sun, animals and space to breathe. After everything she has faced, she says she's focusing on gratitude and on the new life that grew from love, loss and resilience.

Image: wikicommons

Traitor Rachel Duffy tipped for success

Devious Traitors contestant Rachel Duffy has been tipped for a huge showbiz career after insiders predict she'll become a millionaire – making her the richest traitor yet.

Forty-two-year-old Rachel has become somewhat of a household name over the past weeks as she shocked fans with her incredible gameplay, lying and deceiving her fellow co-stars.

The finale of series four, which aired recently, had fans on the edge of their seats when traitors Rachel and Stephen Libby were crowned victorious.

For a while fans were left on tenterhooks convinced Stephen, 32, was going to throw Rachel under the bus and claim the full prize fund but he later admitted he couldn't go back on his promise – to never vote for her at the roundtable.

Meanwhile, showbiz agents have let slip that Rachel, branded one of the show's best-ever players, could be destined for stardom.

Industry insiders believe the stars income is set to skyrocket with multiple celebrity agents looking to scoop her up. They can see star potential and think she has been the standout contestant from start to finish. She has won millions

and millions of fans and showbiz agents know they can make her a fortune. Already they are thinking about what other reality television programmes they can get her on.

So, it seems we might be seeing more of Irish-born Rachel soon as showbiz agents fight to get her back on our screens.



During the series, the Head of Communications managed to bag an impressive 123,000 followers on Instagram and approximately 62,200 on TikTok. The TV personality made it no secret she wanted to win the show and that she did making history with former cyber security consultant Stephen.

Rachel even admitted on the show that she got train-

ing from an ex FBI agent on the art of lying. She said she practiced keeping a straight face while lying to her lawyer husband, Seamus, until she became so good even he couldn't tell if she was telling fibs.

Stephen and Rachel became the first pair of traitors to win the series as they took part in the most thrilling endgame yet. At the final roundtable it came down to Stephen to have the casting vote; thinking with his head instead of his heart he revealed his vote was for Jade – staying loyal to his Traitor partnership with Rachel. When the cunning pair were faced with the endgame they continued their alliance and both voted out Faraaz, while Jack maintained his vote for Rachel and Faraaz took a shot at Stephen. After Faraaz was ousted, they all opted to banish again. The final vote saw the two traitors boot Jack out of Ardross Castle.

Rachel won't be the first Traitors contestant to lock down big brand deals and appear back on our screens: series three's Mollie Pearce debuted on ITV's Dancing on Ice and Harry Clarke has been spotted on The Weakest Link, Celebrity Antiques Road Show and Sky Sports.

David Beckham issues message after pivotal role in Brooklyn spat

David Beckham has sent a public message to Marc Anthony after the singer was drawn into David and Victoria's fallout with their son Brooklyn. Sir David, 50, has been a longtime friend of singer Marc's – with it being claimed the Beckham's friendship with Marc began over their love of his music. Their bond dates back years as Marc is the godfather of Cruz and Harper Beckham, while David is also a godfather to Marc's son Marquitos.

However, Marc's friendship with Sir and Lady Victoria was recently called into question after Brooklyn mentioned Marc, 57, in his bombshell statement hitting out at his parents and their alleged behaviour towards his wife Nicola peltz. In the statement, Brooklyn claimed his mum Victoria, 51, "hijacked" his first dance with his bride during his 2022 wedding.

Brooklyn said in the bombshell Instagram story post: "My mum hijacked my first dance with my wife, which had been planned weeks in advance to a romantic

love song.

"In front of our 500 wedding guests, Marc Anthony called me to the stage, where in the schedule was planned to be my romantic dance with my wife but instead my mum was waiting to dance with me instead. She danced very inappropriately on me in front of everyone." He added: "I've never felt more uncomfortable or humiliated in my entire life."

Marc was performing at Brooklyn and Nicola's 2022 Palm Beach, Florida wedding when the awkward moment occurred, in which it was also claimed the Latin singer had called Brooklyn to the stage before asking for "the most beautiful woman in the room" to join the groom, before naming Victoria. Marc's inclusion in the statement left fans wondering about the state of his relationship with Brooklyn and the Beckhams.

But it now appears that Marc and David remain on good terms as the former professional footballer left a supportive comment to

Marc and his family on a recent Instagram post, in which Marc revealed he and his wife Nadia Ferreira are expecting a child together – which is Marc's eighth child.

The Instagram post shows Nadia, 26, showing off her blossoming bump while she clutches it with one hand and Marc rests his hand on their bump and their eldest child, Marquito, rests a hand on his mum's tummy also. In the caption, Marc penned: "Happy 3rd anniversary!! What a great gift life gives us. God is great Marquito is going to be a big brother."

The top comment comes from Marc's longtime pal Sir David, who penned: "Soooooo excited" followed by a red heart emoji before he tagged both Marc and Nadia. David's move outs to bed any whispers of tension between himself and Marc.

It comes after reports that Marc's gaffes at Brooklyn and Nicola's wedding, in which he was asked to perform, were threefold. First, he gave a speech saying that the



bride and groom would be lucky to enjoy a marriage like Victoria and David's – something that apparently enraged Nicola's parents, who have been married since the 1980s, and have eight children.

Then he called Victoria to the stage for the mother-son dance – something Nicola has apparently been dead set against. The Beckham side of the family apparently cheered throughout the dance while the Peltzes sat in stony silence.

WHAT'S

ON TV?



Your FREE weekly TV Guide

This Week's Movie Picks

The Other Woman

Saturday 7th February, Film 4, 10pm



In New York, successful lawyer Carly Whitten believes she is in a committed relationship with her boyfriend Mark King. When he claims he must travel to Connecticut to deal with a plumbing issue, Carly surprises him and discovers he is married to Kate. After confronting the truth, Carly and Kate meet, realise Mark is a serial cheater, and form an unlikely friendship. When they uncover a third, younger girlfriend, Amber, the three women team up to plot their revenge against him.

The Naked Gun

Sunday 8th February, Sky Premier, 4pm



Clumsy Lieutenant Frank Drebin Jr. investigates a murder tied to a tech mogul. As his police unit faces shutdown, he teams up with a crime writer. Chaos, explosions, and absurd mishaps follow. The film is a comedic reboot of the original classic... A reboot movie based off the widely popular comedy franchise 'The Naked Gun' and television series 'Police Squad!'. Hilarious watch for a Sunday afternoon!

TV Guide

Tuesday 3rd February 2026

BBC

ITV

Channel 4

Channel 5

BBC ONE

10:30 Morning Live
 11:45 Rip Off Britain
 12:15 Homes Under the Hammer
 13:15 Bargain Hunt
 14:00 BBC News at One
 15:00 Lost and Found in the Lakes
 15:30 Marcus Wareing Simply Provence
 16:00 Escape to the Country
 16:45 Clean It, Fix It
 17:30 Antiques Road Trip
 18:15 Pointless
 19:00 BBC News at Six
 19:30 BBC London
 20:00 The One Show
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 Inside the Factory
 22:00 Silent Witness
 23:00 BBC News at Ten
 23:30 BBC London
 23:40 Trying
 00:40 The Notebook

BBC TWO

10:00 BBC News
 13:15 Politics Live
 14:00 Bridge of Lies
 14:45 Unbeatable
 15:15 The Boss
 16:00 The Vintage French Farmhouse
 16:45 Who Do You Think You Are? USA
 17:15 Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands
 18:15 Flog It!
 19:00 Richard Osman's House of Games
 19:30 Clive Myrie's African Adventure
 20:00 Rick Stein's Australia
 Rick Stein travels south from the dry outback into the Riverina, a region that
 21:00 Your Home Made Perfect
 22:00 QI XL
 22:45 Live at the Apollo
 23:30 Newsnight
 00:00 Lover, Liar, Predator

ITV1 HD

10:30 Lorraine
 Lorraine Kelly presents a topical mix of entertainment, discussion and showbiz glamour as
 11:00 This Morning
 13:30 Loose Women
 14:30 ITV Lunchtime News
 14:55 ITV News London
 The latest news and weather from London and the South East. [S,HD]
 15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal
 16:00 Time is Money
 17:00 Deal or No Deal
 18:00 The Chase
 19:00 ITV News London
 19:30 ITV Evening News
 National and international
 20:30 EFL Carabao Cup Live: Arsenal v Chelsea
 23:25 ITV News
 00:00 ITV News London
 00:10 Lucy Letby: Beyond Reasonable Doubt?

ITV2

10:20 The Only Way is Essex
 11:20 The Real Housewives of Miami
 12:15 The Real Housewives of
 13:15 Dinner Date
 15:15 The Only Way is Essex
 16:10 The Real Housewives of
 17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami
 18:05 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills
 19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase
 20:00 Deal or No Deal
 21:00 The Real Housewives of
 22:00 New: Love Island All Stars
 23:05 Grosse Pointe Garden Society
 00:05 Family Guy

Channel 4 HD

10:10 Frasier
 12:10 American Pickers
 13:05 Channel 4 News Summary
 13:10 Car S.O.S
 BMW E30 Alpina: Tim Shaw and Fuzz Townshend fix up an iconic BMW E30
 14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It
 15:10 Countdown
 16:00 A Place in the Sun
 Maria and Paul dream of owning a home away from home in the Andalucian countryside, where they
 17:00 A New Life in the Sun
 18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream
 19:00 A Place in the Sun
 20:00 Channel 4 News
 21:00 New: Bargain Holiday Secrets
 22:00 24 Hours in Police Custody
 23:00 New: 999: What Happened Next
 00:10 Manhunt

5

10:00 Milkshake! Love Nature Young Voices
 10:05 PAWsome Puzzles
 10:10 Milkshake! Story Den
 10:15 Jeremy Vine
 12:30 Storm & Alexis
 13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
 13:50 Matt Allwright
 15:00 Vanessa
 16:00 The Madame Blanc Mysteries
 17:00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun
 18:00 5 News at 5
 19:00 Love Nature
 19:05 The Motorway
 20:00 Supermarket Own Brands: The Big
 21:00 Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly
 22:00 The Good Ship Murder
 23:00 Street Cops: Catching the Yobs
 00:05 Fare Dodgers: At War with the Law

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase

10:00 Stargate SG-1
 12:00 Wildlife ER
 13:00 The Flash
 14:00 Hawaii Five-0
 16:00 S.W.A.T.
 Buried: As the SWAT team
 17:00 NCIS: Los Angeles
 18:00 The Simpsons
 19:00 The Office (US)
 20:00 The Simpsons
 21:00 David Attenborough's Wild City
 22:00 Spielberg
 00:30 Chris Ramsey: Live From London

Sky Max HD

10:00 Stargate SG-1
 12:00 SEAL Team
 13:00 The Flash
 14:00 Hawaii Five-0
 16:10 S.W.A.T.
 17:10 NCIS: Los Angeles
 18:10 SEAL Team
 The Sea and the Hills:
 19:10 Stargate SG-1
 21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks
 22:00 Jericho Ridge
 23:50 New: Fear The Walking Dead
 00:50 The Force: Manchester

Sky Family

10:25 The Golden Child
 12:05 The Cat In The Hat
 13:40 E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial
 15:40 Paulie
 17:20 Harold and The Purple Crayon
 19:00 Lemony Snicket's A Series Of...
 21:00 The Golden Child
 22:45 The Wiz

nat Sky Nature HD

10:00 Hope For Wildlife
 11:00 Great Blue Wild
 12:00 Shark Squad
 13:00 Great Lakes Wild
 14:00 Monkey Life
 15:00 Africa's Hunters
 16:00 Hope For Wildlife
 Kit's the Name: A family of
 17:00 Great Blue Wild
 18:00 Ireland's Wild Islands With...
 19:00 Great Lakes Wild
 20:00 Monkey Life
 21:00 Age Of The Big Cats
 22:00 My Best Friend's An Animal
 23:00 Great Lakes Wild
 00:00 Ireland's Wild Islands With...

Da U&Dave

10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers
 11:00 How Britain Worked
 12:00 Rick Stein's Road to Mexico
 13:00 Bangers & Cash
 15:00 Extreme Fishing with Robson Green
 16:00 Top Gear
 Motoring mania. A trio of convertibles have gone to Iceland - the Audi TT, Nissan 350Z and Chrysler
 18:00 Hairy Bikers' Best of British
 Atlantic: The Bikers explore the 'special relationship' between America and
 19:00 Rick Stein's Road to Mexico
 20:00 Would I Lie To You?
 20:45 Richard Osman's House of Games
 22:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?
 23:00 QI XL
 Leap for joy as Stephen Fry hosts another edition of the stimulating quiz and Julian Clary, Ross Noble, Bill
 00:00 Taskmaster

DMAX

10:00 Guardians Of The Glades
 11:00 Deadliest Catch
 13:00 Devil's Canyon
 14:00 Expedition Unknown
 16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue
 18:00 Outback Opal Hunters
 20:00 Deadliest Catch
 The government shut down and a huge storm causes the fleet to get behind schedule. Plus, a Coast
 22:00 Hoffman Family Gold
 Hunter seeks new paydirt
 23:00 Deadliest Catch
 00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters
HGTV
 10:00 Young Sheldon
 11:00 The Big Bang Theory
 15:00 Mike & Molly
 16:30 Young Sheldon
 Sheldon's obsession with The Lord of the Rings leads to an unhealthy habit. Missy asks her dad to teach her
 18:00 The Big Bang Theory
 22:00 Mock The Week
 23:00 Bumblebee

RTÉ One

10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
 11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
 12:20 Father Brown
 13:15 Off Duty Chef: Bringing It Home
 13:45 Telly Bingo
 14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
 14:30 Home and Away
 15:00 Shortland Street
 15:30 Bog Amach
 16:00 EastEnders
 16:30 Today
 18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
 18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
 19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
 20:00 High Road, Low Road
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 Fair City
 21:30 Heated
 22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
 22:35 Prime Time
 23:15 Unforgotten
 00:10 The Outlaws

Movies

Sky Premiere

11:10 Nuremberg
 13:40 The Naked Gun (2025)
 15:20 Prisoner Of War (2025)
 17:20 The Cut (2024)

TV Guide

Wednesday 4th February 2026

BBC

ITV

Channel 4

Channel 5

BBC ONE

10:30 Morning Live
 11:45 Rip Off Britain
 12:15 Homes Under the Hammer
 13:15 Bargain Hunt
 14:00 BBC News at One
 15:00 Lost and Found in the Lakes
 15:30 Marcus Wareing Simply Provence
 16:00 Escape to the Country
 16:45 Clean It, Fix It
 17:30 Antiques Road Trip
 18:15 Pointless
 19:00 BBC News at Six
 19:30 BBC London
 19:55 Party Political Broadcasts - Labour
 20:00 The One Show
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 The Repair Shop
 22:00 Can You Keep a Secret?
 22:30 Black Ops
 23:00 BBC News at Ten
 23:30 BBC London
 23:40 Sin City: The Real Las Vegas

BBC TWO

10:00 BBC News
 12:15 Politics Live
 14:00 Bridge of Lies
 14:45 Unbeatable
 15:15 The Boss
 16:00 The Vintage French Farmhouse
 16:45 Who Do You Think You Are? USA
 17:15 Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands
 18:15 Flog It!
 19:00 Richard Osman's House of Games
 19:30 Clive Myrie's African Adventure
 20:00 Rick Stein's Australia
 21:00 Digging for Britain
 22:00 Reform: Ready to Rule?
 With Reform UK consistently leading in the polls, Laura Kuenssberg examines the party's
 23:00 One Foot in the Grave
 23:30 Newsnight
 00:00 Unspun World with John Simpson
 00:30 Till

ITV1 HD

10:30 Lorraine
 11:00 This Morning
 13:30 Loose Women
 14:30 ITV Lunchtime News
 14:55 ITV News London
 15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal
 16:00 Time is Money
 17:00 Deal or No Deal
 18:00 The Chase
 19:00 ITV News London
 19:25 Party Political Broadcast: Labour Party
 19:30 ITV Evening News
 20:30 Deal or No Deal Banker's Best: Battles
 21:00 Emmerdale
 21:30 Coronation Street
 Carl resolves to set the record straight, a despondent Kevin hits the roof, and Debbie reveals
 22:00 Grantchester
 Crime drama. Alphy remains undecided on his
 23:00 ITV News at Ten
 23:30 ITV News London
 23:45 New: Peston
 00:40 Sorry, I Didn't Know

ITV2

10:25 The Only Way is Essex
 11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami
 12:20 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills
 13:15 Dinner Date
 15:15 The Only Way is Essex
 16:15 The Real Housewives of Orange County
 17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami
 18:00 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills
 19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase
 Stephen Mulhern hosts a
 20:00 Wheel of Fortune
 21:00 The Real Housewives of Orange County
 22:00 New: Love Island All Stars
 23:05 Grosse Pointe Garden Society
 00:05 Family Guy

Channel 4 HD

10:10 Frasier
 12:10 American Pickers
 Time Warp: Mike and Frank are stunned by an old tailor shop that's frozen in time, with a bounty of never-sold
 13:05 Channel 4 News Summary
 13:10 Car S.O.S.
 Fiesta XR2: Tim Shaw and Fuzz Townshend fix up a partially restored 1980s Ford Fiesta XR2 for Brian,
 14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It
 15:10 Countdown
 16:00 A Place in the Sun
 17:00 A New Life in the Sun
 In Bulgaria, Valentina and Nino host their first ever wellness retreat, but will it
 18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream
 19:00 A Place in the Sun
 20:00 Channel 4 News
 21:00 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It
 22:00 New: Michael Jackson: The Trial
 23:00 The Fabulous Funeral Parlour
 00:05 Gogglebox

5

10:00 Milkshake! Love Nature Young Voices
 10:05 PAWsome Puzzles
 10:10 Milkshake! Story Den
 10:15 Jeremy Vine
 Start the day with a dose of hard-hitting debate, your phone calls and a little fun - all driven by Jeremy's
 12:30 Storm & Alexis
 Two of 5's much-loved
 13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
 13:50 Matt Allwright
 15:00 Vanessa
 16:00 The Madame Blanc Mysteries
 17:00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun
 18:00 5 News at 5
 19:00 Love Nature
 19:05 The Motorway
 20:00 GPs: Behind Closed Doors
 21:00 Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts
 22:00 Surgeons: A Matter of Life or Death
 23:30 Ambulance: Code Red
 00:30 Skin A&E

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase

10:00 Stargate SG-1
 12:00 Wildlife ER
 13:00 The Flash
 14:00 Hawaii Five-0
 16:00 S.W.A.T.
 17:00 NCIS: Los Angeles
 18:00 The Simpsons
 19:00 The Office (US)
 20:00 The Simpsons
 21:00 New: Landscape Artist Of The 2026
 22:00 Band Of Brothers
 00:15 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2
 The Body: Karl discovers

Sky Max HD

10:00 Stargate SG-1
 12:00 A League Of Their Own:
 13:00 The Flash
 14:00 Hawaii Five-0
 16:05 S.W.A.T.
 17:10 NCIS: Los Angeles
 18:15 A League Of Their Own:
 19:15 Stargate SG-1
 21:15 Never Mind The Buzzcocks
 22:00 New: Eye in the Sky
 23:55 New: Fear The Walking Dead

Sky Family

11:15 The Karate Kid (1984)
 13:30 Lemony Snicket's A Series Of...
 15:25 Spy Kids 2: Island Of Lost...
 17:20 Paul Blart: Mall Cop
 19:00 Matilda
 Danny DeVito stars in
 20:50 The Smurfs
 22:45 The Smurfs 2
 00:45 The Karate Kid Part II

nat Sky Nature HD

10:00 Hope For Wildlife
 11:00 Great Blue Wild
 12:00 Wildlife ER
 13:00 Great Lakes Wild
 14:00 Monkey Life
 15:00 Africa's Hunters
 16:00 Hope For Wildlife
 A Makeshift Family: When
 17:00 Great Blue Wild
 18:00 Ireland's Wild Islands With...
 19:00 Great Lakes Wild
 20:00 Monkey Life
 21:00 Leopard Dynasty: The Rise of Rana
 22:00 Woodpeckers: The Hole Story
 23:00 Great Lakes Wild
 00:00 Ireland's Wild Islands With...

D&U Dave

10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers
 11:00 How Britain Worked
 12:00 Rick Stein's Secret France
 Rick's journey begins in Dieppe with turbot straight off the boats, followed by a forage for sea herbs along
 13:00 Bangers & Cash
 15:00 Extreme Fishing with Robson Green
 16:00 Top Gear
 Motoring mayhem courtesy of the usual team. Jeremy makes a splash at a local swimming pool with a Rolls
 18:00 Hairy Bikers' Best of British
 19:00 Rick Stein's Secret France
 Rick's journey begins in Dieppe with turbot straight off the boats, followed by a forage for sea herbs along
 20:00 Would I Lie To You?
 20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games
 22:00 QI XL
 23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?
 00:00 Taskmaster
 Russell Howard charms a

DMAX

10:00 Guardians Of The Glades
 11:00 Deadliest Catch
 13:00 Devil's Canyon
 John's plans are derailed when a tree crushes his shelter. Ben finds the best dig site he's ever seen and
 14:00 Expedition Unknown
 16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue
 18:00 Outback Opal Hunters
 20:00 Deadliest Catch
 22:00 New: Alaska: Homestead Rescue
 00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters

HGTV

10:00 Young Sheldon
 After being released from the psychiatric hospital, Dr. Sturgis unexpectedly breaks up with Meemaw.
 11:00 The Big Bang Theory
 15:00 Mike & Molly
 16:00 New: Mike & Molly
 16:30 Young Sheldon
 18:00 The Big Bang Theory
 Sheldon fears his major
 22:00 New: The Bad Skin...
 23:00 The Bad Skin...

RTÉ One

10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
 11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
 12:20 Father Brown
 13:15 Off Duty Chef: Bringing It Home
 14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
 14:30 Home and Away
 15:00 Shortland Street
 15:30 Fair City
 16:00 EastEnders
 16:30 Today
 18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
 18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
 19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
 20:00 Nationwide
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 Mark Moriarty: Cook Like a Chef
 21:30 Neven's English Food Tour
 22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
 22:35 Any Given Day: Cork University Hospital
 23:35 NORAIID: Irish America and the IRA
 00:40 Return to Paradise

Movies

Sky Premiere

11:25 The Naked Gun (2025)

Film4

12:00 The Shepherd of the Hills

TV Guide

Thursday 5th February 2026

BBC

BBC ONE

10:30 Morning Live
11:45 Rip Off Britain
12:15 Homes Under the Hammer
13:15 Bargain Hunt
14:00 BBC News at One
15:00 Lost and Found in the Lakes
15:30 Marcus Wareing Simply Provence
16:00 Escape to the Country
16:45 Clean It, Fix It
17:30 Antiques Road Trip
18:15 Pointless
19:00 BBC News at Six
19:30 BBC London
20:00 The One Show
20:30 EastEnders
21:00 Dragons' Den
22:00 The Apprentice
23:00 BBC News at Ten
23:30 BBC London
23:40 Question Time
00:40 Newscast

BBC TWO

10:00 Winter Olympics 2026
12:00 BBC News
13:15 Politics Live
14:00 Bridge of Lies
14:45 Unbeatable
15:15 The Boss
16:00 The Vintage French Farmhouse
16:45 Who Do You Think You Are? USA
17:15 Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands
18:15 Flog It!
19:00 Richard Osman's House of Games
19:30 Clive Myrie's African Adventure
20:30 Access All Areas
21:00 Digging for Britain
22:00 Spotlight
23:00 The Apprentice: Unfinished Business
23:30 Newsnight
00:05 Mystery Road: Origin

ITV

ITV1 HD

10:30 Lorraine
Lorraine Kelly presents a topical mix of entertainment, discussion and showbiz glamour as
11:00 This Morning
13:30 Loose Women
14:30 ITV Lunchtime News
14:55 ITV News London
The latest news and weather from London and the South East. [S,HD]
15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal
16:00 Time is Money
17:00 Deal or No Deal
18:00 The Chase
19:00 ITV News London
19:30 ITV Evening News
20:20 Men's Six Nations: France v Ireland
23:35 ITV News
00:10 ITV News London
The latest news and
00:20 The Late Debate
00:50 Social Media Murders

ITV2

10:25 The Only Way is Essex
11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami
12:20 The Real Housewives of
13:15 Dinner Date
15:15 The Only Way is Essex
16:15 The Real Housewives of Orange County
17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami
18:00 The Real Housewives of
19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase
20:00 Deal or No Deal
21:00 New: The Real Housewives of...
22:00 New: Love Island All Stars
23:05 Piglets
23:35 Family Guy
00:35 American Dad!

Channel 4

Channel 4 HD

10:10 Frasier
12:10 American Pickers
Concrete Jungle: Mike and
13:05 Channel 4 News Summary
13:10 Car S.O.S
14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It
15:10 Countdown
16:00 A Place in the Sun
In Italy, former soap star Stephen visits a local vineyard to try and build new business partnerships.
18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream
It's crunch time as the renovators' breakfast rooms are scrutinised for practicality and style. Who
19:00 A Place in the Sun
20:00 Channel 4 News
21:00 George Clarke's Building Home
22:00 New: Michael Jackson: The Trial
23:00 24 Hours in A&E

Channel 5

5

10:00 Milkshake! Love Nature Young Voices
10:05 PAWsome Puzzles
10:10 Milkshake! Story Den
10:15 Jeremy Vine
12:30 Storm & Alexis
13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
13:50 Matt Allwright
15:00 Vanessa
16:00 The Madame Blanc Mysteries
17:00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun
18:00 5 News at 5
19:00 Love Nature
19:05 The Motorway
20:00 The Underground Map of Britain
21:00 Spair with Michael Portillo
22:00 Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild
Ben visits northern England
23:00 A Killer Makes a Call
00:05 My Lover, My Killer

Entertainment

how Sky Showcase

10:00 Stargate SG-1
12:00 Wildlife ER
13:00 The Flash
14:00 Hawaii Five-0
16:00 S.W.A.T.
17:00 NCIS: Los Angeles
18:00 The Simpsons
19:00 The Office (US)
20:00 The Simpsons
21:00 Rob & Romesh Vs The NFL
22:00 Never Mind The Buzzcocks
Perrie, Bradley Simpson,
00:00 The Pacific

Sky Max HD

10:00 Stargate SG-1
12:00 A League Of Their Own: The Rally
13:00 The Flash
14:00 Hawaii Five-0
16:05 S.W.A.T.
17:10 NCIS: Los Angeles
18:15 A League Of Their Own: The Rally
19:15 Stargate SG-1
21:15 Never Mind The Buzzcocks
22:00 Evil
00:00 New: Fear The Walking Dead

Sky Family

11:20 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2
13:10 Robin And The Hoods
15:05 Grow (2025)
17:05 The Smurfs
19:00 A Minecraft Movie
20:50 The Karate Kid Part II
22:50 The Karate Kid Part III
00:50 Robin And The Hoods

nat Sky Nature HD

10:00 Hope For Wildlife
11:00 Great Blue Wild
12:00 Wildlife ER
13:00 Great Lakes Wild
14:00 Monkey Life
15:00 Africa's Hunters
16:00 Hope For Wildlife
17:00 Great Blue Wild
18:00 Wildlife Icons
19:00 Great Lakes Wild
20:00 Monkey Life
21:00 My Best Friend's An Animal
22:00 Into The Wild: Colombia
23:00 Great Lakes Wild
00:00 Wildlife Icons

Da U&Dave

10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers
11:00 How Britain Worked
12:00 Rick Stein's Secret France
Rick Stein's journey takes him through France's eastern border regions of Alsace and Jura, home to
13:00 Bangers & Cash
15:00 Extreme Fishing with Robson Green
16:00 Top Gear
The lads head for the Isle of Man to decide which is best - the V8 Vantage Aston Martin, BMW M6 or
18:00 Hairy Bikers' Best of British
19:00 Rick Stein's Secret France
Rick Stein's journey takes him through France's eastern border regions of
20:00 Would I Lie To You?
20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games
22:00 QI XL
23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?
00:00 Taskmaster

DMAX

10:00 Guardians Of The Glades
11:00 Deadliest Catch
13:00 Devil's Canyon
14:00 Expedition Unknown
16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue
18:00 Outback Opal Hunters
20:00 Deadliest Catch
22:00 Expedition X
23:00 Expedition Bigfoot
00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters

HGTV

10:00 Young Sheldon
11:00 The Big Bang Theory
Sheldon fears his major scientific breakthrough may haunt him for the rest of his career. Howard makes a
15:00 New: Mike & Molly
16:30 Young Sheldon
Sheldon fakes being sick to avoid a swim test at school. Meanwhile, Dr. Sturgis spies on Meemaw's new
18:00 The Big Bang Theory
22:00 New: 90 Day Fiancé UK
00:00 The Bad Skin...

RTÉ One

10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
12:10 Keeping Up Appearances
12:50 Leaders' Questions
13:45 Telly Bingo
14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
14:30 Home and Away
14:55 Shortland Street
15:30 Bog Amach
16:00 EastEnders
16:30 Today
18:40 Nuacnt RTÉ
18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
20:00 Ear to The Ground
20:30 EastEnders
21:00 Reeling In The Years
21:30 Cheap Irish Homes
22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
22:35 Prime Time
23:15 SisterS
23:45 Traces
00:45 Death In Paradise

Movies

Sky Premiere

10:15 The Ballad of Wallis Island
12:00 The Naked Gun (2025)
13:40 Smurfs (2025)
15:20 Nuremberg
17:50 Super Charlie (2024)

Film4

12:00 Local Hero
14:15 Hail the Conquering Hero
16:20 Gun Fury
18:00 Jason and the Argonauts
20:10 Moon

TV Guide

Friday 6th February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	Channel 4 HD	5
10:30 Morning Live	10:00 Winter Olympics 2026	10:30 Lorraine	10:25 The Only Way is Essex	10:10 Frasier	10:00 Milkshake! Love Nature Young Voices
11:45 Rip Off Britain	12:00 BBC News	11:00 This Morning Magazine show with news	11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami	12:10 American Pickers	10:05 PAWsome Puzzles
12:15 Homes Under the Hammer	13:15 Political Thinking with Nick Robinson	13:30 Loose Women	12:20 The Real Housewives of Orange County	13:05 Channel 4 News Summary	10:10 Milkshake! Story Den
13:15 Bargain Hunt	13:45 Bridge of Lies Ross Kemp presents as a team of four family members - Adam, Joshua, Josh and Conor - take on	14:30 ITV Lunchtime News	13:15 Dinner Date	13:10 Car S.O.S	10:15 Jeremy Vine
14:00 BBC News at One	14:30 Winter Olympics 2026	14:55 ITV News London	15:15 The Only Way is Essex	14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It	12:30 Storm & Alexis
15:00 Father Brown	16:30 The Vintage French Farmhouse	15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal	16:15 The Real Housewives of Orange County	15:10 Countdown	13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
15:45 Escape to the Country	17:15 Natural World	16:00 Time is Money	17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami	16:00 A Place in the Sun Rona and Chris can't wait to buy their own French holiday home in Languedoc. Jean	13:50 Matt Allwright
16:45 Clean It, Fix It	18:15 Flog It! This episode comes from Layer Marney Tower in rural Essex. Paul Martin is joined by experts Elizabeth	17:00 New: Deal or No Deal	18:00 The Real Housewives of Orange County	17:00 A New Life in the Sun	15:00 Vanessa
17:30 Antiques Road Trip	19:00 Richard Osman's House of Games	18:00 New: The Chase	19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase	18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream	16:00 The Madame Blanc Mysteries
18:15 Pointless	19:30 Winter Olympics 2026	19:00 ITV News London	20:00 Deal or No Deal	19:00 A Place in the Sun	17:00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun
19:00 BBC News at Six	23:00 QI	19:30 ITV Evening News	21:00 New: The Real Housewives of...	20:00 Channel 4 News Channel 4's flagship news programme. Including the weather. [S]	18:00 5 News at 5
19:30 BBC London	23:30 Newsnight	20:30 New: It'll Be Alright on the Night	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars	21:00 New: Frontline: Our Soldiers...	19:00 Love Nature
20:00 The One Show	00:00 Silver Haze	21:00 Emmerdale	23:05 Olivia Attwood: Getting Filthy Rich	22:00 New: Gogglebox The Goggleboxers return	19:05 The Motorway
20:30 Amanda & Alan's Greek Job		21:30 Coronation Street	00:05 Family Guy	23:00 Live: The Last Leg	20:00 Jewels of the Med
21:30 Would I Lie to You?		22:00 New: Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gacy		00:05 Joe Lycett: More, More, More!...	21:00 Jane McDonald: From Pole to Pole Jane reaches her final
22:00 Death in Paradise		23:05 ITV News at Ten			22:00 The 1970s: Those Were The Days
23:00 BBC News at Ten		23:40 ITV News London			23:30 Sex Stories
23:30 BBC London		23:50 Hellboy II: The Golden Army			00:30 Piers Morgan Uncensored

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	nat Sky Nature HD	D&U Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Hope For Wildlife	10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers In Pharr 840kg of meth is discovered in the floor of a truck. Aromatic candles filled with Fentanyl are	10:00 Guardians Of The Glades	10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
12:00 Wildlife ER	12:00 A League Of Their Own: The Rally	11:00 Great Blue Wild	11:00 How Britain Worked	11:00 Deadliest Catch When Sig and Mandy disagree on a fishing strategy, Clark is caught in the middle. Wild Bill comes	11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
13:00 The Flash	13:00 The Flash	12:00 Wildlife ER	12:00 Rick Stein's Secret France Rick Stein reaches the mid-point of his meander through France, exploring Burgundy and then arriving	13:00 Devil's Canyon	12:20 Father Brown
14:00 Hawaii Five-0	14:00 Hawaii Five-0	13:00 Wild Canary Islands	13:00 Bangers & Cash	14:00 Expedition Unknown Josh has a fresh lead on a shipwreck from 1715 with a potentially massive treasure haul. He launches an	13:15 Off Duty Chef: Bringing It Home
16:00 S.W.A.T.	16:05 S.W.A.T.	14:00 Monkey Life	15:00 Extreme Fishing with Robson Green	16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue Virginia homesteaders are on the brink after the unexplained disappearance of their water and food	13:45 Telly Bingo
17:00 NCIS: Los Angeles	17:05 NCIS: Los Angeles	15:00 Africa's Wild Year	16:00 Top Gear	18:00 Outback Opal Hunters	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
18:00 The Simpsons	18:05 A League Of Their Own: The Rally	16:00 Hope For Wildlife	18:00 Hairy Bikers' Best of British	20:00 Deadliest Catch	14:30 Home and Away
19:00 The Office (US)	19:05 Stargate SG-1	17:00 Great Blue Wild	19:00 Rick Stein's Secret France	22:00 Saving Lives At Sea	15:00 Shortland Street
20:00 The Simpsons	21:05 Never Mind The Buzzcocks	18:00 Wildlife Icons	20:00 Would I Lie To You?	00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters	15:30 Super Garden
21:00 A League Of Their Own...	22:00 An Idiot Abroad	19:00 Wild Canary Islands	20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games Presenter Toby Anstis, comedy actor Kerry Howard, stand-up Evelyn	10:00 Young Sheldon	16:00 EastEnders
22:00 Ted	23:00 The 90's: Cinema's Greatest Decade	20:00 Monkey Life	22:00 QI XL Jolly old Stephen Fry jingles a few bells with Sarah Millican, Phill Jupitus, Danny Baker and	11:00 The Big Bang Theory	16:30 Today Daily magazine show
23:30 Josh Widdicombe: Bit Much...	00:00 New: Fear The Walking Dead	21:00 Extraordinary Animals	23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	15:00 New: Mike & Molly	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
00:45 True Blood	00:00 New: The Karate Kid Part III	22:00 Leopard Dynasty: The Rise of Fana	00:00 Taskmaster	16:30 Young Sheldon	18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
	12:25 Journey To The Center Of The Earth	23:00 Wild Canary Islands		18:00 The Big Bang Theory	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
	14:05 Journey 2: The Mysterious Island	00:00 Wildlife Icons		22:00 New: 90 Day Fiancé: Before The 90 Days	20:00 Nationwide
	15:45 A Minecraft Movie			00:00 Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage	20:30 Fair City
	17:30 The Cat In The Hat				21:00 The Zoo
	19:00 If (2024)				21:30 The Best Place To Be
	20:55 Journey To The Center Of The Earth				22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
	22:40 Journey 2: The Mysterious Island				22:35 The Late Late Show
	00:25 The Next Karate Kid				00:15 Be Good or Be Gone

Movies

Sky Premiere

- 11:40 The Cut (2024)
- 13:30 M3GAN 2.0

TV Guide

Saturday 7th February 2026

BBC

BBC ONE

11:00 Saturday Kitchen
12:30 Bargain Hunt
13:00 Football Focus
13:45 BBC Weekend News
13:55 BBC Weather
14:00 Six Nations Rugby
17:30 Final Score
18:25 BBC Weekend News
18:35 BBC London
18:40 BBC Weather
18:45 Gladiators
19:45 Michael McIntyre's Big Show
20:45 The Weakest Link
21:30 Casualty
22:20 Waiting for the Out
23:05 BBC Weekend News
23:20 BBC Weather
23:25 Match of the Day
00:55 The Football Interview

BBC TWO

10:00 Winter Olympics 2026
Coverage of day 2 of the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games.
23:00 Reel Stories
Dermot O'Leary invites Rick Astley to reflect on the defining moments of his extraordinary career. From his teenage years as a
23:45 Glastonbury
Lauren Laverne presents two performances from the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury. Eighties icon Rick Astley visits Worthy Farm for the very first time,
00:15 Stock Aitken Waterman at the BBC
Mike Stock, Matt Aitken and Pete Waterman were the producers who came, SAW and conquered the UK charts in the 1980s,

ITV

ITV1 HD

10:25 ITV News
10:30 New: James Martin's Saturday Morning
13:00 New: Ainsley's Taste of the Bahamas
13:30 ITV News
13:45 ITV Racing: Live from Newbury
16:45 Men's Six Nations: England v Wales
20:00 New: The Masked Singer
21:30 New: The 1% Club
22:30 New: The Jonathan Ross Show
23:30 It'll Be Alright on the Night
00:00 ITV News
National and international news with reports and
00:15 English Football League Highlights

ITV2

10:55 The Only Way is Essex
11:55 Deal or No Deal
15:00 The Floor
16:05 Ant & Dec's Limitless Win
17:05 Hotel Transylvania
18:05 FYI Daily
18:10 Hotel Transylvania
Animated comedy. In 1895,
19:50 FYI Daily
19:55 Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde
20:55 Coyote Ugly
21:55 FYI Daily
22:00 Coyote Ugly
23:00 New: Love Island All Stars: Unseen Bits
00:05 Family Guy

Channel 4

Channel 4 HD

10:20 Frasier
10:50 The Simpsons
12:15 Come Dine with Me: The...
...Professionals: In Sussex, MED's risky fare causes a stir. Can Big Fat Greek
13:15 Four in a Bed
15:55 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or...
16:55 Phil Spencer: New Zealand's...
17:55 Location, Location, Location
19:00 Channel 4 News
19:30 Sailing the Shipping Forecast...
20:30 New: The Great Icelandic Swim...
21:30 New: Roman Empire by Train with...
22:30 The Woman King

Channel 5

5

10:00 Entertainment News on 5
A daily round-up of showbiz
10:10 Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild
11:00 Tales from the Riverbank
13:00 Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly
15:00 Catching Up with the Royals with Rev Richard Coles
16:00 Our Yorkshire Farm
19:00 5 News Weekend
19:05 Royal Residences: A Map of Britain
20:25 Secrets of The Royal Traditions
21:30 Kate: A Life in 10 Dresses
23:00 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase

10:00 Super Shark Highway
13:00 Gillette Soccer Saturday: Build-Up
16:00 Gillette Soccer Sat: Live Scores
18:00 The Simpsons
20:00 Landscape Artist Of The 2026
21:00 Rob & Romesh Vs The NFL
22:00 Mad Max: Fury Road
Tom Hardy and Charlize
00:15 Never Mind The Buzzcocks

Sky Max HD

10:00 Hawaii Five-0
13:00 SEAL Team
15:00 Movie Megastars...
17:00 Stargate Universe
22:00 Never Mind The Buzzcocks
23:00 Peacemaker
The Ties That Grind: As

Sky Family

11:40 The Cat In The Hat
13:15 Twist
14:55 If (2024)
16:50 Stardust
19:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
21:05 Pokemon Detective Pikachu
23:05 Breaking Point
00:55 Stardust

nat Sky Nature HD

10:00 Super Shark Highway
12:00 Kenya Wildlife Diaries
13:00 Extraordinary Animals
14:00 My Best Friend's An Animal
15:00 Leopard Dynasty: The Rise of Rana
16:00 Airborne
18:00 David Attenborough's Global...
21:00 Battle Of The Alphas
22:00 Super Shark Highway
23:00 Living Beach

Da U&Dave

10:00 Rick Stein's Secret France
11:00 Top Gear
13:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads
Comedians Jack Dee and Jake Lambert team up for a ride through the wilds of Kyrgyzstan while battling
15:00 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs
16:00 Would I Lie To You?
The truth hurts, chiefly when you think it's a lie. David Mitchell, Lee Mack, Susan Calman, Richard
20:00 Gavin and Stacey: The Christmas...
21:20 QI
22:00 Not Going Out
Beep: Lucy has cooked a special meal so that she and Lee can talk about the state of their marriage, but
23:20 Not Going Out Christmas Special: Wilfred
Lee makes a big effort to create the perfect
00:20 Would I Lie To You?

DMAX

10:00 Deadliest Catch
Amid the heaviest competition in years,
11:00 Outback Opal Hunters
14:00 The Snake Catcher
17:00 Aussie Gold Hunters
20:00 Hoarding: Buried Alive
22:00 New: Paranormal Caught On Camera
A family spots Bigfoot in their own backyard. Plus, UFOs speed by in broad daylight, and a cryptid
23:00 New: Ghost Adventures

HGTV

10:00 Young Sheldon
11:00 Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage
Mandy struggles to get Georgie's family to join him for his first Thanksgiving without his dad. S1/Ep5
12:00 The Big Bang Theory
22:00 The Truman Show
00:00 Mock The Week

RTÉ One

10:15 Fair City Omnibus
11:45 Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond The Lobby
12:50 MasterChef: The Professionals
14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
14:10 High Road, Low Road
14:40 Behind the Curtain
15:10 Na Féilte Tine
16:15 My Uni Life
16:45 Dancing with The Stars
18:45 Nuacht RTÉ
18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
19:30 Social Democrats Party Conference:
20:00 The Addams Family
21:35 Killinaskully
22:10 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
22:40 The Tommy Tiernan Show
23:50 These Sacred Vows

Movies

Sky Premiere

10:10 Reckless (2025)
11:55 The Cut (2024)
13:45 M3GAN 2.0
15:55 Prisoner Of War (2025)
17:55 The Naked Gun (2025)
19:25 Smurfs (2025)
21:00 Reckless (2025)
22:45 M3GAN 2.0
00:55 Prisoner Of War (2025)

Film4










12:00 Lifeboat
(1944) Alfred Hitchcock's Oscar-nominated Second World War drama starring Tallulah Bankhead, William
13:55 Monster House
15:40 Stormbreaker
17:30 The Personal History of David...
19:50 Fisherman's Friends
22:00 The Other Woman
(2014) Romcom starring
00:10 The Fury

TV Guide

Sunday 8th February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	Channel 4 HD	5
10:00 Sunday with Laura Kuennsberg	10:00 Winter Olympics 2026 <small>Coverage of day 3 of the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games.</small>	10:25 ITV News	10:00 The Only Way is Essex	10:00 Frasier	10:00 Entertainment News on 5
11:00 Politics London		10:30 New: Love Your Weekend with...	11:00 Deal or No Deal	11:00 Live: Sunday Brunch	10:10 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun <small>Carol pushes for big takings</small>
11:30 Sunday Morning Live		12:30 New: Fletchers' Family Farm	13:00 Celebrity Catchphrase <small>Stephen Mulhern hosts a celebrity special of the</small>	14:00 The Simpsons	
12:30 Songs of Praise	13:20 Bargain Hunt	13:30 New: Talking Royals	14:05 The Masked Singer	15:20 A Place in the Sun	12:05 Jewel of the Med: Majorca and Mencerca
13:05 BBC Weekend News	14:15 Digging for Britain <small>Featuring a vast first-century Roman compound, the warhorses that changed the course of</small>	14:00 ITV Lunchtime News	15:40 Hotel Transylvania 2	16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces <small>George meets a family of Hollywood set designers creating a dystopian glamping site, and follows</small>	14:00 Cruising With Jane McDonald
13:15 Weather for the Week Ahead		14:15 Shrek Forever After	16:45 FYI Daily	17:25 Sandi's Great British Woodland... <small>...Restoration: Sandi Toksvig and her wife Debbie get the chainsaw out to save a patch of</small>	16:00 Inside The Tower of London
13:20 Winter Olympics 2026	15:15 Women's Super League <small>Live coverage of matches from the Women's Super League.</small>	16:00 Millionaire Hot Seat	16:50 Hotel Transylvania 2	18:25 Devon and Cornwall	17:55 The Blitz with Rob Rinder & Ruth Goochman
17:35 Gladiators		16:30 Tipping Point: Lucky Stars	17:30 Marley & Me	19:20 Channel 4 News	19:25 5 News Weekend
18:35 BBC Weekend News	17:35 Winter Olympics 2026 <small>Coverage of day 3 of the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games.</small>	17:30 The Chase Celebrity Special	18:30 FYI Daily	19:50 The Dog House	19:30 Britain's Worst Weather Disasters
18:50 BBC London		18:30 ITV Evening News	18:35 Marley & Me	20:50 New: The Great Pottery Throw Down	21:00 22 Kids & Counting
18:55 BBC Weather		18:45 ITV News London	19:50 Dirty Dancing	22:00 New: Secret Genius with Alan...	22:00 Rich House, Poor House
19:00 Countryfile	23:00 Emily <small>A partly fictional portrait of Emily Brontë, author of Wuthering Heights, that focuses on the struggles of</small>	19:00 The 1% Club	20:50 FYI Daily	23:00 Gogglebox	23:30 Live: NFL Super Bowl LX
20:00 Antiques Roadshow		20:00 New: The Floor	20:55 Dirty Dancing		
21:00 Call the Midwife		21:00 New: Ant and Dec's Limitless Win	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars		
22:00 Lord of the Flies		22:00 New: Betrayal	23:05 Olivia Attwood: Getting Filthy Rich		
23:00 BBC Weekend News		23:00 ITV News	00:05 Family Guy		
23:25 BBC London		23:15 Ghost			
23:30 Match of the Day					
00:25 Six Nations Rugby					

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	nat Sky Nature HD	Da U&Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 The Office (US) 	10:00 Hawaii Five-0	10:00 Wild Crusades: The Monkey Diaries	10:00 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing	10:00 Baggage Battles	10:35 The Frankie Drake Mysteries
12:00 Live WSL: Arsenal v Man City 	11:00 A League Of Their Own - ...	11:00 Alien Abyss	11:15 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs	11:00 Chasing Classic Cars	11:30 Fóram
15:30 The Simpsons 	17:00 Fear The Walking Dead	14:00 Living Beach 	12:20 Top Gear	15:00 Kindig Customs <small>Repeat client Ron Meis gives the team a huge project with a 1927 Shadow Rod. Dave has some big</small>	12:00 Sunday Worship
17:45 David Attenborough: Micro Monsters 	22:00 New: Evil	16:00 Airborne	14:20 Richard Osman's House of Games	18:00 Ant Anstead: Born Mechanic	13:00 The Week In Politics
19:15 Apollo 11	23:00 A League Of Their Own	18:00 New: My Best Friend's An Animal 	15:40 Hairy Bikers' Best of British <small>Potatoes: The Bikers celebrate the humble spud -</small>	20:00 Mysteries Of The Deep	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
21:00 A League Of Their Own: 	00:00 The Force: Manchester	19:00 Extraordinary Animals	17:40 Simon Reeve's South America	22:00 Lost Monster Files	14:10 Ear to The Ground
22:00 New: Evil 	Sky Family	20:00 David Attenborough's Dragons And Damsels	18:40 Mediterranean with Simon Reeve	00:00 Expedition X	14:40 Neven's English Food Tour
23:00 Live NFL Super Bowl LX 	10:40 The Karate Kid (2010)	21:00 Attenborough's Journey	19:40 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing	HGTV	15:10 Beyond Paradise
	13:10 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory	22:00 Weird, Wild and Wonderful	21:00 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs	10:00 Young Sheldon	16:10 Zulu
	15:15 Pokemon Detective Pikachu	23:00 How The Wild Things Sleep	22:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	11:00 The Big Bang Theory	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
	17:10 Matilda	00:00 New: My Best Friend's An Animal	23:00 QI	21:00 New: Georgie & Mandy's First... <small>...Marriage. Georgie worries</small>	18:50 RTÉ News with Signing
	19:00 Karate Kid: Legends		23:40 Mock the Week	22:00 New: Mock The Week	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
	20:50 The Wizard Of Oz			23:00 Mock The Week	19:30 Dancing with The Stars
	22:40 Blueback			00:00 Guz Khan's Custom Cars	21:30 Fair City
	00:35 Journey To The Center Of The Earth				22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
					22:30 These Sacred Vows
					23:30 SisterS
					00:00 The Week In Politics

Movies

Sky Premiere	Film4
10:25 Smurfs (2025)	12:00 Animal Farm
12:05 M3GAN 2.0	13:30 Arabesque
14:15 Reckless (2025)	15:40 Think Like a Dog <small>(2020) Cheeky comedy with Megan Fox. A young science prodigy (Gabriel Bateman) invents a piece of</small>
16:00 The Naked Gun (2025)	17:25 Kindergarten Cop
17:30 The Ballad of Wallis Island	19:35 Oblivion
19:20 Neighborhood Watch (2025)	22:00 Kingsman: The Golden Circle <small>(2017) Taron Egerton returns as the newest</small>
21:00 M3GAN 2.0	00:45 Monster Hunter
23:10 Reckless (2025)	
00:50 The Naked Gun (2025)	

TV Guide

Monday 9th February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	Channel 4 HD	5
10:00 Winter Olympics 2026	10:00 Breakfast	10:30 Lorraine	10:25 The Only Way is Essex	10:10 Frasier	10:00 Milkshake! Love Nature Young Voices
14:00 BBC News at One including BBC...	10:30 Morning Live	11:00 This Morning	11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami	12:10 American Pickers	10:05 PAWsome Puzzles
15:00 Winter Olympics 2026 <small>Coverage of day 4 of the Milano Cortina 2026</small>	11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure	13:30 Loose Women	12:20 The Real Housewives of	13:05 Channel 4 News Summary	10:10 Milkshake! Story Den
18:15 New: Pointless	12:15 Homes Under the Hammer	14:30 ITV Lunchtime News	13:15 Dinner Date	13:10 Car S.O.S <small>TVR Grantura: In Norfolk, Tim Shaw and Fuzz Townshend fix up a 1962 TVR Grantura, a once</small>	10:15 Jeremy Vine
19:00 BBC News	13:15 Bargain Hunt	14:55 ITV News London	15:15 The Only Way is Essex	14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It	12:30 Storm & Alexis
19:30 BBC London News	14:00 Winter Olympics 2026	15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal	16:15 The Real Housewives of	15:10 Countdown	13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
20:00 The One Show	15:00 Politics Live	16:00 New: Riddiculous	17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami	16:00 A Place in the Sun	13:50 Matt Allwright
20:30 EastEnders <small>A worrying situation arises for the Panesars, Zoe asks for help from an unlikely source, and Honey tries to</small>	15:45 Unbeatable	17:00 New: Deal or No Deal	18:00 The Real Housewives of	17:00 A New Life in the Sun <small>The new run continues. In</small>	15:00 Vanessa
21:00 Knife Crime: What Happened to...	16:30 Escape to the Country	18:00 New: The Chase	19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase	18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream	16:00 The Madame Blanc Mysteries
22:00 Silent Witness	17:30 Flog It!	19:00 ITV News London	20:00 Deal or No Deal	19:00 New: A Place in the Sun	17:00 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun
23:00 BBC News and Weather	18:15 Winter Olympics 2026	19:30 ITV Evening News	21:00 New: The Real Housewives of...	20:00 Channel 4 News	18:00 5 News at 5
23:30 BBC London News	23:00 Small Prophets	20:30 New: Fletchers' Family Farm <small>Documentary series. It's all</small>	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars	21:00 New: Jamie's Feasts for a Fiver	19:00 Love Nature
23:40 Industry	23:30 Newsnight, followed by Weather	21:00 Emmerdale	23:05 The 1% Club	22:00 New: Guy Martin's House without...	19:05 The Motorway
00:40 The Traitors Ireland	00:00 What We Do in the Shadows <small>8/11. Colin and Nadja have a couples' night with an old</small>	21:30 Coronation Street	00:05 Family Guy	23:30 Concorde: The Race for Supersonic	20:00 Police Interceptors
	00:50 Deliverance	22:00 New: Betrayal			21:00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's
		23:00 ITV News at Ten			22:00 Platoon 24/7: Preparing for War
		23:30 ITV News London			23:30 999: Police Hour of Duty
		23:45 Social Media Murders			00:30 Traffic Cops
		00:45 Millionaire Hot Seat			

Entertainment

how Sky Showcase	Sky Max HD	nat Sky Nature HD	D&U Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Hope For Wildlife	10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	10:00 Guardians Of The Glades	10:50 The Drew Barrymore Show
12:00 Wildlife ER	12:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life	11:00 Great Blue Wild	11:00 Speed with Guy Martin	11:00 Deadliest Catch	11:40 The Kelly Clarkson Show <small>Kelly is joined by Daisy</small>
13:00 The Flash	13:00 The Flash	12:00 Wildlife ER <small>Spoonbill Soft Shoe</small>	12:00 Rick Stein's Secret France <small>Rick arrives in Perigord, famous for black truffles, walnuts and duck dishes.</small>	13:00 Cooper's Treasure	12:35 Father Brown
14:00 Hawaii Five-0	14:00 Hawaii Five-0	13:00 Island Of The Monsoon	13:00 Bangers & Cash	14:00 Expedition Unknown	13:30 Nico's Cook In Cook Out
16:00 S.W.A.T.	16:05 S.W.A.T.	14:00 Monkey Life	15:00 Extreme Fishing with Robson Green	16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue <small>A Big Island family finds their off-grid paradise strangled by destructive storms that bring deadly</small>	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
17:00 Magnum P.I.	17:10 A League Of Their Own Road Trip:	15:00 Africa's Wild Year	16:00 Top Gear	18:00 Outback Opal Hunters	14:30 Home and Away
18:00 The Simpsons	18:10 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life	16:00 Hope For Wildlife	18:00 Hairy Bikers' Best of British	20:00 Deadliest Catch	15:00 Shortland Street
18:30 The Office (US)	19:10 Stargate SG-1	17:00 Great Blue Wild	19:00 Rick Stein's Secret France <small>Rick arrives in Perigord, famous for black truffles, walnuts and duck dishes. He cooks enchaud, a</small>	22:00 Body Bizarre	15:30 Fair City
20:00 The Simpsons	21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks	18:00 Wildlife Icons	20:00 Would I Lie To You?	00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters	16:30 Today
21:00 Whale With Steve Backshall	22:00 The 90's: Cinema's Greatest Decade	19:00 Island Of The Monsoon	20:45 Richard Osman's House of Games	18:00 The Big Bang Theory <small>Sheldon visits CalTech for the first time. Meanwhile, Georgie is furious when Mary listens in on a phone</small>	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
22:00 The Matrix	23:00 An Idiot Abroad	20:00 Monkey Life	22:00 QI XL	15:00 New: Mike & Molly	18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
00:30 The Essex Murders: Who Killed.	00:00 New: Fear The Walking Dead	21:00 Osprey	23:00 Will and Ralf Should Know Better	16:30 Young Sheldon <small>Sheldon visits CalTech for the first time. Meanwhile, Georgie is furious when Mary listens in on a phone</small>	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
		22:00 Extraordinary Animals	00:00 Taskmaster <small>Taskmaster Greg Davies returns with sidekick Alex Horne as five comics line up to attempt his mostly</small>	18:00 The Big Bang Theory <small>Sheldon and Raj go on an expedition that turns into a</small>	20:00 Nationwide
		23:00 Island Of The Monsoon		22:00 New: Hollywood Demons	20:30 EastEnders
		00:00 Wildlife Icons		00:00 Death By Fame	21:00 Scaita na Lochanna
					21:30 Saoi Na Feirme
					22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
					22:35 RTE Investigates - The Psychiatric Care Scandal
					23:40 Any Given Day: Cork University Hospital
					00:45 The Dry

Movies

Sky Premiere

10:40 Reckless (2025)
12:20 The Cut (2024)
14:00 M3GAN 2.0
16:10 Neighborhood Watch (2025)
17:50 The Naked Gun (2025)



Airlines schedule 10.3 million seats to fly to Alicante-Elche airport in 2026

Alicante-Elche Airport is already aiming for a new record in 2026 after surpassing all previous milestones in 2025, with nearly 20 million passengers - the highest figure in the terminal's history. With the airport expansion still in its early stages, attracting new routes was a key theme at Fitur, the tourism trade fair, to further develop the infrastructure at El Altet.

During a presentation at the Valencian Community's stand by the hotel association Hosbec, the first figures for this year were released, revealing a significant number of seats already booked. This is particularly relevant considering that many airlines have not yet launched their peak seasons, while others continue to increase frequencies or announce new routes.

Therefore, air capacity between January and October 2026 has seen a significant increase, rising from 9.43 million seats in 2025 to the nearly 10.3 million arrivals already scheduled, an 8.8% increase, according to Hosbec data. July remains the month with the most scheduled arrivals, with over 1.2 million seats.

By market, one in three seats scheduled for travel to Alicante-Elche Airport are concentrated in the United Kingdom, which continues to be the most important mar-

ket. Spain follows with a 12% share, and the Netherlands and Germany with almost 6% each. Belgium and Poland reach a 5% share, while Norway and France exceed 4%.

British airports have already scheduled more than 3.4 million seats for travel to Alicante between January and October 2026, an increase of 9.4%. Spain comes in second place, with 1.23 million seats, virtually unchanged from last year.



The strong growth of the Polish market stands out, continuing its rapid expansion with a 12.5% increase in available rooms, surpassing half a million. Other growing markets include Belgium (+16%) and Italy (+25.8%). Hosbec describes Italy as one of the emerging markets that is increasing connectivity with the province, and therefore the employers' association is calling for more promotion in this market.

Hosbec also highlighted two countries, both positive and negative. While the French market is experiencing a significant reduction of 3.6% due to "fatigue," a figure that worries the sector, on the other hand, the Algerian market is returning to normal, with arrivals expected to grow by 41.2%, reaching 236,700 beds.

Cadaques, Spain's hidden gem

Barcelona, Madrid, and Seville are among the most popular cities in Spain. They're unique in many ways and have many important sights that make you want to return all the time. However, visiting off-the-beaten-track and lesser-known destinations offers you a different side of Spain. You can fully enjoy places without crowds, discover more about the local culture and cuisine, and have a more authentic experience most of the time.

No matter which Spanish area you travel to, you can find hidden gem destinations if you explore its surroundings. One such place is Cadaques in Catalonia, located on the Cap de Creus Peninsula, and one of the most beautiful hidden gems in Catalonia. This location has enabled it to conserve a significant part of the original layout of many of its narrow, picturesque streets.



As a whole, the old quarter of Cadaqués is a protected historical area and has been declared a Cultural Asset of National Interest. Strolling through its narrow streets, surrounded by marvellous whitewashed houses with brightly coloured shutters, is one of the great charms of Cadaqués.

This seaside town is so picturesque that it has attracted well-known painters like Picasso and Salvador Dalí. Its whitewashed buildings, crystal-clear blue sea, and abundant green surround-

ings make a stunning landscape that seems straight from a postcard.

While visiting Cadaques, you can visit Salvador Dalí House and Museum, explore Cap de Creus National Park, wander the old town, and relax at one of its beautiful coves.

If you're a foodie, another reason to visit Cadaques is its mouthwatering cuisine combining sea and land products. If you love fish, Suquet de peix (fish and seafood stew) is a must-try!

Ryanair signals higher fares as bookings soar and passenger targets grow

Ryanair has warned that ticket prices on many routes, including popular flights to and from Spain, are now likely to rise more than it previously expected, as strong demand continues and passenger numbers are forecast to surge this year.

In its latest trading update, the airline said fares could increase by up to 9%, higher than the 7% rise it was forecasting back in November. Ryanair now expects to carry almost 208 million passengers over the year, driven by consistently busy travel periods and solid forward bookings.

Over the three months to the end of December, average fares rose by 4% to €44, while total revenue increased by 9% to €3.21bn. Passenger numbers were up 6% compared with the same period last year, reaching 47.5 million. The airline said strong bookings during the October half-term school holidays, along with Christmas and New Year travel, all fed into its more optimistic "fare outlook."

anair is sticking to its long-term target of reaching 300 million passengers a year by 2034. A big part of that growth is expected to come from its order of 300 Boeing 737 Max 10 aircraft. Chief executive Michael O'Leary told analysts that it was now more likely the first 15 planes, due in spring 2027, would arrive "early rather than late".



That is notable given Boeing's recent production problems and last year's factory strike in Seattle, which slowed manufacturing. Ryanair has previously said delivery delays have pushed fares higher because there were fewer seats available, but O'Leary said this week that he now expects the Max 10 order to arrive on schedule. The aircraft is more fuel efficient and has 21% more seats than the airline's current 737 Next Generation planes.

making headlines outside of its financial results. Just last week, O'Leary ruled out using Elon Musk's Starlink technology for in-flight wifi, triggering an online exchange between the two, which Ryanair later said even led to a small bump in bookings thanks to the publicity.

That followed attention last year on its strict cabin baggage rules, after Ryanair confirmed it had increased bonuses for ground staff who identify passengers with oversized bags, part of efforts to enforce luggage limits and keep flights on schedule.

While rising passenger numbers may be good news for the airline, it is less welcome for those planning to travel. With planes filling up and demand staying strong, Ryanair is clearly signalling that cheaper seats may be harder to find, especially during busy holiday periods, and that budget trips could soon be costing more than many travellers have become used to paying.

Image: wikicommons

Looking further ahead, Ry-

The airline has also been

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Date set for Wetherspoon opening at Alicante Airport

A chance for a pint and a feeling of home for UK passengers at Alicante Airport as Wetherspoon confirms opening of its first European pub.

It's official: Wetherspoon will be opening its first pub abroad in continental Europe, which will be at Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernandez Airport in Spain, and the finalised opening date for this new arrival at Alicante Airport has now been revealed.

The pub, which will be named Castell de Santa Bàrbara after the local Alicante landmark of the Santa Barbara Castle, will be located in the airport's departures area, airside, so that flyers can grab a pint before their gate is called.

While initial reports suggested the pub might be open by the end of January, Alicante Today was able to get confirmation from Wetherspoon that the new-build pub, which will be open seven days a week from 6am to 9pm, is scheduled to open on Monday February 9, 2026 at 11am.

"It will offer almost 1,000 square foot of customer space on one level, together with an external terrace with customer seating," according to Wetherspoon. "Food will be served at all times up to an hour before closing," so up until 8pm.

The planned menu will include many meals available in Wetherspoon pubs in the UK, including breakfast dishes, burgers and pizzas, plus a few sur-

prise twists with the addition of local Spanish dishes such as garlic prawns (gambas al ajillo) and Spanish omelette (tortilla de patatas).

Wetherspoon founder and chairman Tim Martin said, "We are very much looking forward to opening our first pub in Spain. We believe it will be popular with a wide range of customers, including those travelling home to the UK and those using the terminal for other destinations.

"We aim to open a number of pubs overseas in the coming months and years, including those at airports."

Cheers to that!



Say goodbye to sachets in Spanish restaurants



It's almost time to say goodbye to those little packets of ketchup, sugar and salt that clutter up restaurant tables across Spain. From 12th August, 2026, bars and restaurants will be banned from using single-serving sachets for sauces, condiments, oil, vinegar and pretty much anything else that currently comes in tiny plastic packets.

The change is down to new EU rules aimed at slashing plastic waste and pushing businesses towards more sustainable practices. The regulation, formally known as the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), has been in the pipeline for a while but now there's finally a firm date for when it kicks in.

Restaurants and bars will be first to comply, but the timeline extends much further. By 2030, the ban will spread to other sectors including hotels, which will have to ditch those miniature shampoo and shower gel bottles in favour of fixed, refillable containers. Cosmetic products and food packaging will also be affected.

There is one big exception though. Single-serving sachets will still be allowed for food delivery orders, with the EU citing hygiene and transportation reasons for the exemption. So restaurants can keep stocking the packets as long as they're only used for takeaway meals. The same exception applies to healthcare and care facilities. So when you order that Saturday

night curry, make sure you save any unused ketchup or mayo for later.

In 2032, the European Union will review the whole scheme to assess its environmental and health impact. That evaluation will cover not just the sachet ban but also regulations on disposable tableware like cups and plates, as well as the hotel sector's switch to refillable containers.

Officials will use the findings to make improvements or adjustments to the rules, with the overall focus remaining on reducing waste that currently makes up the bulk of solid refuse across Europe and causes significant pollution.

If you want better hair, start in the kitchen!

Most people searching for thicker, faster-growing hair reach first for serums, supplements and expensive treatments. Yet hair growth is driven largely by what the body receives every day through food. Hair follicles are among the most metabolically active structures in the body, meaning they require a constant supply of energy, protein and micronutrients to function properly. When nourishment is steady, hair grows more consistently, sheds less and feels visibly stronger over time.

Protein at Every Meal

Hair is made almost entirely of keratin, a protein structure. If dietary protein intake is low, the body conserves resources for vital organs and hair growth slows. Including a clear protein source at every meal helps maintain supply. Eggs, Greek yoghurt, fish, lentils, tofu and lean meats are excellent

options. For most adults, aiming for protein at breakfast, lunch and dinner supports consistent follicle activity and better hair density over time.

Healthy Fats Feed the Scalp

A well-nourished scalp creates a healthier environment for hair growth. Omega-3 fats support skin hydration and reduce dryness that can weaken hair shafts. Oily fish twice per week, along with nuts, seeds and olive oil throughout the week, helps maintain natural shine and elasticity.

Iron and Zinc Build Thickness

Iron delivers oxygen to the hair root, while zinc supports tissue repair and growth. Low iron is a common contributor to thinning, especially in women. Red meat once or twice weekly, lentils, leafy greens and

fortified cereals help maintain healthy levels. Zinc appears in pumpkin seeds, eggs, seafood and whole grains. These nutrients work slowly but reliably when intake is consistent.

Vitamins That Strengthen the Fibre

B vitamins assist cellular energy production, vitamin C supports collagen formation and iron absorption, and vitamin D contributes to follicle cycling. A colourful plate of vegetables and fruit daily ensures coverage without excessive supplementation. Whole foods remain more effective than isolated tablets for most people.

What Growth Really Looks Like

Healthy hair grows roughly one centimetre per month. No food or supplement can dramatically accelerate this rate, but nutrition

can reduce breakage, improve thickness and support stronger regrowth over months rather than weeks. Consistency matters far more than intensity.

Building a Hair-Friendly Routine

Think in simple habits rather than perfection. Eat protein with each meal, include healthy fats daily, prioritise iron-rich foods several times per week, hydrate consistently and avoid extreme dieting. Hair responds to stability, not restriction.

Thicker Hair Is a Long Game

Strong, abundant hair is built quietly through regular nourishment, not overnight solutions. When the body feels safe, fuelled and balanced, hair follows, growing steadily, feeling fuller and reflecting health from the inside out.

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Quesada Fish and Chips

What energy drinks are really doing to your heart

Energy drinks have emerged as a “go-to boost” drink for millions of people around the globe, ranging from students who are studying for final exams to professionals who need to meet a deadline during the night. Beneath the flashy packaging and aggressive marketing push, there is a serious question begging to be answered: What is happening to your heart because of these drinks?

The typical energy drink contains a hardcore combination of caffeine (usually 80-300 mg per serving), sugar, and other stimulants, such as taurine and guarana; all of these are aimed at giving an instant push to the energy level. Although the moderate dose of caffeine itself can be safe, consuming lots of energy drinks exceeds the recommended dose significantly, and additional additives can enhance its effect on your cardiovascular system.

Most of the studies substantiate the fact that energy drinks can raise the heart rate and blood pressure in the short term after consumption. Studies also indicate that these drinks often lead to a rise in systolic and diastolic blood pressure—up to 20 beats per minute or more—and are capable of distorting the heartbeat. An increased heartbeat is not a simple case of the jitters; the alteration of the blood pressure and heart rhythm can result in palpitations, tachycardia (an increase in heartbeats), and irregular heartbeats (arrhythmias) even in healthy individuals.

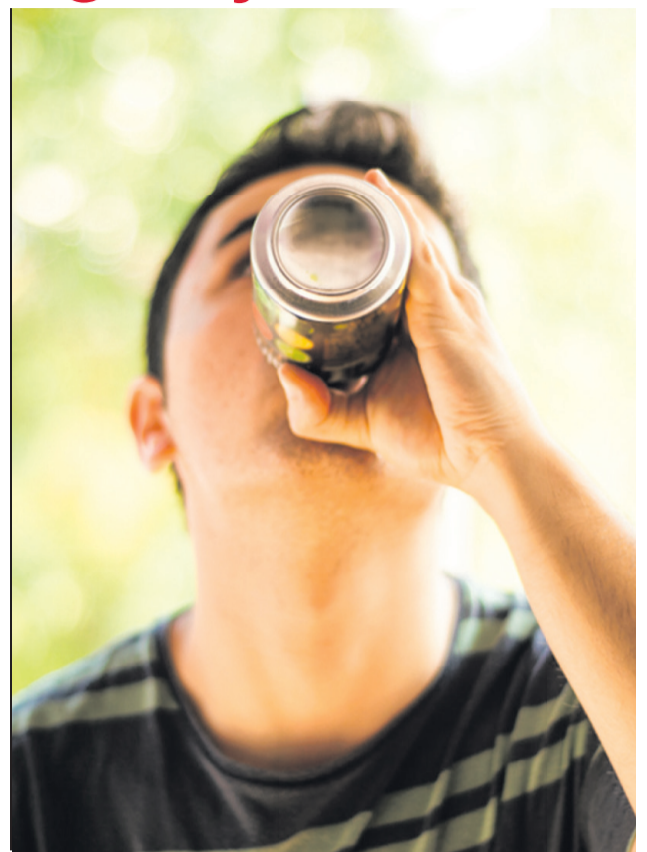
Caffeine and other components have a stimulating effect

on the cardiovascular system. Rising Blood Pressure: Repeated spikes may lead to weakening of blood vessels over time, increasing cardiovascular risk in the long term.

- **Electrical Rhythms Gone Awry:** Irregular heart rhythms involving prolonged QT and intervals—a common risk marker of arrhythmias—have been observed in numerous studies.
- **Potential of Serious Events:** Cases of severe heart-related events are reported to occur upon taking the energy drinks, particularly in patients who have not been diagnosed with heart-related conditions, though these instances are relatively few.

A single can of energy drinks can cause an immediate boost of energy, but intensive and regular consumption of energy drinks is bad. Acute strokes of stimulants may cause permanent hypertension, vascular stress, and susceptibility to heart disease and stroke in old age.

It is not necessarily fatal to indulge in an energy drink occasionally, but a daily dose of it will overwork your heart even before you can suspect anything. To use safely, consume occasionally, check labels carefully, and think of other sources of healthier energy, such as good sleep, balanced diets, sufficient hydration, and natural caffeine from tea or coffee.



The art of the homemade pantry

There is something quietly powerful about a well-stocked pantry. It represents independence, creativity, and a return to practical skills that once defined everyday life. In a world of convenience foods and endless packaging, filling your shelves with things you have made yourself brings a deeper sense of nourishment, economy and pride. A pantry built on homemade staples is not about perfection or rustic fantasy; it is about knowing what you eat, reducing waste, and reconnecting with the simple pleasure of making something with your hands.

Bread as the Foundation of Everyday Nourishment

One of the most satisfying places to begin is with bread. Flour, water, salt and either commercial yeast or a natural sourdough starter are among the simplest ingredients imaginable, yet together they create one of humanity's oldest comforts. Baking your own bread allows you to avoid preservatives and unnecessary sugars while controlling texture, flavour and nutrition. Allowing the dough to ferment slowly develops flavour and improves digestibility, while simple flatbreads can be mixed, rested briefly and cooked directly in a hot pan for everyday meals. Once bread becomes part of your weekly rhythm, you begin to realise how little effort it truly requires and how much quality it adds to the table.

Butter and the Beauty of Simple Transformation

Butter is another revelation when made at home. Cold cream shaken in a jar or whisked steadily separates into solid butter and liquid buttermilk within minutes. Rinsing the butter in cold water removes excess whey and improves keeping quality, while a light seasoning of salt preserves freshness and flavour. You can fold in herbs, citrus zest or honey for flavoured butters that melt beautifully over vegetables, fish or warm bread.

Preserving the Seasons Through Pickling

Pickling opens the door to preserving seasons, reducing food waste and building flavour depth in everyday cooking. Quick pickles are made by pouring hot vinegar seasoned with sugar and spices over sliced vegetables and allowing them to cool and marinate, while fermented pickles rely on vegetables submerged in lightly salted water and left at room temperature for several days until naturally tangy. Both methods extend shelf life and bring brightness and crunch to simple dishes.

Creating Your Own Everyday Pantry Staples

Pantry confidence grows when you realise how many staples can be made at home with little more than a jar and a whisk. A balanced salad dressing forms by shaking good olive oil with vinegar or lemon juice, a spoon of mustard to help emulsify, and seasoning adjusted to taste. Fresh lemonade comes together by dissolving sugar or

honey into warm water, adding freshly squeezed citrus juice, then topping up with cold water or sparkling mineral water. Olive oil gently warmed with dried herbs, citrus peel or chilli becomes a fragrant infusion once cooled and strained. Natural yoghurt forms by heating milk, cooling it slightly, stirring in live yoghurt cultures and keeping it warm overnight until thickened. Granola bakes slowly in the oven when oats, nuts and seeds are lightly coated in honey or maple syrup and stirred halfway through for even toasting.



Sweet Treats Without the Hidden Additives

Healthy treats deserve a place on the shelf as well. Simple chocolate snacks set by melting cocoa powder with coconut oil and a natural sweetener before chilling in moulds or trays. Energy bites are made by blending dates with nuts, seeds and cocoa, then rolling into small portions and storing chilled.

Slow-simmered fruit gently breaks down into glossy compotes that replace syrups and spreads without unnecessary sugar.

Building a Pantry That Feeds Body and Budget

Dry goods form the backbone of a resilient pantry because they store well, cost little and adapt to countless meals. Beans and lentils improve dramatically when soaked and simmered gently with simple aromatics, developing depth and texture that tinned versions rarely achieve. Grains become far more satisfying when rinsed properly and cooked with measured water and steady heat, resulting in better flavour and digestibility. Saving vegetable trimmings or leftover bones to make homemade stock stretches ingredients further while adding richness to everyday cooking, and lightly toasting whole spices releases natural oils that elevate even the simplest dishes. Together, these small techniques transform humble cupboard staples into nourishing, economical meals.

The Living Pantry and the Art of Fermentation

Fermentation expands the pantry into living food, preserving ingredients naturally while enhancing flavour and digestibility. Sauerkraut develops when finely shredded cabbage is massaged with salt until it releases enough liquid to remain submerged in its own brine, allowing beneficial bacteria to ferment the vegetables slowly in an oxygen-limited environment.

Kefir forms when live kefir grains are added to fresh milk and left at room temperature to culture gently over time, producing a lightly tangy, probiotic-rich drink. A sourdough starter grows from flour and water refreshed regularly, allowing natural wild yeast and beneficial bacteria to establish a stable culture that provides natural leavening and complex flavour in bread.

A Return to Everyday Self-Reliance

Beyond nutrition and economy, there is an emotional reward in stocking a homemade pantry. It builds confidence in your ability to provide, encourages mindful consumption, and nurtures creativity as meals evolve from what is already available rather than what must be purchased. The kitchen shifts from a place of constant buying into a space of thoughtful production.

Creating Abundance From What You Already Have

The beauty of this approach is that it requires neither perfection nor large investment. A few jars, basic ingredients and a willingness to experiment are enough to begin. Each small success builds momentum, whether it is your first loaf rising beautifully, a jar of pickles snapping crisp, a bottle of fresh lemonade cooling in the fridge or a slab of homemade chocolate setting on the counter. Real abundance often comes not from buying more, but from learning how much you can already create yourself.



Lemon garlic salmon tray bake

A tasty salmon tray bake recipe that's as simple as it is healthy. Salmon infused with an assertive lemon garlic marinade cooks in just 11 minutes alongside parmesan asparagus and blistered cherry tomatoes.

Green beans would also work great, or thin broccolini stems. Shower with parmesan and squeeze of lemon for an easy finishing touch.

Ingredients

- 4 x 180g/6 oz salmon fillets, skin on or off.

Marinade slather:

- 1 tsp lemon zest (1 lemon)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, grated
- 1/2 tsp cooking salt / kosher salt

- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Vegetables (optional):

- 3 bunches asparagus, woody ends snapped or trimmed off
- 200g/ 7 oz cherry tomatoes (or grape tomatoes, 1 Aussie punnet)
- 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper

Cooking & serving:

- Olive oil spray
- Parmesan, finely grated
- Lemon wedges or slices, optional
- Parsley, finely chopped, optional
- Crusty bread or toast, for serving

Instructions

Lemon garlic paste – Mix the marinade ingredients in a small bowl. Slather onto the top and sides of the salmon. If

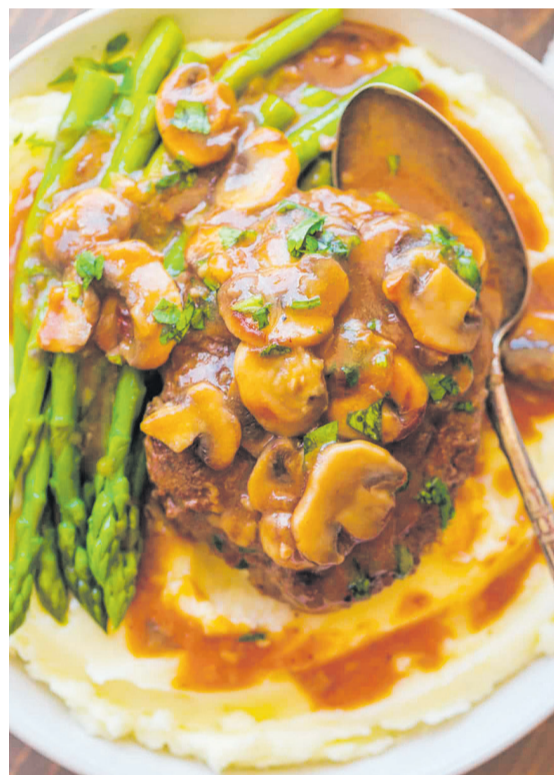
time permits, marinate for 1 hour. Otherwise, proceed with recipe.

Preheat oven grill / broiler to 280°C/525°F or as high as yours goes. Place the oven shelf 20 cm /8" from the heat source.

Prepare tray – Toss the asparagus and cherry tomatoes with the olive oil, salt and pepper. Spread out on a large tray then clear space for the salmon. Place salmon on the tray leaving a bit of space between each. Spray surface of salmon with oil.

Cook – Grill/broil for 11 minutes or until the salmon is done – the flesh should flake, the internal temperature should be 50°C/122°F (Note 5).

Serve – Transfer salmon and vegetables to plate. Grate parmesan over the vegetables. Squeeze lemon juice over the salmon, sprinkle with parsley. Eat!



Salisbury Steak with Mushroom Gravy

Salisbury steak is a great way to transform humble beef mince into something amazing! The onion grating and soaking breadcrumbs will make your dish extra tasty and tender, and the Mushroom Gravy is made extra delicious by cooking the Salisbury Steaks IN the gravy.

Ingredients

Salisbury Steak

- 0.5 onion (white, brown or yellow)
- 0.5 cup panko breadcrumbs (or 1/3 cup ordinary breadcrumbs)
- 1 lb/500g ground beef (mince)
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp ketchup
- 1 beef bouillon cube, crumbled
- 0.5 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tsp Dijon mustard or 2 tsp dry mustard powder

Gravy

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 0.5 onion, finely chopped
- 5 oz/150g mushrooms, sliced
- 30g / 2 tbsp unsalted butter

- 35 g flour (plain)
- 500 ml beef broth / stock, low sodium
- 125 ml water
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

Salisbury Steaks

Onion grating – Place breadcrumbs in a bowl. Use a box grater and grate the onion over the breadcrumbs. Mix with fingers, leave to soak for a few minutes.

Mix – Add remaining Salisbury Steak ingredients into the large bowl. Use your hands to mix until just combined. Mix well for a couple of minutes until the mixture becomes a bit "pasty" which will ensure your patties hold together well.

Form patties – Divide into 5 and pat very firmly into oval patties around 3/4" / 1 2/3 cm thick.

Cooking and Gravy

Brown patties – Heat oil in a skillet over high heat. Add the steaks and cook the first side for 1 minute or until browned, then gently flip and brown the other side

(they will still be raw inside). Remove onto plate.

Cook aromatics – If skillet is looking dry, add a touch more oil. Add chopped onion and garlic and cook for 2 minute until onions are a bit translucent.

Cook mushrooms – Add the mushrooms into the skillet and cook for 2 – 3 minutes until golden.

Make gravy roux – Turn heat down to medium. Add butter. Once melted, add flour and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly.

Gravy – Gradually add in beef broth, stirring as you go. Once mostly lump free, whisk in remaining Gravy ingredients.

Finish cooking steaks – Add steaks along with the juices on the plate. Cook for 5 – 7 minutes, or until gravy is thickened, stirring occasionally around the steaks. If the gravy thickens too quickly, add more water.

Season gravy – Remove steaks onto a plate. Taste gravy and adjust salt and pepper to taste.

Serve salisbury steaks topped with the mushroom gravy – over mashed potato is ideal! Sprinkle with a bit of parsley if desired.

Chilli Lime Fish

Chilli Lime Fish

Pan-seared chunks of white fish are coated in a syrupy, spicy lime sauce in this dish based on a traditional Thai street stall favourite. It tastes a bit like a fish version of everybody's favourite Chilli Garlic Prawns.

Ingredients

Fish:

- 330g / 11 oz thin white fish fillets (~1cm / 0.4" thick), skinless, cut into 6cm / 2.5" (or so) squares pieces
- 0.25 tsp cooking/kosher salt
- 0.25 cup rice flour or ordinary flour
- 2 tbsp canola oil

Sauce:

- 2 tsp sesame oil
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced with a knife
- 2 tsp ginger, finely minced with a knife
- 1 tsp chilli flakes / red pepper flakes

- 2 tbsp sriracha
- 2 tsp light soy sauce or fish sauce
- 35 g brown sugar
- 125 ml water
- 2 tbsp lime juice

Garnishes (optional):

- 2 tbsp coriander/cilantro leaves
- 1 tsp large red chilli, finely sliced
- Lime wedges

Serve with:

- Rice of choice (jasmine, white, brown)
- Steamed Asian greens tossed with Asian Sesame Dressing

Instructions

Fish:

Dust fish – Sprinkle with salt, dust with rice flour, shake off excess.

Cook fish – In a non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook the fish until golden on each side then remove to a

plate.

Fish cooking times – Thin fillets 1 cm / 2/5" thick: 1 1/2 minutes each side; thicker fillets 1.5 – 1.75cm / 0.6 – 0.75" thick 2 minutes each side) or until the internal temperature is 55°C / 130°F. Remove fish to a plate and set aside.

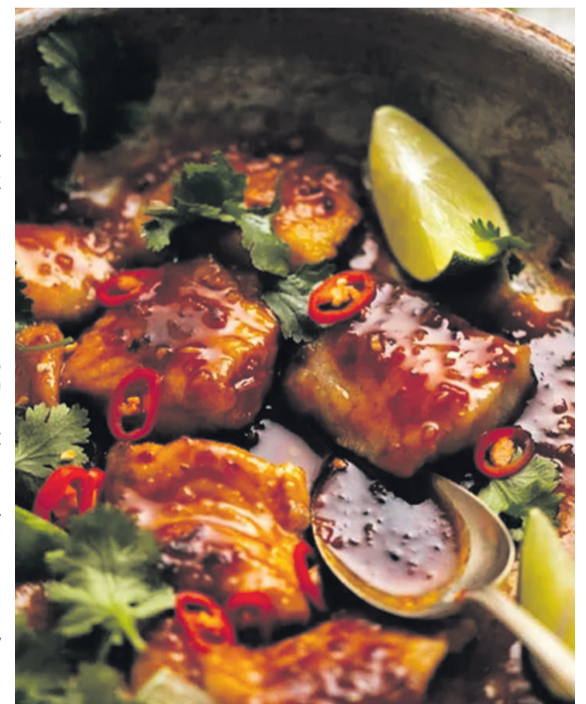
Sauce:

Sauté aromatics – In the same pan, add sesame oil on medium heat. Cook garlic, chilli and ginger until golden – about 20 seconds.

Sauce – Add everything else except lime juice. Stir, simmer, then reduce until syrupy – about 2 minutes. Add lime juice and stir. (If sauce gets too thick, add water)

Coat fish – Return fish into sauce, turning to coat in the sauce.

Serve over rice, with garnishes of choice! Pictured with steamed baby pak choy tossed with Asian Sesame Dressing.





Five Steps to Mental Wellbeing

Research shows there are five steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these actions could help you feel more positive and better able to get the most out of life.

Connect with Other People

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- Help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- Give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- Provide emotional support and allow you to support others

Do:

If possible, take time each day to be with your family. For example, try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together.

Arrange a day out with friends you have not seen for a while.

Try switching off the TV to talk or play a game with your children, friends, or family.

Have lunch with a colleague.

Visit a friend or family member who needs support or company. Volunteer at a local school, hospital, or community group. Find out how to volunteer on the GOV.UK website.

Make the most of technology to stay in touch with friends and family. Video chat apps such as Skype and FaceTime are useful,

especially if you live far apart.

Don't:

Rely on technology or social media alone to build relationships. It is easy to fall into the habit of only texting, messaging, or emailing people.

Be Physically Active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows that it can improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Raising your self-esteem
- Helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- Causing chemical changes in your brain that can positively affect your mood

Read about exercise guidelines and workouts to help improve your fitness and wellbeing.

Do:

Read about exercises such as running and aerobic activities to help get you moving and improve your fitness.

Read about how to improve your strength and flexibility to increase muscle strength, improve balance, and reduce joint pain.

If you are a wheelchair user, read fitness advice designed specifically for wheelchair users.

Don't:

Do not feel that you have to spend hours in a gym. It is best to find activities you enjoy and



make them part of your life.

Learn New Skills

Research shows that learning new skills can improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem
- Helping you build a sense of purpose
- Helping you connect with others

Even if you feel you do not have enough time, or think you may not need to learn new things, there are many ways to bring learning into your life.

Do:

Try learning to cook something new. Find out more about eating a healthy, balanced diet.

Take on a new responsibility at work, such as mentoring a junior colleague or improving your presentation skills.

Work on a DIY project, such as fixing a broken bike, garden gate, or something larger. There are many free video tutorials online.

Consider signing up for a course at a local college. You could learn a new language or a practical skill such as plumbing.

Try new hobbies that challenge you, such as writing a blog, taking up a new sport, or learning to paint.

Don't:

Do not feel that you need to gain new qualifications or sit exams if this does not interest you. It is best to find activities you enjoy and make them part of your life.

Give to Others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can improve your mental wellbeing by:

- Creating positive feelings and a sense of reward

- Giving you a sense of purpose and self-worth
- Helping you connect with other people

This could include small acts of kindness or larger contributions such as volunteering in your local community.

Some examples include:

Saying thank you to someone for something they have done for you.

Asking friends, family, or colleagues how they are and truly listening to their answer.

Spending time with people who need support or company.

Offering to help someone with a DIY task or work project.

Volunteering in your community, such as helping at a school, hospital, or care home.

Mindfulness – Pay Attention to the Present Moment

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing. This includes being aware of your thoughts and feelings, your body, and the world around you.

Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". Mindfulness can help you enjoy life more and understand yourself better. It can positively change how you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

Health centres become welcoming spaces in Torrevieja and Pilar

Three health centres in Torrevieja and Pilar de la Horadada have been transformed into friendlier and more welcoming spaces thanks to a humanisation project led by the University of Alicante (UA) headquarters in Torrevieja, with illustrations created by graphic designer Alba Granero Morales.

The initiative, developed in collaboration and coordination with the Torrevieja Health Department, the Torrevieja City Council, the Valencian Regional Ministry of Health, the University of Alicante, and the Habaneras Shopping Centre, aims to improve the experience of families and patients in spaces dedicated to childcare, paediatrics, and breastfeeding. It has been implemented in the La Loma and El Acequión health centres, the largest in Torrevieja, and the Pilar de la Horadada health centre.

This project is part of a quality process called IHAN accreditation, the Initiative for the Humanization of Birth and Breastfeeding Care. It is a distinction awarded by the non-prof-

it association promoted by WHO, the World Health Organisation, and UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, which encourages Spanish maternity wards, health centres, and neonatal units to adopt practices that protect, promote, and support humanized childbirth and exclusive breastfeeding from birth.

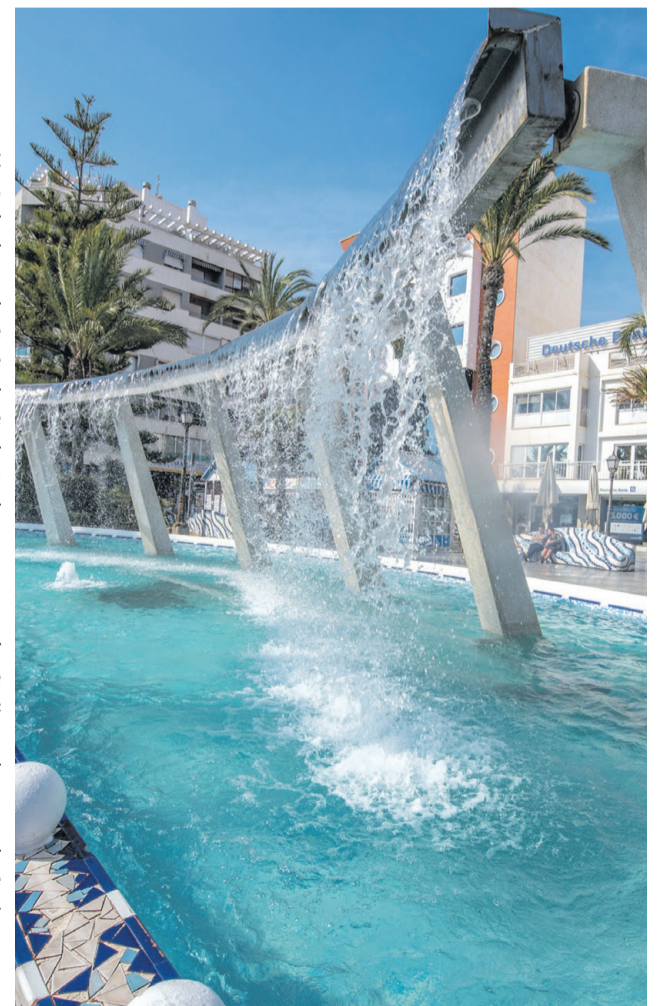
The Torrevieja Primary Care Health Department has been working in this area for more than 15 years, but the Pilar de la Horadada Health Centre has only recently received the IHAN award.

The presentation of the IHAN (Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative) award to the Pilar de la Horadada Health Centre took place recently in the auditorium of the Pilar Local Police Station. The illustrator, Alba Granero, explained the emotional and educational approach of her work, developed in coordination with Jesús Segarra-Saavedra, Professor at the University of Alicante (UA) and Director of the UA's Torrevieja Campus, and Nancy Lorena Cárcamo Collati, a midwife from the department's

breastfeeding committee. The event was also attended by José Cano, manager of the Torrevieja Health Department, other senior health directors and IHAN representatives.

In total, seven graphic design professionals submitted proposals for the project. Alba Granero's ideas were selected for their figurative and approachable style, aligned with the Torrevieja Health Department's objective of humanizing spaces through an everyday, respectful, and representative perspective that reflects the cultural diversity of Torrevieja and the surrounding area.

The project has transformed four key spaces: the waiting room, the breastfeeding room, the paediatric consultation room, and the nursing consultation room. Each space features a distinct illustration that forms part of a single visual universe, linked by concepts such as care, connection, protection, and closeness. The health centres participating in this pilot programme were La Loma and El Acequión, both in Torrevieja, as well as the one in Pilar de la Horadada.



Reconnecting With Life: How Hearing Aids Help People Feel Present Again

Hearing loss rarely arrives all at once. It often slips in quietly, changing daily life in ways that are easy to dismiss at first. Conversations start to feel harder to follow. Background noise becomes exhausting. Moments that once felt effortless begin to require real concentration. Over time, many people find themselves withdrawing – not because they want to, but because listening has become tiring and frustrating.

It's common for people to adapt by smiling and nodding, hoping they've understood enough. Group conversations can feel overwhelming, and social situations that were once enjoyable may begin to feel stressful. Little by little, confidence can fade, replaced by a sense of disconnection from the people and places that matter most.

For many, taking the first step and booking a hearing as-

essment can feel daunting. Worries about looking old, dependent, or different often stand in the way. Yet modern hearing care is about much more than test results. It starts with being listened to. We take time to understand individual concerns, daily challenges, and what truly matters to each person's life.

When hearing aids are introduced, the impact can be surprisingly emotional. Many people notice everyday sounds returning – sounds they hadn't realised they were missing. Voices become clearer, conversations flow more naturally, and listening no longer feels like hard work. The effort of constantly trying to keep up begins to fade.

Perhaps the most meaningful change is the effect on relationships. When communication improves, frustration eases on both sides. People feel more present in conver-



sations, more confident contributing, and more connected to family, friends, and their wider community. Laughter comes more easily. Moments feel shared again.

Hearing aids also help restore independence. With clearer hearing comes renewed confidence to socialise, take part

in hobbies, and engage with the world without hesitation. Rather than feeling limited, many people describe feeling like themselves again.

Today's hearing aids are discreet, comfortable, and designed to fit real lives. They are not symbols of loss, but tools that support connec-

tion, confidence, and emotional well-being.

Hearing loss does not have to mean stepping back from life. With the right support and modern hearing solutions, it is possible to feel present, engaged, and truly connected once more – at any age.



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Ranges	Bernafon Alpha 1	Oticon Zircon 2 Bernafon Alpha 3	Oticon Intent 4 Bernafon Encanta 100	Oticon Intent 3 Bernafon Encanta 200	Oticon Intent 2 Bernafon Encanta 300	Oticon Intent 1 Bernafon Encanta 400
Suitability	Home 1-1 Conversation TV	Family Family gatherings Shopping	Groups Cafes Small groups	Social Large groups Terraces Sports	Complex Restaurants Parties Bars	Demanding Concerts Theatre Music
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Turn to page 34 for all puzzle solutions.

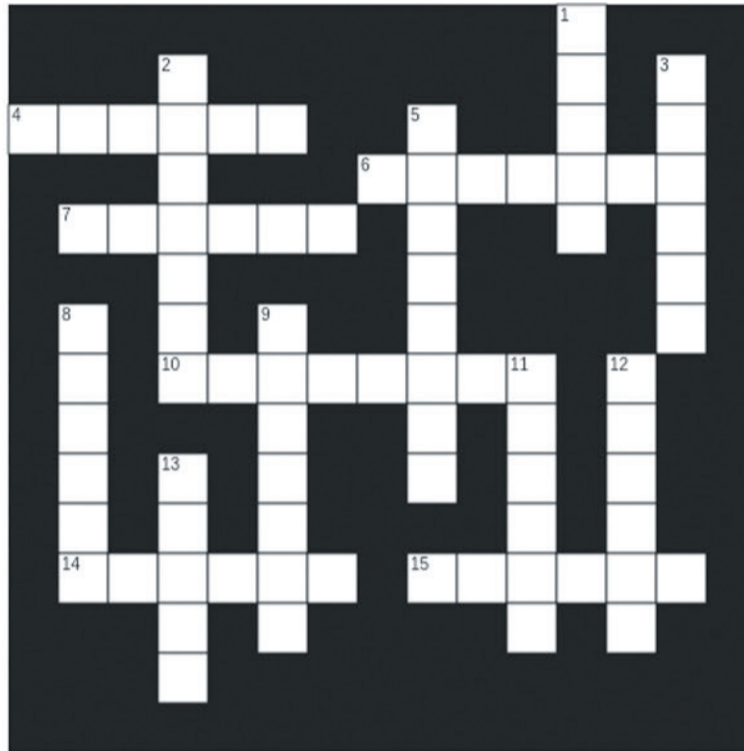


Word Ladder — Easy (4 letters)

Change one letter at a time to turn the start word into the end word. Every step must be a valid word.

1	R O A D	START
2	- - - -	
3	- - - -	
4	- - - -	
5	- - - -	
6	- - - -	
7	P A T H	END

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 4. Combat sport with gloves
- 6. Intelligent marine mammal
- 7. Citrus fruit
- 10. Large gray mammal with trunk
- 14. Hopping animal with long ears
- 15. Winter snow sport

DOWN

- 1. Japanese rice and fish dish
- 2. Tallest land animal
- 3. Yellow curved fruit
- 5. Tall land formation
- 8. World's most popular sport
- 9. Flightless bird from Antarctica
- 11. Racket sport with net
- 12. Land surrounded by water

SUDOKU



Word Ladder — Medium (5 letters)

Change one letter at a time to turn the start word into the end word. Every step must be a valid word.

1	S T O N E	START
2	- - - - -	
3	- - - - -	
4	- - - - -	
5	- - - - -	
6	- - - - -	
7	- - - - -	
8	- - - - -	
9	M O N E Y	END

1					3			9
			8	2				1
				4		2		
					9	8		
	6							5
							4	
4	5					3		
6					4			7
	8	7		6			5	



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New scooter rules kick in across Spain

If you use an electric scooter in Spain, you may already be used to rules changing, being delayed, then changing again. Last week, however, one of the biggest shifts has finally arrived, and for some riders there is no longer any grace period.

From Monday January 26, the Directorate General of Traffic (DGT) has officially brought in new requirements for electric scooters and other personal mobility vehicles, marking the end of a long transition phase that has been discussed for months.

The headline change is insurance, but not everyone needs it yet. Under Law 5/2025, only scooters classed as heavier or more powerful are affected for now. That means models weighing more than 25 kilos, or those designed to exceed 14 km/h, must now have civil liability insurance in place to continue using public roads. As the DGT has made clear, "the transition period has ended and compliance is now mandatory".

Lighter, slower scooters are tem-

porarily exempt. If your scooter weighs under 25 kilos and does not exceed 14 km/h, insurance is not yet required. This exemption exists because there is still no national system in place to register all scooters, something the DGT has openly acknowledged will need a new royal decree before it can hap-



pen.

Importantly, even those scooters that do need insurance will not have to be registered, and number plates are not being introduced at this stage. The DGT has confirmed there is currently "no operational national registry" capable of handling this.

What will apply to all scooters, regardless of size, is the controversial V16 flashing emergency light, which becomes compulsory in the same way it already is for cars.

Despite criticism of the device, the requirement is going ahead.

Riders who ignore the new rules risk fines of between 200 and 1,000 euros. The insurance itself is managed through the Consorcio de Compensación de Seguros (Spain's Insurance Compensation Consortium) and only covers injury to third parties. Any damage to your own scooter or other property remains the rider's responsibility.

There is another change on the horizon too. The DGT is pressing ahead with plans to require a circulation certificate for all scooters. Those bought before January 21, 2024 have until 2027 to comply, while any purchased after that date must already have the certificate.

For many riders, especially those who have been following the debate for months, this will feel like the rules finally catching up with reality. The key message from the authorities is simple: check your scooter's weight and speed, know where you stand, and avoid an expensive surprise.

Spain grants grace period for V-16 beacons



Drivers in Spain who have yet to get their hands on the new V-16 emergency beacon can breathe a small sigh of relief. Despite the device being mandatory since 1st January, traffic officers will initially take a softer approach before reaching for the fine book.

Interior Minister Fernando Grande Mar-

laska confirmed that there will be a grace period during which motorists will not be penalised for failing to display the new warning light.

"Our intention is not to raise revenue. Officers will be flexible and will prioritise providing information over issuing fines for a reasonable period of time," Mr Marlaska said, although he stopped short of saying how long this period of leniency will last.

The minister stressed that the change is first and foremost about safety. According to official figures, around 25 people are killed each year while attempting to place emergency warning triangles on Spanish roads.

"Everyone who has ever gotten out of their car to place a triangle knows the danger involved," Mr Marlaska stated, underlining

what he described as the "essential" need for measures to reduce these deaths.

He also dismissed concerns that the new beacon could increase the risk of robberies or roadside assaults by broadcasting the location of broken-down vehicles.

"With this device connected, the Traffic Department automatically knows there's a vehicle in that area and alerts all units, so I think the risk decreases even more than if that vehicle hadn't activated the beacon," he explained.

Visibility complaints were also brushed aside. Mr Marlaska insisted that the V-16 offers strong visual coverage, saying it "has a range of one kilometre, guaranteeing perfect visibility."

He added that "it also offers connectivity,

which is another form of virtual visibility, allowing drivers to know well in advance when a vehicle is stopped and to see it on a map."

As for how many drivers have already made the switch, the minister admitted there are no official figures.

"I hope everyone has it because it's been mandatory since January 1st," he said, while noting that uptake is steadily increasing. "Around 3,000 drivers are already using it every day."

Mr Marlaska also pointed out that Spain is leading the way with the new system. While it is the first country to implement the V-16 beacon nationwide, he said several European countries are closely watching the Spanish rollout before deciding whether to follow suit themselves.

DGT cracks down on WhatsApp checkpoint alerts

If you're in one of those WhatsApp or Telegram groups that ping alerts about police checkpoints, it might be time to think again. The DGT has launched a determined effort across Spain to identify and shut down groups that tip off drivers about mobile radar positions and, especially, alcohol and drug checks. The message is clear: belonging is fine, but sending warnings could land you a fine from €601 up to a hefty €30,000.

For many, these groups have become a familiar part of driving life here, with thousands of members across local areas receiving instant notifications about speed cameras or Guardia Civil stops. Typically, one driver spots a checkpoint and posts

the exact location, giving others seconds to slow down, take a detour or prepare themselves. While some see it as helpful information sharing, the DGT views these alerts as a direct threat to road safety.

The distinction matters. It's perfectly legal to warn about fixed speed cameras, since the DGT publishes their locations precisely so drivers know where to be cautious. However, posting about mobile alcohol or drug checkpoints crosses the line. These warnings undermine efforts to keep impaired drivers off the roads, which is why they now carry serious penalties. Group administrators and frequent posters face the highest fines, and since everything is recorded with timestamps and user de-

tails, tracking offenders is straightforward for authorities.

Recent action shows they're serious. On Saturday January 4 in Ibiza, the Guardia Civil reported a woman who used Telegram to alert others about a nearby traffic checkpoint. She now faces a penalty for this offence. Simple membership without posting carries no risk, but the DGT warns that these groups make it easier for dangerous drivers to evade detection and stay on the road.

The logic behind the crackdown makes sense when you consider the stakes. Drunk or drugged drivers are among the biggest killers on Spanish roads, and any-



thing that helps them slip through checks directly endangers everyone else. If you're currently in one of these groups, staying silent keeps you legal, but if you're worried then leaving altogether avoids any doubt.



Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)

Life
Aquarius, your innovative mind is buzzing with ideas. Channel this creativity into a quirky DIY project or invent a new game. Don't forget to involve friends in your unique endeavors—they'll be more fun with a sprinkle of your eccentric charm!

Mind
Your innovative spirit is at its peak, making it a great time to brainstorm new ideas. Encourage yourself to think outside the box, but balance your inventive moments with grounding activities like yoga or gardening. Connect with like-minded individuals for inspiration.

Heart
Innovation is your forte, Aquarius. This week, try a fresh approach in your relationships. Whether it's planning a surprise or introducing a new idea, your creativity will invigorate your connections. Be open to change and enjoy the positive energy it brings.

Aries (21 Mar – 19 Apr)
Life
Your week starts with a burst of energy, Aries! Channel this enthusiasm into tidying up—your sock drawer might look less like a black hole. Just remember, when communicating, pause before sending that emoji-laden email. A simple smiley face goes a long way!

Mind
This week, channel your energy into organizing your personal space. Clearing clutter can refresh your mind and create a peaceful, balanced environment. Enjoy a walk in nature to recharge your creative energies, and remember to take a moment to appreciate your accomplishments.

Heart
This week, open your heart to new experiences in relationships. A fresh perspective can bring you closer to someone special. Consider sharing a hobby or interest with your partner to strengthen your bond. Remember, a little kindness goes a long way in nurturing connections.

Cancer (21 Jun – 22 Jul)
Life
Cancer, it's a fantastic week to focus on your nest. Rearrange a room or add a touch of green with a new plant. Your nurturing vibes are contagious, so friends might reach out for advice. Remember to sprinkle positivity and a dash of humor!

Mind
Home is your sanctuary this week, so invest time in making it cozy and inviting. Small changes, like adding plants or rearranging furniture, can enhance the atmosphere. Reach out to family or close friends for meaningful conversations that nurture your soul.

Heart
This week, your nurturing nature shines, Cancer. Offer your support to those you care about, and don't hesitate to express your feelings. A shared activity or memory could bring you and a loved one closer. Just be yourself, and your warmth will do wonders.

Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)
Life
Capricorn, take a break from climbing that ambitious mountain and enjoy the view. Engage in a leisurely activity that relaxes your mind. A board game night might be just what you need to reconnect with loved ones and share some laughs.

Mind
This week, take steps to bolster your well-being by setting clear boundaries. Manage your time wisely to ensure a balance between responsibilities and relaxation. Enjoy a hobby that brings you joy, and let it serve as a reminder of the importance of leisure.

Heart
Steady and thoughtful, Capricorn, this week focus on building a strong foundation in your relationships. A simple gesture, like writing a thoughtful note or spending quality time, will resonate deeply. Your consistent effort is appreciated and will be repaid in kind.

Gemini (21 May – 20 Jun)
Life
Gemini, your curiosity is at an all-time high. Dive into a new hobby or revisit a forgotten passion. A spontaneous chat with a stranger could reveal a delightful surprise, so stay open to new conversations and keep that charming smile ready!

Mind
Your curiosity is heightened this week, making it a great time to learn something new. Dive into a book or attend an online workshop that excites you. Balance your social interactions with quiet time to recharge, ensuring you stay energized and focused.

Heart
Communication is your strength, Gem-

ini. Use it to clear up misunderstandings and deepen your relationships this week. A heartfelt conversation could open doors to a more profound connection. Take time to really listen, and you'll be amazed by what you learn.

Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)
Life
Leo, you're the life of the party, even if it's just a party of one. Share your warmth by hosting a virtual hangout. Your charisma is magnetic, but don't forget to recharge with some quiet time. A little self-care will keep your roar strong!

Mind
Your creativity shines brightly, so allow it to flow into your projects. Take pride in your accomplishments, but also be open to feedback from others. A little relaxation and self-care, like a warm bath or meditation, can help maintain your vibrant energy.

Heart
Your charisma is your superpower this week, Leo. Use it to bring joy and laughter into your relationships. A spontaneous adventure or playful plan could spark lasting memories. Stay genuine, and your natural glow will keep your connections strong.

Libra (23 Sep – 22 Oct)
Life
Libra, balance is your middle name, and this week, you're walking the tightrope with grace. Indulge in a creative project and let your artistic side shine. Whether it's painting, music, or dance, embrace the joy of creation and share it with your circle.

Mind
Focus on harmony in your relationships by fostering open communication and understanding. A shared activity, like cooking or a simple game night, can strengthen bonds. Balance social activities with solo leisure to keep your energy levels in check.

Heart
Harmony is your guide this week, Libra. Seek balance in your relationships by ensuring you're both giving and receiving. A heartfelt gesture or simple act of kindness can enhance your connection. Embrace the beauty of shared moments and mutual respect.

Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)
Life
Pisces, your intuition is as deep as the ocean this week. Dive into your thoughts with a journal entry or some

watercolor painting. Surround yourself with calming music and let your imagination flow. Just remember, a good nap is sometimes the best inspiration!

Mind
Nurture your emotional well-being by engaging in creative expressions like painting or writing. Quiet reflection, perhaps through a calming playlist, can help maintain emotional balance. Remember to reach out to friends for support and shared laughter.

Heart
Your empathetic nature is your strength this week, Pisces. Offer a listening ear to those who need it, and your understanding will foster closer bonds. Simple acts of kindness will create ripple effects of love and appreciation. Let your intuition guide you to meaningful interactions.

Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)
Life
Sagittarius, adventure is on the horizon, even if it's just a culinary one. Try a new recipe or spice things up with an international dish. Your infectious optimism will attract fun-loving friends, so gather your crew for some spontaneous laughter.

Mind
Adventure calls this week, so explore a new area or try a new activity that expands your horizons. Balance your excitement with moments of rest to avoid burnout. A little planning can ensure your spontaneous energies are channeled positively.

Heart
Adventure calls, Sagittarius, and this week, it could be in the realm of relationships. Explore new ways to connect with a loved one, perhaps through a fun activity or a shared dream. Your enthusiasm is contagious, so let it lead you to exciting discoveries.

Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)
Life
Scorpio, your intensity is a superpower. Use it to dive deep into a passion project. As secrets surround you, remember that it's okay to keep some things close to your chest. Trust your instincts—they're as sharp as ever!

Mind
Your determination is powerful this week, so channel it into a personal project. Ensure you're balancing ambition with self-care—perhaps a few moments of meditation or journaling each day. Connect with a trusted friend for a fresh

perspective or inspiration.

Heart
Depth is your strength, Scorpio, and this week it's time to dive deeper into your relationships. Share a secret or explore a new layer of understanding with someone you trust. Your genuine curiosity will bring you closer together. Stay open, and magic might happen.

Taurus (20 Apr – 20 May)
Life
Taurus, comfort is calling! Treat yourself to a cozy night with a good book or a binge-worthy series. You might feel extra generous, so why not bake a batch of cookies for a friend? Just be sure to save a few for yourself!

Mind
Focus on stability by nurturing your daily routine. Integrate a new hobby or activity you love, and let it bring joy and relaxation. Consider spending time with loved ones, and relish the sense of connection and comfort it provides.

Heart
Balance is key this week, Taurus. While it's important to nurture your relationships, don't forget to take time for yourself. Plan a cozy evening with loved ones, or perhaps a simple walk to enjoy each other's company. Little gestures will bring warmth and joy.

Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sep)
Life
Virgo, embrace your inner organizer this week. Declutter a space that's been on your mind—your future self will thank you. Your attention to detail is sharp, so it's a great time to tackle those pesky to-do lists. Celebrate each small victory with a happy dance!

Mind
This week is perfect for refining your plans and routines. Consider creating a list of small goals to tackle, and take pleasure in the sense of order they bring. Balance work with some leisure activities, like a favorite film or quiet walk, to stay refreshed.

Heart
Focus on the details, Virgo, but don't get lost in them. This week, schedule quality time with those you love. Whether it's a dinner or a casual chat, these moments will strengthen your bonds. Remember, it's the thought that counts more than perfection.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Word Ladder — Easy Solution

- 1 ROAD START
- 2 ROOD
- 3 POOD
- 4 POOH
- 5 POSH
- 6 PASH
- 7 PATH END

Word Ladder — Medium Solution

- 1 STONE START
- 2 SHONE
- 3 SHOTE
- 4 SOOTE
- 5 SOOTY
- 6 SOOEY
- 7 COOEY
- 8 CONEY
- 9 MONEY END

Crossword - Solution



ACROSS

- 4. Combat sport with gloves
- 6. Intelligent marine mammal
- 7. Citrus fruit
- 10. Large gray mammal with trunk
- 14. Hopping animal with long ears
- 15. Winter snow sport

DOWN

- 1. Japanese rice and fish dish
- 2. Tallest land animal
- 3. Yellow curved fruit
- 5. Tall land formation
- 8. World's most popular sport
- 9. Flightless bird from Antarctica
- 11. Racket sport with net
- 12. Land surrounded by water

SUDOKU SOL

1	2	6	7	5	3	4	8	9
7	4	9	8	2	6	5	1	3
8	3	5	9	4	1	2	7	6
5	7	4	6	1	9	8	3	2
2	6	1	4	3	8	7	9	5
3	9	8	2	7	5	6	4	1
4	5	2	1	9	7	3	6	8
6	1	3	5	8	4	9	2	7
9	8	7	3	6	2	1	5	4

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EU pushes stricter visa controls amid renewed migration focus

The European Union has presented plans to revamp its visa regime and intensify deportations as part of a new five-year migration framework, marking a continued shift toward a tougher stance on the politically sensitive issue. The European Commission has proposed a new visa policy designed to use access to EU territory as leverage in advancing the bloc's broader diplomatic and strategic objectives.

Under the plan, countries that refuse to readmit their own nationals could face restrictions on visa access, while procedures would be simplified for select categories of skilled workers the EU hopes to attract.

According to the EU's border agency, irregular arrivals across the 27-member bloc fell by more than 25% in 2025. Despite the decline, migration remains a major political concern.

"The priority is clear: bringing illegal arrival numbers down and keeping them down," said Magnus Brunner, the EU's commissioner for migration.

A central element of the strategy unveiled is a renewed push to increase the deportation of rejected asylum applicants.

"Abuse gives migration a bad name – it undermines public trust and ultimately takes away from our ability to provide protection and undercuts our drive to attract talent," Brunner said.



Separately, the European Parliament is reviewing proposed legislation from the European Commission that would allow for the establishment of so-called 'return hubs' outside EU territory. The initiative, which has drawn criticism from human rights organisations, would also introduce tougher sanctions for migrants who refuse to leave the EU, including extended periods of detention.

European governments are facing mounting pressure to adopt stricter migration policies as public sentiment hardens, contributing to a broader political shift to the right across the bloc. In Spain, however, the left-leaning coalition government this week marked a clear departure

from the tougher approaches adopted elsewhere in Europe, by preparing a decree that will grant legal status to around 500,000 undocumented migrants.

The EU's strategy calls for strengthening what it describes as an 'assertive migration diplomacy', aimed at persuading third countries to curb migration flows toward Europe and readmit nationals without the right to remain.

The Spanish government has repeatedly argued that reducing irregular migration requires tackling the issue before migrants set off. PM Pedro Sánchez has attributed the decline in arrivals to the Canary Islands during 2025 – which fell by 62% to 17,788 in 2025 – to closer cooperation with Mauritania and other African nations.

In recent months, Brussels has signed or entered negotiations on agreements with several North African countries – including Tunisia, Mauritania, Egypt and Morocco – offering financial aid and investment in exchange for cooperation on migration control.

Amnesty International condemned the EU's approach, calling it 'flawed'.

Torrevieja in talks to host MasterChef filming

Torrevieja is in discussions to host the filming of a future episode of the television programme MasterChef following a meeting at FITUR with representatives from Shine Iberia, the show's production company. The talks were led by Mayor Eduardo Dolón and the councillor for tourism and hospitality, Rosario Martínez.



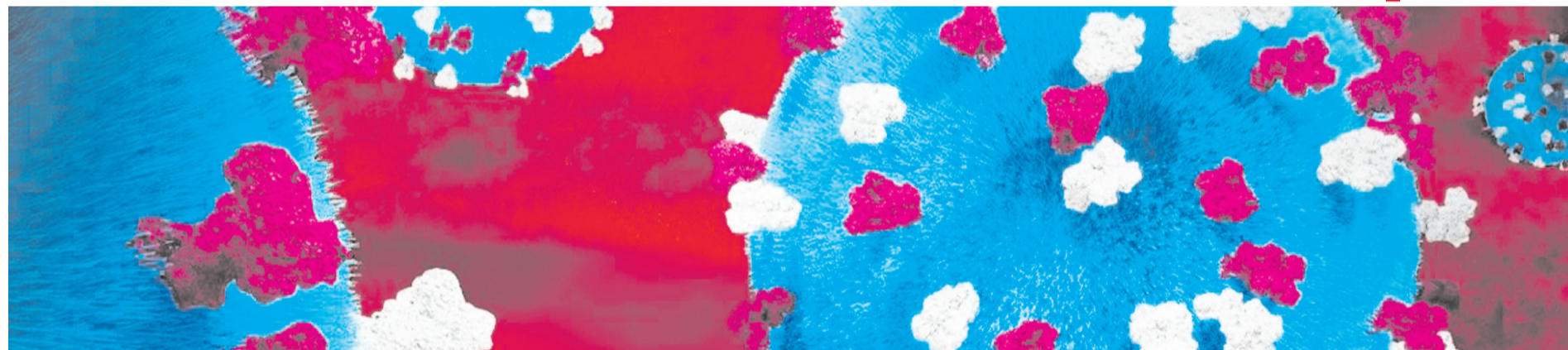
During the meeting, the council presented a range of locations across the municipality where the programme could set up its competition kitchens. The aim is to showcase Torrevieja's distinctive settings, identity and tourism appeal to a large national and international television audience.

The council believes hosting MasterChef would deliver significant media exposure, as it is one of the most-watched programmes on Spanish television and

is broadcast in more than 200 territories worldwide. It would also help promote local gastronomy and highlight the work of hospitality businesses, particularly as the local hospitality association marks its fiftieth anniversary.

MasterChef is an internationally recognised cooking competition format that has been adapted in more than fifty countries. Torrevieja's bid forms part of a wider strategy at FITUR to position the city as an attractive, competitive destination capable of hosting major audiovisual productions and high-profile events.

Measles cases double across Spain



A massive measles outbreak is sweeping the globe. Fuelled by low vaccination rates resulting from the pandemic-induced slow-down in some countries and the rise of anti-vaccine movements, the highly contagious and potentially deadly virus is ravaging the unvaccinated population. In the Eastern Mediterranean region, cases in 2024 increased by 84%; in Europe, by 47%; and in the United States, they jumped from nearly 300 in 2024 to more than 2,000 last year. No one is spared the shockwave of this global measles scourge, and even in Spain, a country where there are no endemic cases and vaccination coverage is above 93%, diagnoses have skyrocketed: according to the epidemiological bulletins of the Carlos III Health Institute, nearly 397 cases were registered in 2025, almost double that of the previous year (217 in 2024) and far from the 11 reported in 2023. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared in 2017 that

Spain was free of endemic measles transmission. And it remains so. But the country is not isolated from the rest of the world, and the measles outbreak affecting neighbouring countries is also hitting it hard. The origin of the reported infections is usually an imported case from areas with high virus circulation. In 2024, for example, most cases came from Morocco or Romania, where serious epidemics are currently active. Following contact with an imported case, secondary outbreaks can occur here among people who have not had the disease and are not properly vaccinated.

The medical community is on high alert, knowing that viruses do not respect borders and circulation outside of Spain has surged.

Given the virus's high contagiousness, the WHO recommends coverage rates above 95% with two doses of the vaccine to keep the pathogen at bay, but protection

levels vary considerably between countries, and there has been a general decline in coverage.

In Spain vaccination coverage is high: 96% with one dose and 93.2% with two and the healthcare system is on high alert to respond quickly to any suspected case and prevent potential transmission.

However, despite high vaccination coverage, there may still be pockets of susceptible individuals. These are people at risk of contracting the disease if they come into contact with the virus. These could be communities of people who have come from countries where they haven't been vaccinated, or communities of people who are unvaccinated for other reasons. The Ministry of Health recommends the MMR vaccine—the injection against measles, mumps, and rubella—for everyone born after 1978 (those born before are considered immune because they have already had the disease).

2025 began with several ongoing measles outbreaks. In February, there was an active outbreak in Bizkaia with more than fifty cases (around twenty of whom were healthcare workers), another in Toledo, and one in a daycare centre in Málaga with a dozen children affected. After the summer, 13 cases were reported in Sant Pere de Ribes, near Barcelona. The spokesperson for the Catalan government, Sílvia Paneque, said at the time that this was all "due to denialist beliefs that prevent people from getting vaccinated."

Grim Outlook

From the outside, the outlook is grim. According to the WHO, an estimated 11 million measles infections occurred worldwide in 2024, nearly 800,000 more than in 2019, before the pandemic. And, despite having an effective vaccine against the disease, some 95,000 deaths from

measles were reported that year alone. The virus, which is transmitted through the air, infects the respiratory tract and can cause serious complications or death. Last November, the WHO noted that recent measles outbreaks are occurring in areas where children are less likely to die from the disease due to good nutrition and access to healthcare. However, it immediately warned that while the likelihood of death is lower, infected children remain at risk of permanent complications such as blindness, pneumonia, or encephalitis, an infection that causes inflammation and can damage the brain.

There are no antiviral medications or specific treatments to cure measles once it is contracted. Therefore, the best medicine is prevention through vaccination, which is very safe and effective, experts emphasize. With the vaccination, you not only protect yourself but also help reduce the circulation of the virus.

Be mindful....

It can be easy to rush through life without stopping to notice much. Paying more attention to the present moment – to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you – can improve your mental wellbeing. Some people call this awareness “mindfulness”. Mindfulness can help us enjoy life more and understand ourselves better. You can take steps to develop it in your own life.

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness involves paying attention to what is going on inside and outside ourselves, moment by moment. It's easy to stop noticing the world around us. It's also easy to lose touch with the way our bodies are feeling and to end up living “in our heads” – caught up in our thoughts without stopping to notice how those thoughts are driving our emotions and behaviour.

An important part of mindfulness is reconnecting with our bodies and the sensations they experience. This means paying attention to the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the present moment. That might be something as simple as the feel of a banister as we walk upstairs.

Another important part of mindfulness is an awareness of our

thoughts and feelings as they happen moment to moment.

How mindfulness helps mental wellbeing

Becoming more aware of the present moment can help us enjoy the world around us more and understand ourselves better. When we become more aware of the present moment, we begin to experience afresh things that we have been taking for granted.

Mindfulness also allows us to become more aware of the stream of thoughts and feelings that we experience, and to see how we can become entangled in that stream in ways that are not helpful. This lets us stand back from our thoughts and start to see their patterns. Gradually, we can train ourselves to notice when our thoughts are taking over and realise that thoughts are simply “mental events” that do not have to control us.

Mindfulness can help us deal with issues more productively. We can ask: “Is trying to solve this by brooding about it helpful, or am I just getting caught up in my thoughts?”

Awareness of this kind may also help us notice signs of stress or anxiety earlier and deal with them better.



How to be more mindful

Reminding yourself to take notice of your thoughts, feelings, body sensations and the world around you is the first step to mindfulness. As we go about our daily lives, we can notice the sensations of things, the food we eat, the air moving past the body as we walk.

It can be helpful to pick a regular time, such as a morning journey to work or a walk at lunchtime, during which you decide to be aware of the sensations created by the world around you.

Try something new

Trying new things, such as sitting in a different seat in meetings or going somewhere new for lunch, can also help you notice the world in a new way.

Watch worrying thoughts

Some people find it very difficult to practise mindfulness. As soon as they stop what they're doing, lots of thoughts and worries crowd in. It might be useful to remember that mindfulness isn't about making these thoughts go away, but rather about seeing them as mental events that come and go. This can be very hard at first, but with gentle persistence it is possible. Some people find that it is easier to cope with an over-busy mind if they are doing gentle yoga or walking.

To develop an awareness of thoughts and feelings, some people find it helpful to silently name them: “Here's the thought that I might fail that exam” or: “This is anxiety”.

You can practise mindfulness

anywhere, but it can be especially helpful to take a mindful approach if you realise that, for several minutes, you have been trapped in reliving past problems or pre-living future worries.

Different mindfulness practices

As well as practising mindfulness in daily life, it can be helpful to set aside time for a more formal mindfulness practice. Mindfulness meditation involves sitting silently and paying attention to thoughts, sounds, the sensations of breathing or parts of the body, bringing your attention back whenever the mind starts to wander. Yoga and tai-chi can also help with developing awareness of your breathing.

Working for Wellbeing

For many retirees, the dream of moving to Spain begins with sunshine, siestas and a gentler pace of life. What few anticipate, however, is how access to healthcare can quietly reshape life decisions long after the boxes have been unpacked. In Spain, employment and social security contributions are not just about a pay packet. They are a gateway into one of Europe's most comprehensive public healthcare systems, a benefit that's now drawing some retirees back into the job market not out of necessity, but for peace of mind and purpose.

Spain's public healthcare system, known as the Sistema Nacional de Salud (SNS), ranks among the best in the world and is funded through social security contributions and taxes. Residents who work or have made sufficient contributions are entitled to free or low-cost care, including doctor visits, specialist treatment and hospital stays. To access this, residents must register with the Spanish social security system by obtaining a Social Security number and health card (Tarjeta Sanitaria) once they are legally resident.

For retirees who arrive on a non-working visa, access to the public system can be less straightforward and requires careful planning. In these cases, private health insurance often becomes an important part of the overall relocation strategy, offering flexibility, choice of provider and ad-

ditional peace of mind. As with any long-term commitment, it is sensible to research policy options carefully, understand what is included in the cover, and factor ongoing premiums into household budgeting. Taking independent advice helps ensure the chosen solution aligns with individual health needs, residency status and future lifestyle plans, as every situation is different.



This dynamic has created a fascinating shift in behaviour among some retired residents. Instead of viewing work only as a financial pursuit, many see it as a strategic choice to protect long-term health security while remaining active and socially connected. One composite example might be a retired teacher on the Costa del Sol who takes on a few hours a week as a language tutor. The income is modest, but the resulting social security contributions mean access to public care while maintaining a flexible lifestyle. Another might be a former engineer in Valencia who works

part-time in technical consultancy to maintain eligibility for the SNS while keeping mentally engaged and socially involved.

The benefits aren't purely financial. Returning to work, even in a limited capacity, provides routine, community interaction and a renewed sense of purpose. Many retirees report that part-time work helps them feel less isolated and more integrated into Spanish life complementing the practical advantage of healthcare access with improved wellbeing.

Of course, there are ethical and legal considerations. Work must be genuine and properly registered; simply signing up to make contributions without real economic activity is not compliant with Spanish labour law. Residents should also be aware that access to public healthcare requires legal residency and registration in Spain for more than half of the year.

Ultimately, this trend reflects a broader truth about retirement in a foreign country: lifestyle decisions and practical realities are deeply interconnected. What begins as a search for sunshine and leisure often evolves into a careful balancing of health planning, purpose and financial logic. In Spain, work and wellbeing are more closely connected than many first imagine and for some, that connection continues to offer lasting value well beyond retirement.

Demolition approved for new four-star hotel in Torrevieja port area

Torrevieja's local government has granted permission to demolish buildings at numbers 4 and 5 on Paseo de la Libertad, clearing the way for the construction of a four-star superior hotel in the future port area. The project has the required urban planning compatibility certificate

and is expected to significantly increase hotel capacity in the town centre.

The buildings stand

opposite ongoing port redevelopment works and include two ageing properties of three storeys with long-vacant commercial units, although two homes remain occupied. The site is considered strategically important, helping to improve the link between the town and its seafront as part of wider re-

generation plans.

At the same time as approving the licence, Mayor Eduardo Dolón met representatives from the Hotusa and Masa hotel groups at the FITUR tourism fair in Madrid to discuss the possibility of further hotel projects in the area.



The council has previously amended its planning rules to encourage hotel development, allowing greater building heights and added facilities.

Torrevieja currently has thirteen hotels with just over 1,600 beds, most of them three-star establishments. The council believes new developments will strengthen the local tourism offer and create more employment opportunities.

Spanish economy closes 2025 with growth of 0.8% in the fourth quarter

Spanish GDP rose by 0.8% in the last three months of 2025, according to data that the INE will publish soon. Inflation fell to 2.4% in January, five tenths less than in December. The Ministry of Economy highlights that the country doubles the average growth rate of the euro area.

The fourth-quarter numbers reflect that both household spending and business investment maintained their pulse at the end of last year. Employment and the recovery of purchasing power boosted consumption, while construction and productive projects supported investment.

The ministry points out that Spain is among the best-performing advanced economies, with growth around double the Eurozone average.

This behaviour contrasts with the situation in other European countries, where economic activity is less dynamic. The 0.8% quarterly growth figure closes a year that, according to the economic authorities, is characterised by

solid and widespread growth in the different components of GDP. According to Carlos Cuerpo, Minister of Economy, Trade and Business, this is very good economic news.

At the start of 2026, prices experienced a notable setback. The inflation rate stood at 2.4%, which represents a fall of five tenths compared to December and the largest monthly decrease since March of the previous year. If these preliminary data are confirmed, Spain would chain three consecutive months of deceleration in prices.

Core inflation, which leaves out fresh food and energy products, remained at 2.6% for the third month in a row. The ministry interprets this evolution as a factor that reinforces economic stability and improves expectations for both families and companies.

The combination of accelerated growth and price moderation lays, according to the government, the foundations for a 2026 with robust domestic fundamentals.

Cars crushed by falling light tower at Alicante sports stadium

Several vehicles have been crushed by the fall of a light tower of the Florida Babel sports centre due to the strong gusts of wind that hit, during the afternoon of this Wednesday, the city of Alicante with orange alert of the Aemet recently.

This has been more one of more than 180 interventions that have been carried out by the emergency services of the Alicante City Council due to the strong gusts of wind, up to 70 kilometers per hour registered at the Ciudad Jardín station.

Local Police, Fire Prevention and Extinction -Speis- and Civil Protection have carried out actions mainly related to the detachment of tree branches, awnings, flower pots and urban furniture, without any serious personal injury having been recorded so far, as confirmed by municipal sources.

It was in the early afternoon when the lighting tower of the football field collapsed due to the gale, falling on the adjacent car park and destroying several parked cars.

The car park in question is located between the Florida Babel municipal sports centre, on Vicente Chávarri street, next to the health centre and the La Florida public school.

The affected vehicles have been completely destroyed, with sunken roofs and broken windows, due to the strong impact of the infrastructure.

Apparently, the lighting tower, of

large dimensions, would have given way due to the intensity of the gale, which during the day has caused multiple incidents in different parts of the city.

The area is already cordoned off to analyze the damage and proceed to remove the lighting tower. The afternoon has been the most complicated moment of the day, with the highest number of incidents concentrated between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Its force has caused the fall and displacement of fences and posters on public roads, containers moved by the gusts, trees and affected walls, in addition to several falls of traffic light heads and lampposts. Despite the spectacular nature of some episodes, these incidents have not generated direct effects on traffic.

In view of the activation of the orange alert for strong winds and coastal phenomena decreed by the State Meteorological Agency (Aemet) and the Emergency Coordination Centre, the mayor of Alicante, Luis Barcala, chaired two meetings of the Local Operational Coordination Center (Cecopal) on Wednesday, held at 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The objective of this body has been to closely monitor the evolution of the meteorological episode and reinforce the preventive measures already adopted on the previous day. The monitoring device remains per-



manently active and will remain operational until midnight on the 28th, when the orange alert situation is scheduled to end.

Opening of the CAUS and suspension of sports activities:

Throughout the day on Wednesday, the Castles of Santa Bárbara and San Fernando remain closed, as well as the parks and gardens and passage areas with monumental trees. Bathing has also been prohibited on the beaches and the candles have been removed in sealed areas due to the presence of large trees.

The council has suspended sports activities in outdoor facilities and the reinforcement of essential municipal emergency services has been maintained. As for the Reception and Social Emergencies Centre (CAUS), which has been open from Tuesday afternoon to Thursday morning, on the first night 41 people came for dinner and 26 stayed overnight.

Drifting Russian tanker puts Spanish coast under threat



Maritime Rescue is keeping the CHARIOT TIDE, an oil tanker linked to the opaque Russian fleet that was adrift in the Strait of Gibraltar, under close surveillance. The ship transports more than 425,000 barrels of refined products officially bound for Tangier.

The oil tanker Chariot Tide, flying the flag of Mozambique, has been sailing for days off the coast of Almeria at minimum speed. Ecologists in Action of Andalucía have confirmed that the ship Clara Campamor, of the Spanish Maritime Rescue, is monitoring it after it was left without a government in the middle of the Strait of Gibraltar traffic route.

Two Moroccan tugboats intervened to tow it to the Alboran Sea. Although its declared destination is Tangier, environmental organisations do not rule out that the cargo

will end up in Algerian ports or be transferred by barges to other vessels, a common practice in this illegal transport network.

The ship loaded the refined products in Ust-Luga, Russia. Maritime tracking data indicate possible failures in its navigation system, which would explain its erratic trajectory.

The Chariot Tide is part of the so-called 'dark fleet', a network of hundreds of old oil tankers that Russia uses to circumvent international sanctions. These vessels are constantly changing their name, flag and management company to make them difficult to track.

The operational practices of this fleet increase the risk of accidents: they turn off AIS transponders to avoid detection, carry out cargo transfers between ships in the open sea and drift for extended periods. Many lack adequate insurance or

have coverage of dubious validity. Ecologists in Action has repeatedly denounced the movement of these oil tankers through the Alboran Sea. The organization warns that a spill in this area would have irreparable effects on fishing and marine ecosystems, in addition to affecting tourism on the Andalusian coast for years.

The Strait of Gibraltar is one of the busiest shipping points in the world. The presence of ships in poor condition increases the chances of collisions, strandings or massive fuel spills.

A shipwreck of the Chariot Tide would release hundreds of thousands of barrels into waters that connect the Atlantic with the Mediterranean, an area of special environmental sensitivity. The sea currents would spread the pollution over large coastal areas of Spain and Morocco.

Maritime Rescue maintains the monitoring of the tanker while it remains in waters near the Almeria coast. For now, the authorities have not reported additional measures beyond surveillance. The situation highlights the difficulties of controlling a fleet that deliberately operates outside international regulations.

Elon Musk and Pedro Sanchez clash over immigration

The Spanish Prime Minister avoided attending the state funeral for Adamuz's accident and opted for a digital duel with the American businessman on immigration. The PP accused the government of a lack of humanity.

Pedro Sánchez did not attend the religious funeral for the 45 people who died in the Adamuz train accident on Thursday. Nor did he appear in the Senate with the Minister of Transport, Óscar Puente, where the tragedy was being debated.

The double absence generated criticism from the opposition, which saw this agenda as incompatible with what was happening on social networks.

Meanwhile, the president found time to get into a public discussion with Elon Musk. The tycoon had commented with a brief "Wow" on a publication about the new regularization of migrants approved in Spain. Sánchez did not take long to respond from his official account: "Mars can wait, humanity cannot." A phrase that sought to point out the priorities of the owner of Tesla and SpaceX in the

face of earthly affairs.

The response of the Popular Party came quickly. From their official account they launched: "Is Adamuz on Mars? We already know that you don't have humanity."

The message pointed directly to the contradiction between talking about humanity to a foreign businessman while absenting himself from an act of national mourning. The controversy was left open on a day where the forms of the government once again occupied the political debate.

Reactions to Sánchez's comment have not been long in coming and many reproach him for not having been present at the funeral with the 45 families who lost loved ones in the Adamuz accident.

Among the most repeated criticisms on the social network X.com can be read the absence at the funeral, or a matter of priorities.

The funeral was a very emotional moment in which the King and Queen were close to the families and showed their support in the face of such a catastrophe.

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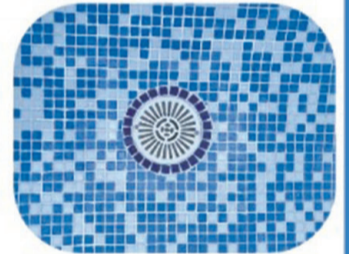
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