

Costa Weekly News tm

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Storm Oriana wreaks havoc and more is to come



Strong winds are expected to continue across Alicante province over the coming days, despite the storm *Oriana* beginning to fade, according to the Climatology Laboratory at the University of Alicante (UA).

Experts say the weather has not yet stabilised and have warned that a "new wind corridor" is

forming in the wake of Oriana's departure — a pattern that could keep blustery conditions in place even without an active storm system directly overhead.

Oriana battered the southern Costa Blanca and the Vega Baja region over the weekend, bringing gusts of more than 100 kilometres per hour and causing widespread disruption. Emergency crews were called out repeatedly, particularly on Saturday, as strong winds uprooted trees, ripped away roofing, dislodged solar panels and brought down power lines. Several public events across the province were cancelled and residents were urged to stay indoors.

The storm's arrival was dramatic. A red alert was pushed to mobile phones across the Valencian Community at around 6pm on Friday, startling residents and prompting many to reconsider weekend travel and leisure plans.

Some of the most extreme gusts were recorded in exposed inland areas. Villena registered winds of up to 144 km/h, according to the Valencian Association

of Meteorology. Other readings included 99 km/h in Orihuela, 79 km/h in Catral, and 77 km/h in both Algorfa and Guardamar. While Oriana is weakening and moving away from the Iberian Peninsula, UA experts said the combination of the Azores anticyclone and low-pressure systems circulating across Europe is likely to channel westerly winds directly into the Valencian Community — and especially the Province of Alicante.

that the lull may be short-lived.

Between Wednesday and Thursday, another weather system is predicted to arrive, potentially reactivating strong winds and returning the province to a new period of atmospheric instability.

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They have said that the winds can still blow strongly even after the main storm has passed. A brief easing is expected on Tuesday, when winds should slacken somewhat. However, forecasters cautioned

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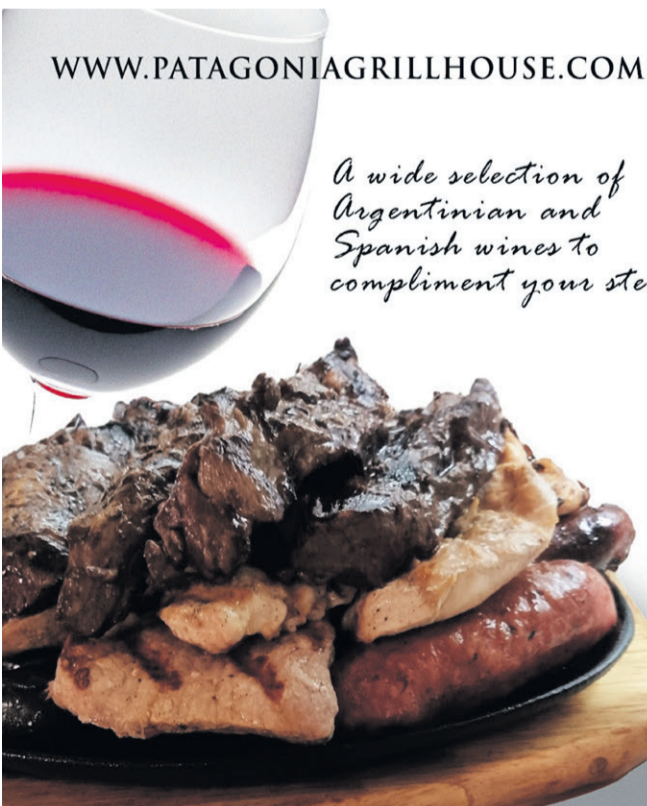
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Airports urge EU to rethink EES rollout amid summer chaos fears



180-day period. The system is expected to gradually replace manual passport stamping.

The scheme is being rolled out across EU member states, with the exception of Cyprus and Ireland, and will also apply in Schengen-associated countries including Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Concerns were formally raised by three major aviation organisations – Airports Council International (ACI) Europe, Airlines for Europe (A4E) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The groups said EES implementation is already causing delays, citing “persistent excessive waiting times of up to 2 hours at airport border control.”

They attributed the disruption to a combination of chronic understaffing, unresolved technology issues – particularly around border automation – and low adoption of the Frontex pre-registration app intended to streamline the process.

Frontex has built the backend

infrastructure for a voluntary self-registration tool that allows travellers to submit information before arrival. However, Schengen countries are responsible for deciding whether to use it and for developing their own front-end systems. According to the aviation groups, only Sweden has opted to deploy the app so far. The EES officially came into force on 12 October 2025, with the EU aiming to gradually increase registrations and reach full operational capacity within six months, by April 2026.

But airlines and airports argue that moving to mandatory registration at all border crossings during the busiest travel months, particularly July and August, could overwhelm border controls.

They warned that unless urgent steps are taken, “mandatory EES registrations of all border crossings during the peak summer season... would result in waiting times of up to 4 hours or more.”

The European Commission has insisted that member states have some leeway. Commission spokesperson Markus Lammert recently said countries will still be able to partially suspend EES

operations after rollout, where necessary, for up to 90 days – with a possible 60-day extension – to help manage the summer peak.

Despite that, the aviation sector is calling for broader flexibility or a revision of the current timetable, arguing that the EU’s confidence in the rollout does not match what passengers are experiencing.

“There is a complete disconnect between the perception of the EU institutions that EES is working well, and the reality, which is that non-EU travellers are experiencing massive delays and inconvenience,” the industry groups said in a joint statement.

They added that traffic at Europe’s airports typically doubles in summer and warned the success of the system depends on allowing it to adapt to operational realities.

“The rollout of EES must be flexible... This is an absolute prerequisite for its success – and for safeguarding the reputation of the EU as an efficient, welcoming and desirable destination,” they said.

Airlines and airport authorities across Europe are pressing EU leaders to urgently rethink the rollout schedule of the bloc’s new digital border control system, warning it could cause major disruption during the peak summer travel season.

In a letter sent to the European Commission, aviation industry groups said the planned implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) risks creating severe congestion at Schengen border checkpoints unless the timetable is adjusted.

“Failing immediate action to pro-

vide sufficient flexibility, severe disruptions over the peak summer months are a real prospect, with queues potentially reaching 4 hours or more,” the organisations wrote.

The EES is a new EU-wide border regime designed to modernise the way non-EU travellers enter and exit the Schengen area. Under the system, third-country nationals must provide personal details and biometric information at their first point of entry. The data is stored in a central EU database that logs every entry and exit and helps authorities enforce the 90-day limit within any

Orihuela Costa Police continue crime clean-up

Local Police officers have carried out various actions in Orihuela Costa that have resulted in nine people arrested, the seizing of drugs and the recovery of allegedly stolen goods.

Villamartin domestic violence

After receiving a notice through 112 emergency services, police were alerted to a situation of domestic violence at a house in the Villamartin area. Upon arrival, officers found a woman outside the home who said that her husband, in a drunken state, had violently expelled her from the house. The officers verified the aggressive attitude of the man, as well as damage to the property.

After the appropriate checks, the alleged perpetrator was arrested for a crime of Injury in the field of gender violence, being brought to justice.

Drugs intervention in La Zenia

Local Police officers intervened after receiving a warning of a suspicious package at a



transport shop located in the area of La Zenia.

A person had tried to make a shipment, but when asked for the required identification, he left the establishment leaving the package behind. Inside were several packages of a pink powdery substance, with a total weight of 134.67 grams.

The substance was seized and sent to the Civil Guard for analysis, and proceedings are

being initiated for an alleged crime against public health.

Arrest for violation of restraining order in Florida

During preventive surveillance work in the area of La Florida, a patrol identified a man who was subject to a 200-meter restraining order in place for two people and their workplaces.

The individual was seen in the

vicinity of one of the places where he was prohibited from being, so he was arrested for violation of sentence.

Five arrested for theft in a supermarket

After receiving notice of a theft in a supermarket in Orihuela Costa, officers located the vehicle in which the alleged perpetrators had left the place and identified its occupants.

Staff at the supermarket confirmed the theft of products and cash with an approximate value of 586 euros.

As a result of the police intervention, five people were arrested for an alleged crime of theft, being placed at the disposal of the Civil Guard.

Two arrested for robbery with force and breaking and entering

In another action, several patrols were called to a house in the area of La Zenia after receiving notice that two individuals were forcing the door.

Officers arrived at the scene and surprised the men, who were then inside the property. The house had been ransacked and the police found tools commonly used to pick locks, cash and various objects of dubious origin were located.

The two individuals were arrested for alleged crimes of robbery and breaking and entering and were brought to justice.

British man arrested for fatal shooting in Orihuela Costa



One line of inquiry being pursued by the Guardia Civil is whether the killing is connected to another shooting that happened ten days earlier. On December 11, 32-year-old British national Peter F. was shot and wounded when he drove his car into the garage of his home.

The victim, who had been released on bail just two weeks earlier, was the alleged leader of a gang that extorted cannabis clubs in the Vega Baja region to take control of them.

Peter F., formerly known as Sonny James R., had been held in prison after robbing a cannabis club in San Fulgencio. When he was arrested in Orihuela Costa, three Guardia Civil officers were injured during the operation. Officers seized two sub-machine guns, classed as weapons of war, and more than 300 rounds of ammunition of various calibres from his home.

The British man spent several days in hospital recovering from three gunshot wounds. In January, he was arrested in Merseyside in England, despite the fact that the Orihuela court investigating him for the cannabis club robbery had released him on bail with a ban on leaving the country and an obligation to appear in court every two weeks.

For the moment, the Guardia Civil is keeping all possibilities open, including yet another violent death related to disputes between drug trafficking gangs in the UK and Ireland.

A British man has been arrested in connection with the fatal shooting of a 29-year-old English man whose body was discovered on December 21 at an urbanisation in Orihuela Costa.

Agents from the Homicide Team of the Guardia Civil in Alicante made the arrest this week following a month-long investigation into the killing, which took place in the Campoamor area. The case is believed to be linked to a drug trafficking score-settling.

The Guardia Civil was alerted to the crime by a Local Police patrol at around 9pm on December 21. Officers had been called to a house in Lomas de Cabo Roig after people reported that something serious had happened to a friend. When they arrived, they found the bloodied body of the young man and immediately notified the Guardia Civil.

Just a few weeks later, homicide investigators identified and arrested the British suspect.

Brits keep Alicante Airport in topflight

Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernández Airport has kicked off 2026 with another record-breaking month, proving that last year's phenomenal performance wasn't a one-off.

The airport handled 1,106,689 passengers in January, marking a 4.7% increase on the same month in 2025 and maintaining the momentum from a record-breaking year that saw 19.9 million passengers pass through the terminal.

These figures have pushed Alicante up to sixth place among Spain's busiest airports by passenger volume this past month, sitting behind Madrid, Barcelona, Málaga, Gran Canaria and Tenerife South.

More impressively, it's got the second-highest percentage growth among these top six, beaten only by Málaga Airport which saw a 5.1% increase.

To put that in perspective, Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport registered the highest number of passengers in January with 5,379,569, representing a 3.5% increase compared to the same month last year.

Barcelona-El Prat Airport came in second with 3,806,895 passengers (up 3%), followed by Málaga-Costa del Sol Airport with 1,440,294 passengers (up 5.1%), Gran Canaria Airport with 1,398,924 passengers (up 2.1%) and Tenerife South Airport with 1,275,134 passengers (down 1%).

Palma de Mallorca would be next after Alicante, with 882,638 passengers, which is 3% less than in January 2025.

The figures show once again that international travel is absolutely dominating at Alicante Airport. International traffic jumped by 6.6% with 950,021 passengers recorded, demonstrating that foreign visitors are still choosing the Costa Blanca in droves.

The flip side is that domestic traffic continues its downward slide, with 155,593 passengers representing a 6.1% decrease compared to January 2025, following the initial surge in activity after the coronavirus pandemic that's now well and truly worn off.

When it comes to where all these international passen-

gers are coming from, the UK once again led the pack in January with 288,107 travellers making the journey. The Netherlands came in second with 82,474 passengers, followed by Poland with 79,892, Belgium with 76,174 and Germany with 65,543.

Flight operations also hit record figures with 7,521 movements in January, representing a 5.6% increase compared to the same period in 2025.

What makes these statistics particularly impressive for Alicante Airport is that the growth rate actually outpaces what's happening across the rest of Spain's airport network.

Spanish terminals closed January with 20,315,707 passengers, which is 2.6% more than in the same month of 2025. However, that represents a significantly lower growth rate than the 6.1% recorded between January 2025 and January 2024, suggesting that the overall national picture is one of slowing growth. Alicante, on the other hand, is clearly bucking that trend and continuing to pull in passengers at a healthy clip.



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Surveillance camera project in Pilar

The Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Innovation and Commerce has supported, within the framework of the Innovative Territories programme, the development of an intelligent surveillance system in the coastal area of Pilar de la Horadada. The project aims to not only improve traffic management and safety, but also to allow monitoring the promenade that crosses the municipality to anticipate possible floods.

The head of this department, Marian Cano and the general director of Innovation, Juan José Cortés, met with the Mayor of the Alicante town, José María Pérez, to learn more about the project that the Pilar consistory has executed with the support of the Generalitat.

More than the 141,000 euros contributed by the Ministry have

been used to expand the existing monitoring system which, as Cano explained, is capable of reading license plates and detecting traffic flows. Specifically, a dozen high-performance video surveillance cameras have been installed at the main crossings of the promenade that crosses this town. Pilar de la Horadada currently has a total of 63 cameras and 12 license plate readers.

"The data obtained will not only help local authorities to design actions to pacify traffic and reduce the number of accidents but will also allow real-time monitoring of the situation of this channel, which in episodes of torrential rain can register a sudden increase in flow," he explained.

For the Minister, this initiative is an example of how innovation can

respond to the challenges of local administrations and contribute to the improvement of public services. "With the Innovative Territories programme we intend to bring R+D+i to all the municipalities of the Valencian Community, regardless of their size," said Cano, who recalled that last year nearly three million euros were granted for this concept.

The mayor of Pilar de la Horadada, José María Pérez Sánchez, thanked the Generalitat for its support, while underlining the innovative nature of a project that integrates advanced technologies with a smart city approach, data analytics and sustainability.

He explained that the town's video surveillance system is interconnected through a secure network through fibre optic connections.

Likewise, the public lighting network has been used to install the cameras, so it has not been necessary to carry out additional works.

Better management
In the field of vehicle traffic, the data collected will make it possible to monitor the flow of cars, identify congested areas and optimise traffic management through adjustments to traffic lights and signage. But, in addition, the information on the movement of people will help to better size municipal resources during the celebration of large events, as well as in the seasons of high tourist influx. The goal is for public services such as security, cleanliness, and transportation to respond efficiently to the needs of the population.

Predictive analysis of this data also offers advantages for municipal teams since it allows problems to be anticipated and interventions to be planned. In short, the information obtained through this technology will facilitate decision-making by local authorities and will enable the development of more effective urban and mobility policies, based on real patterns of behaviour and use of urban space.

As a result of the implementation of this intelligent system of cameras, the Consistory also foresees a decrease in criminal incidents and acts of vandalism, according to the results of studies carried out in similar municipalities. In the same vein, reaction times for security and emergency services are expected to improve by between 20 and 30%.

Foreigners boost Spanish population



Spain's population has reached a new high of 49,570,725 as of January 1, 2026, up 442,428 from last year, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INE). For the first time ever, more than 10 million people, exactly

10,004,581, living here were born abroad, making up one in five residents and offsetting a drop in births among those born in Spain.

Out of the total, 39.6 million were born in Spain, while 42.3 million hold Spanish nationality (many naturalised through residency, marriage or the Historical Memory Law) and 7.2 million have foreign passports, or 14.6% of the population. Migration expert Elisa Brey from Complutense University in Madrid welcomed the figures. "If it weren't for the arrival of migrants, Spain would lose population," she said, pointing to a fall of 18,696 Spanish-born babies in late 2025 alone.

New arrivals in the last quarter of 2025 were led by Colombians (36,600), Venezuelans (27,000) and Moroccans (22,000), drawn by job opportunities, existing communities and troubles back home like Venezuela's crisis. Departures were highest among Moroccans

(13,000), Colombians (12,500) and Spaniards (7,900). Brey noted the "dynamism of the Spanish labour market" as a key pull.

Growth varies widely by region. The Balearic Islands top the list for foreign-born share at 29.27%, followed by Catalonia (26.11%), Madrid (25.7%) and the Valencian Community (25.45%). Provinces like Alicante (30.51%) and Almería (26.04%) stand out too, while Extremadura (6.59%) lags far behind. Nationally, households rose to 19.7 million by January 1.

The Valencian Community saw the biggest yearly jump at 1.78% (over 5.5 million total), followed by Castilla-La Mancha (1.31%), Aragon (1.26%) and Murcia (1.07%). Two-thirds of 2025's growth happened in the Valencian Community, Catalonia, Madrid and Andalucía.

This surge, building since 2022's economic recovery, means Spain could top 50 million by the year's end - a stark contrast to the "demographic winter" of more deaths than births among natives. For those of us settled here, it shows how newcomers are keeping communities vibrant.

Brits busted for running pirate TV

A house in Alicante has been revealed as the nerve centre of an illegal streaming operation that gave hundreds of people access to pirated television channels from across Europe. The National Police have shut down the platform and arrested two British men, aged 70 and 50, who are accused of running the whole show and pocketing around €190,000 in the process.

The operation was carried out by the Central Cybercrime Unit, who managed to track down the private residence where the pair were controlling illicit access to audiovisual content from several different European countries. When officers raided the property, they found 42 decoding devices, seven memory cards, a computer, two mobile phones

and a tablet, all of which were being used as part of the technical setup to offer paid subscription packages to television channels without any proper authorisation.

The platform worked on a username and password basis and gave customers access to TV content from Spain, Germany, France, Norway and Denmark. Subscribers could watch their programmes on both smart TVs and mobile devices, making it pretty convenient for anyone who didn't fancy paying legitimate subscription fees.

According to the investigation, the two men were also offering tutorials and specific tools, including decoders, to help their customers get connected. Police believe this shows the operation

was pretty well organised and technically sophisticated, with the pair clearly knowing how to get around the broadcast protection systems that are supposed to stop this sort of thing.

The platform had 330 subscribers in total, which might not sound like a massive operation compared to some of the big streaming services, but it was clearly lucrative enough to generate a substantial income for the two arrested men.

They're now facing charges for crimes against intellectual property, crimes against linear television audiovisual communication services with conditional access, and fraud against electricity. The police have already blocked the website that was being used

to distribute the service, but officers are still trying to work out if there are more people involved in the network or if there are

international connections linked to the distribution of this type of illegal content.



Deadly storms hit Spain, France and Portugal

A lorry driver was killed in western France after a tree crashed onto his vehicle as Storm Nils tore across the region, bringing violent winds and widespread disruption across France, Spain and Portugal.

French authorities said the driver died in the Landes area when a falling tree struck his lorry, with police reporting that a branch pierced the windscreen. Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot paid tribute to the man and urged the public to "exercise utmost caution" and check travel conditions before setting out.

The storm left around 900,000 homes without electricity in France, as red alerts were issued across parts of the south-west, south and south-east. Along the south-west coast, gusts reached 162km/h (100mph), while in the southern Aude region officials said 40 roads were rendered impassable, with winds hitting 110km/h.

Further east, several Alpine ski resorts shut down amid a heightened avalanche threat, including La Plagne.



In Spain, the storms caused major transport disruption and injuries. Schools were suspended in Catalonia, while the Basque Country was placed on red alert for waves expected to reach up to 10 metres (32ft). Winds of 148km/h were recorded in Alicante.

Around Barcelona, four workers were injured while clearing fallen trees, and a pedestrian was hurt after a wall collapsed. Dozens of flights were also

cancelled at El Prat airport. Elsewhere, a woman had to be rescued after her car plunged into a sinkhole that opened on a road near the western town of Cáceres.

In neighbouring Portugal, flooding caused part of the A1 motorway between Lisbon and Porto to collapse after the Mondego river burst its banks near Coimbra. Officials said a 10-metre stretch of the road gave way after floodwaters breached the

Casais do Campo dyke. The motorway section had already been closed as a precaution. Infrastructure Minister Miguel Pinto Luz, who visited the site, said repairs would take weeks.

Portugal has been battered by successive storms for weeks, with the government saying the country experienced 20% of its annual average rainfall in the past week alone. Maria Graça Carvalho told Portuguese media that since the start of January,

discharges from dams and reservoirs had equalled roughly a year's worth of national water consumption.

Authorities were also monitoring the River Tagus, where they said water releases from three dams reached 6,500 cubic metres per second on Thursday morning.

The worsening weather crisis has already sparked political fallout, with Interior Minister Maria Lucia Amaral resigning earlier this week following criticism of her response to conditions that have left several people dead and caused billions of euros in damage.

Portugal had already been hit by Storm Kristin, Leonardo and Storm Marta before Storm Nils arrived.

Scientists say while winter storms are common, the growing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events on the Iberian Peninsula is partly linked to climate change driven by rising greenhouse gas emissions. In France, another serious incident was reported near Toulouse, where a worker was badly injured after a tree fell onto his vehicle near Castelsarrasin.

New family Emergency Centre opens in Elche



A new Emergency Centre for families has opened in Elche, led by the Conciénciate Foundation. The temporary residential facility is designed for families with children facing urgent social emergencies and in need of immediate housing support. The service provides continuous 24-hour care and is integrated into the Reception and Overnight Centre building, which thus expands its care coverage.

The centre has six independent modules adaptable to families of between two and six people. Designed to guarantee privacy, security, and a suitable environment for the care of minors, each module has its own bathroom and access to common areas equipped with a dining area, microwave, television, and mobile device

charging stations. In addition to accommodation, the facility offers breakfast, lunch and dinner. Laundry service and social and psychosocial support from the foundation's technical team.

The objective is to provide an immediate and short-term housing solution to facilitate the transition to more stable alternatives and ensure coordinated intervention with the council of Childhood, Family and Seniors with special attention to the emotional and social support of families.

During the opening ceremony, the Mayor Pablo Ruz noted that the opening of this resource "deserves the commitment and gratitude of this municipal government" and affirmed that "we will continue to fund the initiatives launched to promote social justice," while also thanking the support of the Generalitat Valencia.

The launch also marks the extension of the city's homeless shelter to a 24-hour service. The centre has 60 places and assisted 477 people in 2025, achieving 64 housing reintegration and 28 job placements. Since opening in December 2023, 131 people have secured housing and 54 have found employment.



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Budget buys lead supermarket shopping



The supermarket landscape in Spain is shifting dramatically and it's the budget-friendly and discount stores that are coming out on top. Mercadona, Lidl and Aldi have all gained significant market share over the past year as shoppers across Spain increasingly turn to eating at home, with at-home food consumption jumping by 4.6% in value terms according to a study by Worldpanel by Numerator.

The change in shopping habits is being driven by accumulated inflation that's left consumers far more price-conscious than

they used to be. People are now visiting an average of 6.1 different supermarket chains per year. Shoppers are essentially hopping between different stores to find the best deals, even if it means hitting two or three shops in a single trip.

Discount supermarkets and local convenience stores are absolutely thriving in this environment and now command a 38.9% market share. Meanwhile, the traditional big hypermarkets like Carrefour have taken a battering, with their share falling to just 10.5%.

Regular supermarkets haven't fared much better, declining slightly to 9.9%. Regional chains are still growing but at a slower pace than in previous years, and they now account for 18.5% of the market.

Mercadona has further cemented its position as the undisputed leader, holding a 27% market share at the end of last year. Lidl has consolidated its spot as the third largest supermarket chain in the country with a 6.9% share and Aldi, which opened 33 new stores last year and now has 496 locations across Spain, holds a

2% market share and is clearly on the up.

Private label brands are playing a massive role in this success story, now accounting for 45.6% of the market. These own-brand products are a key feature of discount supermarkets like Lidl and Aldi, offering shoppers the chance to save money without having to choose between dozens of different branded options for the same item.

Among the regional supermarkets, Consum has continued to pick up some market share,

reaching 3.6% last year. The IFA Group, which includes brands like Ahorramás, Alimerka and Unide, maintains its presence with a 9.9% share. These establishments are seeing a slight slowdown in packaged goods but are gaining market share in fresh perishable items, suggesting shoppers still want quality when it comes to fruit, veg and meat.

Torre Vieja approves tender for the new urban transport service

The councillor secretary of the Local Governing Board (JGL) of the Torre Vieja City Council, Federico Alarcón, has announced that the explanatory memorandum, technical specifications, and administrative terms and conditions for contracting the new urban transport service in our municipality were approved. The service will be provided through a 10-year concession for a total amount of €115,440,005 (plus VAT). The period for submitting bids will be 40 calendar days from the date of the tender announcement, meaning that proposals will be accepted until January 12, 2026.

The new Urban Transport service significantly increases both the number of employees and the bus fleet. Specifically, the number of buses has doubled, from 16 to 32 units (26 hybrid buses and 6 electric buses), fulfilling this administration's com-

mitment to sustainable mobility through low-emission vehicles, reduced fossil fuel consumption, and a significant decrease in noise levels. All buses are equipped with a driver assistance system, allowing both users and the concessionaire to access real-time information on routes, arrival times, incidents, and more.

Meanwhile, the number of workers more than doubles, with an estimated staff of over one hundred professionals, compared to the current 41 employees. The new urban transport service will increase the number of lines, creating a total of 6 new ones: the Circular Line, Hospital Line, Torreblanca-La Mata-Hospital Quirón Line, as well as the 3 night lines.

Urban transport hours will also increase, so it will be from 7:00 to 22:30 hours in Low Season, and from 7:00 to 24:00 hours



Torre Vieja opens "Full Stop. Life is Stronger" exhibition



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Bienestar social

The Department of Equality of Torre Vieja City Council has opened the travelling photography exhibition "Full Stop. Life Can Do More". The exhibition aims to provoke thought and discussion on human trafficking, a still largely unknown reality considered one of the forms of slavery in the 21st century.

The exhibition is on display in the lobby of the Torre Vieja Multipurpose Building, located at Avenida de las Habaneras, until 20th February. Opening hours are from 9am to 1:30pm and from 3:30pm to 9:00pm.

The exhibition is part of a social awareness project carried out with the participation of survivors of human trafficking. Through the images, it aims to highlight the situations of abuse and exploitation suffered by many people, as well as to raise public awareness of a phenomenon that, due to its complexity and hidden nature, is difficult to detect and identify.

"Full Stop. Life Can Do More" seeks to put a face to this problem and generate greater social awareness, showing that, despite the hard experiences lived, life and the dignity

of people prevail.

The exhibition has been carried out and promoted by the Secretariat of the Episcopal Commission for Migrants, through its Human Trafficking Section, in which the Ecclesial Group against Trafficking of the Diocese of Orihuela-Alicante participates.

The Department of Equality encourages citizens to visit this exhibition and learn first hand about a reality that requires the commitment and awareness of the entire society.

Province registers the highest number of homes started since 2008

Housing construction in the province of Alicante closed 2025 with 11.011 housing starts, the best annual figure since 2008, according to visa statistics from Official College of Technical Architecture of Alicante (COATA). The figure represents an increase of 31.8% compared to 2024 and confirms a progressive acceleration of activity throughout the year.

The president of COATA, Cristina Bordered noted that "the year's performance has been positive, following a third quarter with outstanding figures and a trend towards growth. The data from this fourth quarter confirms this trend and leads us to forecast a start to 2026 with high levels of activity. The sector has responded to sustained demand with an increase in supply that will continue in the coming months."

The fourth quarter has been decisive, with 3.119 housing starts, the highest quarterly figure since 2008, even above the 3.001 of the second quarter of 2023. Cumulative growth has gone from 11% in the first half of the year 21% by the end of September, until reaching the 31,8% at the



end of the year.

Activity has increased in all areas of the province, both in the last quarter and for the year as a whole. In quarterly terms, all areas have registered increases exceeding 40% compared to the same period in 2024, with the Alicante area standing out with an increase of more than 200%.

In the annual accumulation, Vega Baja, Marinas and the Alicante area have reached their highest

levels of activity since 2008, while Elche and the interior have shown more moderate, though still positive, progress. Bordera indicated that "this behaviour represents a pattern opposite to that observed in 2024," recalling that last year Elche and the interior led the growth."

The Vega Baja has established itself as the area with the most activity, with 3.894 housing starts, which represents the 35,3% of the provincial total and

a year-on-year growth of 17,5%. They only started in the fourth quarter 1.071 homes, 48% more than in the same period of the previous year.

At the municipal level, the increase is mainly concentrated in Torrevieja, together with Rojales and San Miguel de Salinas, which together add up 803 more homes in 2024.

Main municipalities Across the province, the muni-

palities with the highest volume of housing starts have been San Joan d'Alacant (1.313), Torrevieja (1.184) and Benidorm (682). They follow Alicante (677), San Miguel de Salinas (674), Villajoyosa (519), Denia (517) and Orihuela (505).

As Bordera pointed out "it is important to highlight that the top three municipalities not only lead in absolute volume, but also in year-on-year growth, since between San Juan, Torrevieja and Benidorm account for a combined increase of 2.164 homes compared to 2024."

The average cost of execution per square metre has been set at 597 Euros, which represents an annual increase of 6,1% and reflects an acceleration in construction costs.

Looking ahead to 2026, the president of COATA has warned that the evolution will depend on factors such as the availability of land and the processing of urban planning licenses, although she stressed that "the sector's willingness to generate new supply" is evident.

Torrevieja health workers welcome renewed talks



The Works Committee of the Torrevieja Health Department has welcomed what it describes as 'a more constructive atmosphere' in renewed negotiations with the Valencian Health Ministry over the 'statutarisation' of staff.

The process would allow around 850 employees – including hospital and primary care staff across ten municipalities in the Vega Baja area – to join the statutory workforce of the Health Ministry. These workers were transferred from private management at the end of 2021 and are currently classified as permanent employees on an "at extinction" basis. The change would follow a single competitive access exam.

The Generalitat has acknowledged that the procedure is legally complex and described it as a pioneering initiative in Spain. Officials have said they are consulting experts to ensure the necessary legal and administrative guarantees are in place.

The Works Committee, which has been calling for statutarisation for more than four years, has submitted proposals aimed at safeguarding staff rights. While it has welcomed greater transparency and cooperation, it has insisted that negotiations on pay and conditions must continue throughout 2026 to prevent any pause in workplace improvements.



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Early retirees in Spain hit with shock pension reduction

Workers in Spain who choose to retire early this year could lose up to €400 more from their monthly pension than they expected.

The change affects people who have paid the highest level of contributions into Spain's Social Security system and who want to take voluntary early retirement. If they retire two years before the official retirement age, their pension could be cut by as much as €705 from the current maximum of €3,359 per month.

Under the previous system, the reduction would have been around €305. This means some people will lose roughly €400 more each month than they had planned for.

The reason is that from January 1, without any major public announcement, Social Security

removed a special transitional rule that was due to remain in place until 2033. This rule protected certain higher earning workers from large penalties if they retired early. In some cases, it reduced the cuts to their pensions to a third of what other workers faced.

Now, instead of a reduction of 9.1% for some workers, Social Security is applying a 21% cut for those who retire two years early.

As a result, the pension paid to someone affected cannot be more than €2,654 per month. This is a significant drop for workers who have been contributing based on annual salaries above €61,200.

The decision is linked to a pension reform introduced in 2022, the aim of which was to discourage people from retiring early. It changed the

way reductions are calculated so that the penalty is applied directly to the pension amount rather than to the contribution base. This has a greater impact on higher earners.

Although the softer transitional system was meant to last for ten years, only two years have passed before it was effectively withdrawn. Social Security argues that maximum pensions have increased enough in recent years to balance out the difference, meaning the final pension amount is similar to what someone might have received under the old rules in 2021.

The possibility that rising maximum pensions could cancel out the benefit of the softer reductions was written into the rules. However, experts and trade unions

say this detail was not clearly communicated and has come as a surprise to many professionals and workers.

Social Security claims it is simply applying the law as it stands, although it admits the issue is being reviewed internally.

José Ramón Mínguez, a la-

bour law specialist and former senior Social Security official, says reforms like this are often introduced quietly without enough public explanation. He points out that the change only affects voluntary early retirement and says each case should be studied carefully. However, he believes the government should have been more transparent.



Man arrested for stealing bikes and scooters in Torrevieja



The Civil Guard has arrested a 45-year-old man in Torrevieja as the suspected perpetrator of a series of robberies and thefts involving high-end bicycles and electric scooters in the municipality and surrounding areas.

Officers seized more than 50 vehicles during the operation, including 34 bicycles and 18 electric scooters, along with five chargers and one bicycle believed to be directly linked to a reported burglary.

According to the Civil Guard, the investigation began in January after a resident reported that two high-end bicycles had been stolen from the courtyard of his home. Following an analysis of evidence, agents tracked the stolen bikes to a building in the urban area of Torrevieja and went to the location to carry out checks.

While there, officers spotted a man transporting a bicycle that closely matched the description of one of the stolen bikes. The suspect was reportedly unable to justify how he had legally obtained it. Investigators contacted the complainant, who positively identified the bicycle as his.

During the police intervention, agents also received information suggesting the suspect may have been storing a large number of bicycles and scooters inside his home. The Civil Guard said the man became hostile and attempted to obstruct officers when they informed him the bicycle would be temporarily seized to verify its origin.

He was arrested at the scene on suspicion of resistance and serious disobedience. He is also being investigated for alleged robbery with force in connection with the theft of the bicycle.

A subsequent search of the man's home led to the seizure of dozens of vehicles. Authorities described the residence as small and "completely crowded" with the recovered items. Some electric scooters were reportedly stacked inside the bathtub.

After giving a statement, the suspect was released pending a summons by judicial authorities. All seized property has been placed at the disposal of the competent court.

The Civil Guard has urged anyone in Torrevieja who believes their bicycle or scooter may be among the recovered items to contact officers. Residents are advised to visit the Civil Guard facilities in Torrevieja or call **965 710 113**, and to bring serial numbers, photographs, or other identifying details to help prove ownership.

So far, investigators have linked the case to seven robberies or thefts, all committed in Torrevieja. Authorities say the number of victims could rise as the investigation continues.

Spain's rail network is 'not perfect but safe', says Sanchez

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has promised that justice will be served following two train crashes in January that killed 47 people, while insisting Spain's rail network remains safe despite the tragedies.

Speaking in the Spanish Congress, Sánchez said the government would continue supporting the injured and the families of those killed, while working to establish the causes of both incidents.

"The entire state is doing, and will continue to do, everything possible to support the injured and the victims' families, clarify the causes of the accident, and, if necessary, ensure justice is done," he told lawmakers. The two crashes, which occurred within days of each other, shocked the country and reig-

nited scrutiny over rail safety in Spain, home to one of the largest high-speed train networks in the world.

The deadliest of the two incidents took place on 18 January in the southern province of Córdoba, in Andalusia, when two high-speed trains collided. Forty-six people were killed, making it one of Europe's worst rail disasters this century. An initial investigation suggested a crack in the track may have been present before the crash.

Just two days later, a commuter train near Barcelona struck debris from a collapsed wall after heavy rainfall. A trainee driver was killed and dozens of passengers were injured.

Facing mounting criticism, Sánchez acknowledged flaws in the system but defended its overall

safety.

"Spain's rail network is not perfect, but it is safe," he said, adding that the government would take every necessary step to prevent similar disasters in the future.

In response to the crashes, the government reached an agreement with rail unions to invest 1.8 billion euros in maintenance upgrades, create 3,650 new jobs, and strengthen public rail safety measures. Following the deal, unions called off a planned three-day strike.

However, opposition parties used the parliamentary session to accuse Sánchez's government of negligence.

The main right-wing People's Party (PP) demanded Sánchez resign, arguing that years of underinvestment in maintenance and staff shortages contributed

to the accidents.

PP leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo told parliament the government had "played Russian roulette with our safety," calling the Andalusia collision "preventable" and criticising the government for failing to apologise or accept responsibility.

Vox leader Santiago Abascal went further, describing the crash as "a crime and not just an accident," and said he hoped the government would be held accountable in court.

The renewed pressure comes at a difficult political moment for Sánchez, whose minority coalition has been weakened by corruption allegations involving members of his inner circle. His Socialist party (PSOE) has

also suffered recent electoral setbacks, including a major defeat in Aragón on Sunday and its worst-ever regional result in Extremadura in December.

Spain opened its passenger rail market to private operators in 2021, ending the long-standing monopoly of state-owned RENFE. Unions have argued that investment in upkeep has failed to keep pace with the system's expansion.

Sánchez rejected that criticism, saying his government has nearly tripled rail infrastructure spending since taking office in 2018. He noted that Spain's rail network carries more than 12 million passengers every week.

"There is still work to be done, without a doubt, and much to improve," Sánchez told MPs.

New speed cameras rolled out

Drivers in Alicante are being warned that new average speed cameras are now being tested on some of the province's busiest roads, as Spain's traffic authority steps up its crackdown on speeding.

The DGT has begun testing new section control radars on key stretches of road in the Alicante area. The aim is to boost speed enforcement across the State Road Network using what officials describe as the most effective technology available to catch offenders.

In Alicante province, new average speed cameras have been installed on the A 31 between Novelda and Elda Petrer. They cover the stretch from kilometre 211.700 to 203.005 in the direction of Madrid. Another section on the same motorway between Novelda and Monforte del Cid, from kilometre 216.550 to 218.900, is also now under average speed control.

A further section control radar has been placed on the A 7 between the Elche Sur exit and Crevillent, covering kilometre points 523.360 to 519.200. This stretch is used daily by thousands of drivers commuting between Elche, Crevillent and surrounding areas.

For now, drivers who exceed the speed limit in these newly monitored sections will not immediately receive fines. Instead, they will receive warning notifications while the system is in its testing phase. However, similar to the sanctions for not having a V16 beacon, the DGT has not confirmed how long this grace period

will last.

Average speed cameras work differently from traditional fixed radars. Rather than measuring speed at a single point, they record a vehicle's number plate as it enters and exits a controlled stretch of road. A computer system then calculates how long the journey took and works out the vehicle's average speed.

If the average speed stays within the legal limit, no action is taken. If it exceeds the limit, the driver can face a fine once the system is fully operational.

These systems are considered particularly effective because drivers can't simply slow down for a camera and then speed up again. The monitoring takes place over several kilometres, making it much harder to avoid detection.

The DGT says it will intensify controls throughout this month, with more average speed cameras and radar cars being deployed across Spain.



Former Mayor of Catral convicted



Albero kept him working at the council through a verbal appointment. Later this was extended through a series of minor contracts and extensions that were considered irregular.

According to the judgment, this arrangement allowed Llopis to control the municipal accounts until March 2013. During that time, and with access to banking passwords provided by the council, he allegedly diverted around 10,000 euros from public funds into personal accounts through multiple transfers.

For these actions, the Supreme Court confirmed the sentence of four years and three months of disqualification for Albero for the crime of prevarication. It also upheld the conviction of Llopis, who was sentenced to three years in prison and six years of disqualification for embezzlement and document forgery.

However, the High Court partially accepted the appeal filed by Carmen María Flores, Llopis' wife, reducing her civil liability as a "lucrative participant" by half. As a result, the amount she must return has been set at 1,436 euros, down from more than the 2,800 euros originally ordered, after the court concluded that the misappropriated money was used for shared household expenses.

The municipal management of Catral City Council has returned to the courts after the Supreme Court upheld the conviction handed down by the Provincial Court of Alicante against former Mayor Aurelio Albero and his collaborator Juan Carlos Llopis. The pair have been found guilty of a scheme of prevarication and embezzlement that lasted almost two years.

In a ruling linked to events that began after the May 2011 municipal elections, the Supreme Court confirmed that Albero, once he took office as Mayor, brought Llopis into the council as a trusted figure despite the fact that he had been part of the electoral candidacy but failed to secure a councillor's seat.

The court found that although the municipal plenary council meeting rejected the creation of an advisory position for Llopis,



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Worst score of the century for Spain in Corruption Perceptions Index

In 2025, Spain recorded its worst score of the century in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) prepared every year by the organisation Transparency International. The country obtains 55 points out of 100, one point less than the previous year, and falls three positions in the global ranking, to 49th place out of the 182 countries and territories analysed, according to a recent report.

The organisation warns that Spain's setback is part of a broader trend of weakening anti-corruption mechanisms worldwide. In its statement, Transparency International warns of the "serious global weakening of anti-corruption mechanisms", a phenomenon that generates "international concern" and that also affects consolidated democracies.

With this score, Spain shares

a position with Cyprus and Fiji, and is behind countries such as Portugal, which obtains 56 points despite also dropping one point, or Slovenia, with 58. At the European level, Spain drops from 16th to 17th place among the 27 Member States of the European Union, placing it below the EU average.

The report stresses that in most EU countries there is a "general decline in the score", reflecting a "worrying state of stagnation in the effective application of anti-corruption standards" and a "growing erosion of accountability mechanisms". This dynamic, the NGO notes, is aggravated by the loss of international leadership and by the deterioration of the role of the United States in the fight against the practice of bribery.

On a global scale, the CPI 2025

reveals that the world average has fallen to 42 points, the lowest level in more than a decade. More than two-thirds of the countries analysed, 122 in total, score below 50, indicating high levels of perceived corruption in the public sector.

Transparency International insists that this setback can still be stopped. "Corruption is not inevitable," says the president of the organization, François Valérien, who recalls that there are effective tools to combat it, from independent control institutions to a free and protected civil society.

The NGO warns, however, that political polarisation, increasingly common attacks on journalists and the persecution of whistleblowers are weakening response capacities in many countries.

At the bottom of the ranking, as a country where the perception of corruption is lower, Denmark is once again in last place in the index for the eighth consecutive year, with 89 points, followed by Finland (88) and Singapore (84).

At the opposite extreme are countries such as South Sudan and Somalia, with 9 points, and Venezuela, with 10, characterised, according to the organisation, by strong repression of civil society and high levels of instability.

The report also identifies countries that have made sustained progress since 2012, such as Estonia, South Korea and Seychelles, thanks to institutional reforms and the digitalisation of public services.

In contrast, others such as Turkey, Hungary and Nicaragua have registered significant declines, associated with democratic setbacks and a structural weakening of integrity systems.



National Police dismantles violent robbery gang

Spain's National Police have dismantled a criminal group allegedly responsible for a series of forceful robberies in gambling halls across the Region of Murcia and the province of Alicante. Investigators say the group used a technique known as the "stacker" method to artificially increase the amount of cash inside gaming machines before breaking into the cash boxes and stealing large sums.

The investigation began last year after officers were alerted to a group targeting several gambling halls in Molina de Segura and Murcia. Police said the suspects stole more than €20,000 and caused significant damage to the machines.

As the inquiry progressed, investigators were able to identify the role each member allegedly played in the criminal operation. Police described a structured network, including a ringleader responsible for planning the robberies, recruiting participants and gaining the trust of gambling hall staff.

Other members were allegedly tasked with "fattening" the machines using the stacker technique, forcing open the cash boxes with specialised tools, and driving the



getaway vehicle to ensure the group could flee safely after each robbery.

Police said the gang also carried out detailed surveillance before striking. Investigators believe the suspects studied the layout of each premises, including the location of the machines, staff routines and working hours. Officers said they chose the most suitable time to act and, in some cases, allegedly contacted an employee in advance, offering them €5,000 in exchange for helping facilitate the crime.

According to police, the stacker method involves starting a session on a gaming machine by inserting cash and then retrieving the amount as a ticket without placing any bets. The ticket is then cashed at an ATM within the same establishment, and the money is repeatedly inserted back into the machine.

Police said this cycle is carried out multiple times until the machine is "primed," allowing a large amount of cash to accumulate. The suspects then allegedly manipulated the machine using a metal tool to access the cash box, taking money that belonged to the establishment – funds that had been exchanged through the repeated ticket transactions.

So far, National Police have arrested four members of the alleged criminal group. They are accused of robbery with force and belonging to a criminal organisation. All have been brought before the courts.

Police said the investigation remains open as officers continue working to identify other possible robberies linked to the same group and to arrest any additional suspects.

January is gloomiest month Spain has seen in 30 years

January always feels like it drags on forever after Christmas, but this year seemed particularly grim thanks to the relentless bad weather that battered Spain throughout the month.

The succession of storms that pounded the country last month, and which shows no sign of letting up, darkened the days across the entire country. Spain has just experienced its January with the fewest hours of sunshine since 1996 and the second darkest in the series that began in 1984.

This January was also the wettest in the last quarter of a century, with 85% more rain than the 1991-2020 average. Moreover, it was the seventh dampest January on record since 1961,

and the second wettest of the 21st century, surpassed only by 2001.

The figures come from researcher Dominic Royé at the Biological Mission of Galicia, who prepared a graph based on European satellite data from Eumestat.

Royé explained that January was the month with the greatest negative anomaly in sunshine hours in the entire record, with an average of 29 fewer hours across Spain. Only 1996 was worse, with 33 fewer hours than usual.

The country normally gets around 185 hours of sunshine in January, although there are significant differences between areas. The north usually sees be-

tween 100 and 120 hours, while the south gets between 250 and 270 hours.

This year, almost the entire country fell below these averages, with the exception of Murcia, Almería and the Balearic Islands, which stayed within normal ranges. The Atlantic coast and the northwest corner saw the biggest drops.

Galician cities registered very high percentage falls. In Santiago de Compostela, sunshine hours compared to the average for this time of year were slashed by almost 50%, in Vigo by 48% and in A Coruña by 46%. Even more significant decreases occurred in Ourense (57%), Pontevedra (56%) and Lugo (55%).

These figures are much higher than those of other Spanish cities mentioned by the researcher, such as Madrid (20%), Sevilla (30%), Gijón (40%) and Burgos (40%).

Geography plays a role as well. The greatest reductions in sunshine tend to occur in mountainous areas because of the topography, and the impact on the coast is usually less because cloud cover clears more quickly.

Cloud cover is the factor that causes the reduction in sunshine hours, although Royé explains that the amount of rain doesn't necessarily mean less sun. The sky can be cloudy without rain, just as there can be heavy downpours in a short period, like summer storms, followed

by clearing. The season and day length also matter, as days are shorter in January than in July.

The reduction in daylight hours has well-known effects on people's moods, pointed out Royé, who researches the relationship between health and climate.

"It has a physiological effect but also a psychological one, because it often depresses us, especially those of us who live further north," he said.

The latest storm to batter Spain was Marta, the 13th high-impact storm of the season. Aemet explained that this is the earliest year the letter M has been reached. Until now the earliest was Myriam, named on March 3, 2020.

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Worst January for employment since 2012

Spain has started 2026 with the worst employment figures for more than a decade. In January, Social Security lost 270,782 average contributors compared to December, the worst figure for that month since 2012, at the height of the financial crisis.

That said, Social Security affiliation closed January at 21,573,632 contributors, the highest figure recorded for the month of January. Compared to a year ago, the number of contributors increased by 477,818 people, representing a year-on-year growth of 2.3%.

The loss of contributors was mainly among contracted employees, while the number of self-employed workers also fell at the start of the year, although it remains above the level recorded 12 months ago. The decline was reflected in a reduction in the number of foreign workers, which remains near record highs.

The Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, Elma Saiz, pointed out that January is "traditionally a negative month" due to the end of contracts linked to the Christmas festivities, and defended that the data show a "stronger and more stable" labour market than in previous years.

She also highlighted that, in seasonally adjusted terms, numbers grew in January

by just over 17,000 people, reaching a new all-time high in the adjusted series. The monthly adjustment was reflected in unemployment. Registered unemployment increased in January by 30,392 people, to 2.44 million, according to SEPE data. Even so, this is the lowest unemployment figure in the month of January since 2008.

The increase in unemployment was concentrated in the services sector, the one most closely linked to seasonal year-end hiring. On the other hand, unemployment fell in general industry, construction and among people without previous employment. The rebound was more pronounced among women those under 25 years of age.

By autonomous communities, unemployment only fell in the Balearic Islands, while it increased in the rest of the country, with Andalusia, Madrid and Galicia seeing the largest increases.



International buyers shape a historic year in Spain's property market

Spain's property market saw a busy year in 2025, with sales reaching levels not seen since before the property crisis of 2008. International buyers continued to play an important role, making up around one in seven home purchases. Over the year, nearly 97,000 homes were sold to international buyers, showing that Spain is still an attractive destination for people looking to buy a property abroad.

Cash purchases also stood out in 2025. Around three out of every 10 homes were purchased without a mortgage, which roughly totals 206,500 properties. Many of these buyers used savings, sold a previous property, or received an inheritance. The source of the funds must be recorded in the property deed. This proportion is only slightly lower than in 2024, even though house prices increased by 9.5% and interest rates fell during the year.

The last quarter of 2025 was particularly busy, with 178,270 homes sold. Most of these were second-hand properties, with 141,450 resales compared to 24,200 newly built homes. With new builds hard to come by at the moment, the resale market is where most of the activity is happening.

Most people still take out a mortgage to buy their property. In the final quar-

ter, 132,385 loans were signed with an average value of €171,177, a record high. There are significant differences between regions. Madrid and the Balearic Islands had the highest average mortgages at €277,680 and €271,874, while Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha remained below €100,000. Interest rates fell to an average of 2.97% by the end of the year.

Despite this, rising property prices mean that monthly mortgage payments continue to take up a large portion of income. Nationally, the average mortgage represents about one-third of a typical salary. In Madrid and the Balearic Islands, it rises to between 43 and 55%, while in Murcia, La Rioja and Extremadura it stays below 25%.

House prices also reached record highs in 2025. The average price per square metre was €2,354. But in places like Madrid, the Balearic Islands, País Vasco and Cataluña, prices remained the most expensive, with some city centres exceeding €5,283 per square metre.

With the government announcing plans to streamline building licenses and to build more affordable homes, 2026 could bring some real changes to the housing market.

Eighty-six-year-old Brit found dead at Alicante home



An 86-year-old British man was found dead in his flat in the centre of the town of Teulada, Alicante province, this Monday afternoon, February 9.

His relatives and acquaintances had been unable to contact him at his home, located on the corner of Calle Canonge Valés and Calle Mestre Mulet Borrell,

and so phoned the emergency services. Firefighters broke into the flat through a window and discovered him dead.

It is not known whether he suffered an accident at home or died of natural causes.

Teulada, a town in the Marina Alta area of Alicante with a

population of nearly 13,000 at the last census, is made up of more than 50% foreigners, more than 2,000 of whom are British.

Police dismantle drug sales point in Benidorm

Spain's National Police have arrested three people in Benidorm — two men and a woman aged 29, 39 and 43 — for their alleged involvement in drug trafficking. Officers seized 105 grams of cocaine after intercepting two of the suspects in a vehicle, police said.

The investigation began after officers received information from local residents about a couple allegedly making a living from selling narcotics, including marijuana and cocaine. According to police, the suspects were believed to be using their home and communal areas of their building to store and distribute drugs.

Neighbours reported constant movement of people entering and leaving the property to buy

drugs and said they had also witnessed drug use on public roads. Police said this created fear among residents and disrupted daily life in the area.

To verify the information, officers launched surveillance operations focusing on the suspects' location and monitoring activity around the property. After identifying the couple, police carried out further surveillance and determined that the two, along with a third person, were allegedly involved in the sale of narcotics.

Police said the suspects contacted customers through various communication channels and used their home to store both the drugs and the money obtained from sales. Officers also confirmed that most of the

distribution took place around Benidorm's English leisure area, with an electric scooter reportedly used for deliveries.

With evidence suggesting an ongoing drug trafficking operation, police carried out an operation aimed at seizing narcotics believed to be hidden inside the home. The operation led to the arrest of two men.

The suspects were intercepted in a vehicle shortly after allegedly completing a drug transaction. During an initial search, officers reportedly found one of them carrying a packet of marijuana.

Police then conducted a detailed search of the vehicle with support from a National Police canine unit. The trained dog detected narcotics near the

dashboard area, leading officers to inspect the audio system. Police said the system detached when pushed, revealing a hidden compartment containing a plastic bag with a rock-like substance later confirmed to be cocaine, weighing 105 grams.

The woman under investigation was arrested later, bringing the total number of detainees to three.

Police said the operation confirmed the existence of a retail drug sales point that was allegedly frequented by large numbers of people daily, as well as public drug consumption, which they said affected residents and local businesses.

All three suspects have been placed at the disposal of the on-duty investigating courts in Benidorm.



Thirteen full moons to light up the skies

Stargazers across Spain are in for a treat this year with 13 full moons set to light up the night sky throughout 2026, making it an exceptional year for lunar enthusiasts.

The Moon's regular and cyclical movement means that approximately every 28 days, different phases of the lunar calendar occur, including the new moon, waning crescent, waxing crescent and the most striking of all: the full moon.

This is the moment when Earth's satellite is observed in its maximum splendour and acquires a greater presence in the night sky.

Due to this cyclical movement, full moons occur at different times throughout the year. Popular belief and tradition have led to each full moon being known by a different name, particularly in Anglo-Saxon and Central European countries, although this terminology is gradually being adopted elsewhere, including Spain.

Depending on the year, the number of full moons can vary. In 2026 there will be a total of 13. Some are considered micro-moons, others supermoons and there are also more common full



moons, but all of them have a name.

The first two full moons of 2026 have already passed. The Wolf Moon appeared on January 3, shortly after the start of the year. This name, used especially by indigenous peoples of North America, originates from the harsh winter when only the howls of wolves could be heard during the coldest days.

The Snow Moon followed on February 1, reflecting the wintry conditions typical of that month in the Northern Hemisphere.

What's still to come

The next full moon visible from Spain will be the Worm Moon on March 3. This name comes from

the thawing of the ground after winter, when the soil begins to melt and earthworms and larvae reappear, an unmistakable sign of the end of winter.

April 2 brings the Pink Moon, a name of Native American origin linked to spring blossoms and the pinkish hues that appear in some plants during this month. The name is symbolic and doesn't mean the moon actually turns pink.

May sees two full moons. The Flower Moon on May 1 reflects the splendour of nature in spring, when plants reach their peak bloom and growth. Then on May 31 comes the Blue Moon, a term describing the phenomenon that occurs when the full moon phase repeats within the same month.

The Strawberry Moon appears on June 29 and typically coincides with the alignment of the Sun, Earth and Moon so that all the sunlight is reflected.

In the heart of summer, the Buck Moon rises on July 29, associated with the natural cycles of wildlife and carrying symbolic weight inherited from ancient traditions.

August 28 brings the Sturgeon Moon, named by Native American peoples for the abundance of this fish in the Great Lakes during this time. This name is much less common and popular in Europe and places like Spain.

During the transition between summer and autumn, near the equinox, the Harvest Moon

occurs on September 26. This moon is associated with the harvest season for a large portion of crops before the arrival of cold weather, and the moon's brightness traditionally facilitated agricultural work at night.

In the heart of autumn comes the Hunter's Moon on October 26, so called because it illuminates the night sky and is associated with hunting activities that were essential for survival at this time of year. It's often a supermoon.

The Beaver Moon appears on November 24. The name comes from very ancient traditions when Native American peoples assigned names to each full moon based on the tasks associated with each time of year. November coincided with the time to set traps to capture beavers to obtain their pelts before the waters froze.

The year closes with the Cold Moon on December 24, coinciding with the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. It marks the longest and coldest nights of the year and sometimes coincides with a supermoon, making it especially bright and dominant in the night sky across Spain and the rest of Europe.

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Where to see the best almond blossoms in Alicante this February



Well, after what must have been the gloomiest and greyest January in Spain for a long time, February's almond blossom season is just what we need. For people living in the province of Alicante, the timing couldn't be better. National Geographic has just selected Tàrbena, a small village in Marina Baixa, as one of the best places to see almond trees in bloom.

Tàrbena sits between the Sierra de Bèrnia, the Sierra del Ferrer, and the Sierra de Sa Creu, where the hills here turn white and pink for a few weeks each year. But National Geographic didn't just focus on the almond blossoms, this beautiful, whitewashed village and the ruins of the old Almohad castle, Sa Casallota, cling to the hillside, making the views all the more dramatic.

This beautiful village is made even more special by its history. After the expulsion of the Moriscos in the 17th century, families from Santa Margalida in Mallorca repopulated Tàrbena, and their Mallorcan heritage is still very much alive today. You can see it in the way people speak,

in local surnames, in the food, and in the traditional production of sobrasada. With its combination of history, interesting heritage, and of course, the almond blossoms, there are plenty of reasons to visit this village.

But Tàrbena is not the only place in Alicante where almond trees put on a show. The Alicante Province has many spots where the almond blossom can be enjoyed without large crowds. For example, Hondón de los Frailes and its surrounding valley are known for quiet paths lined with flowering almond trees. The Vall de Pop, including towns like Alcalalí, has stunning countryside trails where the terraces fill with white and pink flowers each year. Castell de Castells is another option, with routes through old almond groves that give a clear view of the surrounding mountains and villages.

The almond blossom season is short, it usually peaks in February. For anyone wanting to celebrate the fact that winter is coming to an end and Spring is hopefully just around the corner, now is the moment to make plans!

Tiny town near Benidorm clamps down on tourist lets in historic centre

A small inland town close to Benidorm has taken a firm stance on holiday rentals, becoming one of the few municipalities in the Marina Baixa to introduce its own detailed local rules.

The Ayuntamiento of Polop de la Marina has given initial approval to a new ordinance regulating tourist accommodation and short-term holiday rentals, known in Spain as viviendas de uso turístico (VUT), aimed at balancing tourism with residential life and safeguarding the town's historic character.

The measure was approved in plenary with the backing of the governing Partido Popular and an independent councillor, while the PSOE abstained. The council says the goal is to avoid future problems linked to uncontrolled growth in short-term lets and to provide legal clarity for residents and property owners.

At the heart of the regulation is a total ban on tourist accommodation in the old town and around the Cultural Interest Site, as well as in the historic centre

itself. These areas are being protected to preserve their heritage value and residential use.

In urban expansion zones dominated by terraced housing, tourist accommodation will only be permitted in very exceptional cases. More flexibility is allowed in outer urbanisations, where holiday lets may be authorised up to a limit of 15 percent of homes in each area, and only with the approval of the relevant homeowners' association.

The ordinance has been in preparation for over a year and is based on a technical study by the University of Alicante, identifying which areas require special protection and how tourism can be regulated in line with the town's development model.

Polop's decision reflects a wider push across Spain to rein in tourist rentals, following national action last year to remove tens of thousands of illegal listings from online platforms.



Urgent search for missing Benidorm Brit



Family and friends are becoming increasingly worried about a British expat who vanished after discharging himself from a hospital in Benidorm over the weekend.

Pete Jackson, 54, walked out of IMED Hospital on Saturday morning and hasn't been seen or heard from since. The disappearance is completely out of character for the British man, who has lived and worked in the Costa Blanca resort for nearly three years.

His relatives say he was alert when he left the medical facility but was still on medication, and they're now concerned he may have become confused or lost his bearings. There are fears he could have had a fall or become disorientated trying to find his way home.

The last confirmed sighting of Pete was on the morning of Saturday February 7 when he left the hospital, and there have been no reports of anyone seeing him since.

He's roughly 5ft 10in tall with a slim frame and fair, curly hair. Pete has several tattoos that could help people identify him, including a candle and tulip on one arm, a turtle on the back of his leg and a shark.

People who know him say Pete lives a quiet but sociable life in Benidorm and is well regarded in the community. Friends and family paint a picture of someone who's friendly, cheerful and full of energy. He's been married for almost 29 years and is said to be completely devoted to his family and closest friends.

The local British community has thrown its weight behind efforts to find him, with appeals being shared widely across social media and local groups in the hope that someone might have information about his whereabouts.

Anyone who thinks they may have seen Pete Jackson or knows where he is should contact the police immediately. The National Police can be reached on 0034 966 831 930.

Taxis to go on strike this February

The taxi situation is already far from ideal in Alicante and other tourist areas but things are going to get a whole lot worse with news that cab drivers throughout the Valencian Community have called a 24-hour strike on Wednesday February 25.

The stoppage will run from 6am on Wednesday right through until 6am on Thursday.

Taxi associations say the sector has been waiting months for new regulations that would restore the balance between taxis and VTCs (ride-hail services like Uber and Cabify).

According to the drivers, the recent ruling by the High Court of Justice of the Valencian Community (TSJCV), although not yet final, could lead to the complete liberalisation of ride-hailing services.

"This situation jeopardises the stability of more than 7,000 families throughout the Valencian Community," they stated in a press release.

They add that the lack of a clear regulatory framework has increased tension between taxi drivers and private transportation platforms.

Minister of Environment, Infrastructure, Territory and Recovery, Vicente Martínez Mus, confirmed this week that the region-

al government is working on a decree to protect cab drivers and guarantee the viability of taxis as an essential public service.

"We are close to approving a legal framework that will ensure the stability of the sector and maintain a balance with the new transport services," the Minister stated.

However, the associations emphasise that a final text and specific dates for its implementation are still unknown. "We've been hearing promises for years and still have no certainty about how the necessary measures will be applied," they state, while insisting that until there is progress, many taxi drivers feel their jobs and income "are at risk."

Taxi drivers have organised a demonstration at the Palau de la Generalitat on the 25th, where they will present their demands and call for legal guarantees.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Four arrested after violent robbery at La Marina opticians

Staff at an optician in La Marina were victims of a violent robbery after an organised group targeted the shop and stole eight pairs of sunglasses valued at around 2,000 euros.

Two women entered the premises to distract one of the employees, while two men went straight to a sunglasses display and took the items. When a worker realised what was happening and tried to stop them, the suspects reacted violently, struggling with her and attempting to knock her to the ground. As another employee partially blocked the exit, the group pushed both staff and the door with force before escaping.

Torrevieja promotes healthy technology use in schools

Torrevieja Council has launched a new educational programme aimed at encouraging healthy, responsible and balanced use of digital technology among primary school pupils. The initiative, known as Cibersabios, is being delivered during the 2025 to 2026 school year through the council's Community Prevention Unit.

The programme consists of ninety-minute workshops led by specialist professionals and is taking place in classrooms across all sixteen primary schools in Torrevieja. The aim is to give children practical tools to build a healthy relationship with technology from an early age. The sessions cover topics such as screen time management, digital safety, emotional self-regulation, online respect, and awareness of risks including dependency, cyberbullying and sleep disruption.



Street-cleaning vehicle hits pizzeria terrace in central Torrevieja

A municipal street-cleaning vehicle ran into the terrace of a pizzeria in Calle del Mar, at the junction with Ramón Gallud, in central Torrevieja. The incident happened close to the Virgen del Carmen cultural centre, according to the Provincial Fire Consortium.

The vehicle caught the terrace awning, leaving part of the structure unstable. Although the restaurant was busy inside, there were no customers seated outside at the time, partly due to windy weather conditions. Emergency services confirmed that no one was injured and alcohol was not involved.

San Javier insurance broker arrested over bogus car policies

A well-known insurance broker in San Javier has been arrested for allegedly scamming nearly a dozen expatriate clients by selling car insurance policies that were never valid.

The 40-year-old woman, who ran a franchised office of a major national insurer in the Mar Menor area, is accused of taking customers' money without properly registering their policies. Many of her clients were foreign residents who later discovered during routine police checks that they were driving without insurance.



ered during routine police checks that they were driving without insurance.

Man arrested after alleged break-in at La Marina property

Elche Local Police have arrested a man on suspicion of burglary at a detached property in the La Marina district of the municipality. Officers responded to a report of a possible break-in and during a search of the area near Camino del Molar, found a man crouching in a ditch. When he noticed the patrol car, he allegedly tried to hide by lying on the ground. Police discovered he was carrying a backpack containing professional tools, including a hydraulic jack, a torch and a defensive spray. A balaclava and a keyring with several vehicle keys were also found among his belongings.

Another patrol spoke to the property owner and carried out an inspection. Officers found that rear and side metal fencing had been cut and that a hole had been made to access a storage area containing 32 solar batteries, valued at 140 euros each, as well as a water pump.

The owner identified several of the seized tools as his, including a wheel wrench, metal cutting shears and pliers. Based on the evidence gathered at the scene, officers arrested the man on suspicion of burglary with force.

Scientists probe whale strandings on Murcia and Almería coasts

An investigation is under way into the deaths of four Cuvier's beaked whales found stranded along the Mediterranean coasts of Murcia and Almería. The animals were discovered at different locations within a short time frame, prompting concerns about a possible shared cause.

Spain's Ministry for Ecological Transition deployed a specialist cetacean pathology team from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, working alongside regional

wildlife experts. Necropsies were carried out and samples taken from major organs to determine whether the deaths were linked to disease or human-related factors.

Researchers have now ruled out infectious causes and have classified the incident as an atypical mass stranding, meaning several animals of the same species appeared across a defined area in a short period.

Man detained after clothing theft at Dos Mares shopping centre

A man has been detained following a theft at the Dos Mares shopping centre in San Javier. Local Police were called after security staff at the Pull & Bear store reported



they were holding a suspect. The alert was raised through the 112 emergency number.

The man admitted he had used scissors to

cut security tags from several T-shirts and pairs of trousers in the changing rooms. He told officers he had been accompanied by a woman, who is known to staff from previous similar incidents, and her son. The woman fled when the alarms were triggered, while he remained at the scene.

Los Alcázares to have Easter lifeguards for the first time

Los Alcázares will station lifeguards on two of its beaches during Holy Week for the first time, responding to rising visitor numbers outside the peak summer months. The council has confirmed that a full rescue operation will run from 28th March to 6th April, between 11am and 5pm, at Las Palmeras and Manzanares beaches.

The team will consist of four lifeguards, a captain, a coordinator and a jet ski, with dynamic patrol routes in place. Tourism and Beaches councillor María José Díaz said beach management is a year-round responsibility. She added that extending lifeguard cover beyond the summer months reflects changing tourism patterns, with more people choosing to visit the coastline throughout the year.



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Sir Mick Jagger's fiancée attacked outside famous London club

Melanie Hamrick, the fiancée of Rolling Stones frontman, has claimed she was "physically attacked" during a night out at the exclusive Mayfair club Annabel's.

Ms Hamrick, 38, said she was left "shaken, sad and heartbroken" after the alleged incident, which she described in an Instagram post that was later deleted.

"This is incredibly hard to share, but I was physically attacked at Annabel's Mayfair tonight," she wrote. "I'm so thankful to my friends for protecting me.

Two people grabbed me from behind and thank God for the good people who stepped in to help me.

"I'm shaken, sad and heartbroken that people can treat each other this way."

The former ballerina is believed to have been attacked outside the private members' club in Berkeley Square. She had reportedly been dining earlier in the evening at Nobu with socialite friend Emma Thynn before heading to Annabel's. Ms Hamrick, who danced

with the American Ballet Theatre for 15 years before retiring in 2019, has been in a relationship with Sir Mick since 2014. The pair share a son, Devereaux, and have been engaged for three years.

The incident comes amid growing concerns over crime in London's most affluent areas, following a string of bold daytime thefts in which criminals have targeted luxury watches, handbags and jewellery at some of the capital's most expensive stores.



Dawsons Creek star dies from cancer at 48

James Van Der Beek, best known for playing teen heartthrob Dawson Leery in Dawson's Creek, has died aged 48 following a public two-year battle with colorectal cancer.

The actor's family confirmed his death in an emotional statement shared on Instagram, revealing he passed away peacefully.

"Our beloved James David Van Der Beek passed peacefully this morning," the post read. "He met his final days with courage, faith, and grace. There is much to share regarding his wishes, love for humanity and the sacredness of time. Those days will come. For now we ask for peaceful privacy as we grieve our loving husband, father, son, brother, and friend."

Van Der Beek is survived by his wife, Kimberly, and their six children: daughters Olivia, 15, Annabel, 12, Emilia, nine, and Gwendolyn, seven, as well as sons Joshua, 13, and Jeremiah, four.

Following the announcement, several celebrities including Jennifer Garner,

Sarah Michelle Gellar, Lucy Hale, Christie Brinkley and Rumer Willis showed their support by liking the family's statement.

In the hours after the news broke, a GoFundMe page was launched to support Van Der Beek's wife and children, with an initial target of \$500,000. Kimberly shared the fundraiser on her Instagram Stories, writing: "My friends created this link to support me and our children during this time. With gratitude and a broken heart."

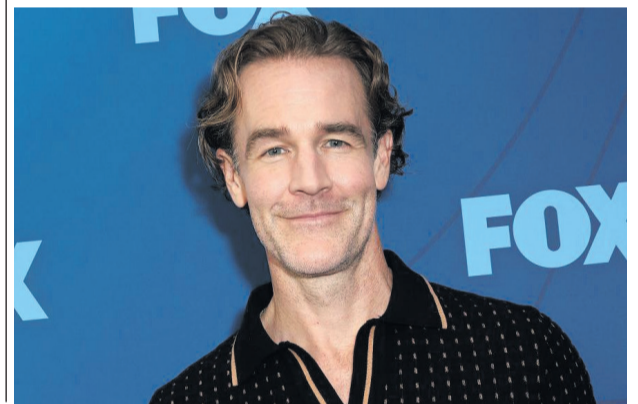
The fundraiser description said donations would help cover "essential living expenses, pay bills, and support the children's education." More than \$100,000 was reportedly

raised within an hour.

Van Der Beek first revealed his cancer diagnosis in November 2024. Over the following months, the actor frequently updated fans on social media about his health. His last Instagram post, shared on 25th January, showed him looking noticeably slender but in good spirits.

Van Der Beek and his family relocated from Los Angeles to Austin, Texas in 2020, opting for a quieter lifestyle on a ranch.

The actor rose to fame in the late 1990s, becoming a household name at just 20 years old when he landed the lead role in Dawson's Creek, one of the defining teen dramas of the era.



Pogues drummer dies

Andrew Ranken, the drummer and founding member of Irish folk-punk band The Pogues, has died aged 72.

The band confirmed the news in a statement shared on X, formerly Twitter, paying tribute to the musician they described as the "heartbeat" of the group.

"It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Andrew Ranken, drummer, founding member, and heartbeat of The Pogues," the statement read. "Andrew, thank you for everything, for your friendship, your wit and your generosity of spirit, and of course for the music, forever a true friend and brother.

"Our thoughts and love are with his family at this sad and difficult time."

Ranken was instrumental in bringing together the band's

original line-up in 1983 and performed with The Pogues during their early rise to fame. He played with the group from 1983 until 1996, before returning again between 2001 and 2014.

Nicknamed 'The Clobberer', Ranken was known for his energetic drumming and also contributed percussion, harmonica and backing vocals during the band's later years.

He had suffered ill health for a number of years and was reported to have lived with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The news comes as The Pogues recently returned to the stage for a 40th anniversary tour celebrating their album *Rum Sodomy and the Lash*. Surviving members Spider Stacy, James Fearnley and Jem Finer appeared throughout the

tour, though Ranken did not take part due to his health. He was replaced on drums by Fontaines D.C. musician Tom Cull.

Formed in London in the 1980s, The Pogues released their debut album Red Roses for Me in 1984 and went on to become one of the most influential bands of their era.

Ranken played on the group's best-known track, Fairytale of New York, which remains their most iconic song. First released in 1987, it was written by late frontman Shane MacGowan, who was born on Christmas Day, alongside banjo player Jem Finer.



Inquest hears Strictly star said show axing 'destroyed' him in suicide note

An inquest into the death of former Strictly Come Dancing professional Robin Windsor has heard he claimed the show "destroyed" him after he was dropped from the BBC series.

Windsor, who was 44, died in 2024 after taking his own life. He was found at a hotel in Shepherd's Bush, west London, the inquest was told. A suicide note left by the dancer was read during proceedings, in which he described a long struggle following his axing from Strictly in 2015, five years after he first joined the programme.

"This all really started when I lost my job on Strictly and have been fighting it ever since," Windsor wrote.

He added: "The way they treated me destroyed me... It started me on the road I'm

still on. All I wanted from life was to be happy. I loved my job more than anyone else."

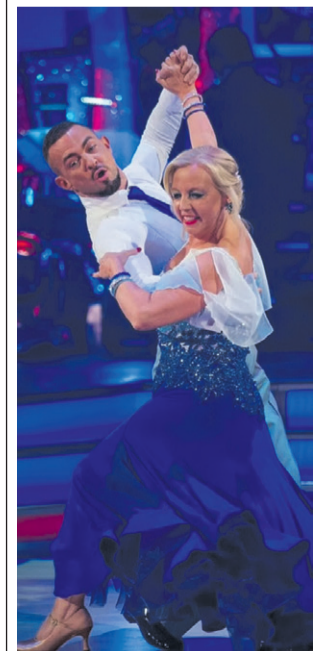
Windsor also described living "permanently in a dark place" and said: "I just can't live like this anymore, it's too painful."

In the closing lines of his note, he reflected on his life and career, writing: "I had a good run, I've done some incredible things in my 44 years and had an unreal life doing what I loved, but all things must come to an end, and my curtain has come down for the final time."

The inquest heard that a post-mortem examination concluded Windsor's death was likely caused by an overdose of drugs and alcohol.

His friend and former Strictly dance partner, actress Lisa Riley, also provided a

witness statement. She said Windsor's "glow had gone" after being dropped from the show, and that he appeared to fall "deeper into endless depression" in the years that followed.





THIS WEEK'S FILM PICKS

The Cut

Friday 20th February, Sky Premier, 1.10pm



The Cut is a 2024 psychological thriller film directed by Sean Ellis and starring Orlando Bloom as an Irish boxer ending his retirement to seek a championship title, undergoing a drastic weight cutting regimen at the urging of his coach. Determined to win a championship title after coming out of retirement, the Irish fighter begins a gruelling training and weight loss regimen under his demanding, unorthodox boxing coach.

Django Unchained

Saturday 21st February, Fim 4, 10pm



Django Unchained is a 2012 American revisionist Western film written and directed by Quentin Tarantino. Produced by Tarantino's A Band Apart and Columbia Pictures, it stars Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kerry Washington, and Samuel L. Jackson. The film, set in the Antebellum South and Old West follows the story of an enslaved man who trains under a German bounty hunter with the ultimate goal of reuniting with his wife. It is a highly stylized, revisionist tribute to spaghetti Westerns, with its title referring particularly to the 1966 Italian film Django by Sergio Corbucci.

TV Guide

Tuesday 17th February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	Channel 4 HD	5
10:00 Winter Olympics 2026 <small>Coverage of day 11 of the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games.</small>	10:00 Breakfast	10:30 Lorraine	10:25 The Only Way is Essex	10:10 Frasier	10:05 Milkshake! Story Den
14:00 BBC News at One	10:30 Morning Live	11:00 This Morning	11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami	12:10 American Pickers	10:10 Entertainment News on 5 <small>A daily round-up of showbiz news and gossip from around the world, focusing on celebrities, movies,</small>
15:00 Winter Olympics 2026	11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure	13:30 Loose Women	12:20 The Real Housewives of	13:05 Channel 4 News Summary	10:15 Jeremy Vine
18:15 Pointless	12:15 Homes Under the Hammer	14:30 ITV Lunchtime News	13:15 Dinner Date	13:10 Car S.O.S	12:30 Storm & Alexis
19:00 BBC News at Six <small>The latest national and international news from the BBC.</small>	13:15 Bargain Hunt	14:55 ITV News London	15:15 The Only Way is Essex	14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It	13:30 Snooker Players Championship
19:30 BBC London	14:00 Winter Olympics 2026	15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal	16:15 The Real Housewives of	15:10 Countdown	18:30 5 News at 5 <small>Join Dan Walker and the team for the news that matters to you.</small>
20:00 The One Show	15:00 Unbeatable	16:00 Riddiculous	17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami	16:00 A Place in the Sun	19:30 Snooker Players Championship
20:30 EastEnders	15:45 Escape to the Country	17:00 Tipping Point	18:00 The Real Housewives of	17:00 A New Life in the Sun	21:00 Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly <small>In the 100th episode,</small>
21:00 MasterChef: The Professionals	16:30 Cities: Nature's New Wild	18:00 The Chase	19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase	18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream	22:00 The Good Ship Murder
22:00 Silent Witness	17:30 Flog It!	19:00 ITV News London	20:00 Deal or No Deal	19:00 A Place in the Sun <small>Veronica and Tim search</small>	23:00 The Curfew
23:00 BBC News at Ten	18:15 Winter Olympics 2026	19:30 ITV Evening News	21:00 The Real Housewives of	20:00 Channel 4 News	00:05 The Bailiffs
23:30 BBC London	23:00 QI <small>More of the best moments from the W series of QI, hosted by Sandi Toksvig</small>	20:30 Bradley & Barney Walsh: Breaking Dad	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars	21:00 Bargain Holiday Secrets	
23:40 Trying	23:30 Newsnight	21:00 Emmerdale	23:05 Family Guy	22:00 New: The Tony Blair Story	
00:35 Dinosaur	00:00 Bonnie and Clyde	21:30 Coronation Street		23:30 New: Fukushima: Days That...	
		22:00 The Summit		00:30 Super Surgeons: A Chance at Life	
		23:00 ITV News at Ten			
		23:30 ITV News London			
		23:45 The British Airways Killer			
		00:45 The Summit			

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	Sky Family	U&Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Hold The Front Page	11:30 The Golden Child	10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	10:00 Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters	10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
12:00 Wildlife ER	11:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV <small>Joel Dommett, Jason Fox,</small>	13:15 Spy Kids 3: Game Over	11:00 Speed with Guy Martin <small>The speedster tries to break the world speed record for a hovercraft, but hovercrafts are notoriously</small>	11:00 Deadliest Catch	11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
13:00 The Flash	12:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	14:50 The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out	12:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends <small>Rick Stein visits Vienna, the city that is home to comfort</small>	13:00 Cooper's Treasure	12:20 Father Brown
14:00 A League Of Their Own	13:00 The Flash	16:35 The Wiz	13:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	14:00 Expedition Unknown: Hunt... <small>...For Extraterrestrials. Josh Gates starts his</small>	13:15 Nico's Cook In, Cook Out
16:00 Magnum P.I.	14:00 Hold The Front Page	19:00 Stardust	15:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads	16:00 Homestead Rescue: Raney Ranch	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
18:00 The Simpsons	15:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV	21:10 Save The Cinema	16:00 Top Gear <small>The auto-enthusiast's favourite show returns with more motoring hijinks - this time, Richard and James</small>	18:00 Outback Opal Hunters	14:30 Home and Away
18:30 The Office (US)	16:00 There's Something About Movies	23:05 The Golden Child	18:00 Hairy Bikers' Chicken and Egg	20:00 Deadliest Catch	15:00 Shortland Street
20:00 The Simpsons	17:05 A League Of Their Own Road Trip: Southeast Asia	00:45 Harold and The Purple Crayon	19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends	22:00 Hoffman Family Gold	15:30 Super Garden
21:00 David Attenborough's Wild City	18:10 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	nat Sky Nature HD	20:00 Would I Lie To You?	23:00 Deadliest Catch	16:00 EastEnders
22:00 Force Of Nature: The Dry 2	19:10 Harry Potter 20th...	10:00 Hope For Wildlife	20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games	00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters <small>The Gold Timers fight back against gold thieves. Machinery problems continue to plague the Dust</small>	16:30 Today
00:00 Lucy Beaumont: Live From The Royal Court Theatre	21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks	11:00 Great Blue Wild	22:00 QI XL	HGTV	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
	22:00 FILM: Johnny Mnemonic	12:00 Wildlife ER	23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	10:00 Young Sheldon	18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
	00:00 Joe Lycett's United States Of Birmingham	13:00 Undiscovered Vistas	00:00 Taskmaster	11:00 The Big Bang Theory <small>Sheldon stays with Bernadette while the rest of the gang attends an event where they run into Penny's</small>	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
		14:00 Monkey Life			20:00 High Road, Low Road
		15:00 Africa's Underwater Wonders			20:30 EastEnders
		16:00 Hope For Wildlife			21:00 Fair City
		17:00 Great Blue Wild			21:30 Great Irish Interiors
		18:00 Wildlife Icons			22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
		19:00 Undiscovered Vistas			22:35 Prime Time
		20:00 Monkey Life			23:15 Unforgotten
		21:00 David Attenborough's Wild City			00:10 Annika
		22:00 My Best Friend's An Animal			
		23:00 Undiscovered Vistas			
		00:00 Wildlife Icons			

Movies

Sky Premiere	Film4
11:15 Neighborhood Watch (2025)	12:00 The Man from Colorado
13:00 Xeno	14:00 Sherlock Holmes and the Secret...
14:50 King Ivory	15:20 Crash Dive
17:15 The Naked Gun (2025)	17:30 Hell and High Water
18:45 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)	19:35 Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle

TV Guide

Wednesday 18th February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	Channel 4 HD	5
14:00 BBC News at One	10:30 Morning Live	10:30 Lorraine	10:25 The Only Way is Essex	10:10 Frasier	10:05 Milkshake! Story Den
15:00 Winter Olympics 2026	11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure	11:00 This Morning	11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami	12:10 American Pickers	10:10 Entertainment News on 5
18:15 Pointless	As 200 people in Scotland call for a public enquiry into	13:30 Loose Women	12:20 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills	Plymouth Rocks: Mike falls hard for a 100-year-old turbocharged hotrod. A	10:15 Jeremy Vine
19:00 BBC News at Six	12:15 Homes Under the Hammer	14:30 ITV Lunchtime News	13:15 Dinner Date	13:05 Channel 4 News Summary	Start the day with a dose of hard-hitting debate, your phone calls and a little fun - all driven by Jeremy's
19:30 BBC London	13:15 Bargain Hunt	14:55 ITV News London	15:15 The Only Way is Essex	Channel 4's midday news summary. [S]	12:30 Storm & Alexis
19:55 Party Political Broadcasts - Liberal Democrats	14:00 Winter Olympics 2026	15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal	16:15 The Real Housewives of	13:10 Car S.O.S	Two of 5's much-loved faces team up to focus on the issues that matter most to viewers - with your
20:00 The One Show	15:00 Unbeatable	16:00 New: Riddiculous	17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami	14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It	13:30 Snooker Players Championship
20:30 EastEnders	15:45 Escape to the Country	17:00 Tipping Point	18:00 The Real Housewives of	15:10 Countdown	18:30 5 News at 5
21:00 MasterChef: The Professionals	16:30 Cities: Nature's New Wild	18:00 The Chase	19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase	16:00 A Place in the Sun	19:30 Snooker Players Championship
Philli Armitage-Mattin sets the chefs a skills test challenge using her own recipes. Two must recreate	17:30 Flog It!	19:00 ITV News London	20:00 Wheel of Fortune	17:00 A New Life in the Sun	18:30 5 News at 5
22:00 Silent Witness	18:15 Winter Olympics 2026	19:25 Party Political Broadcast...	21:00 The Real Housewives of Orange County	18:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream	19:30 Snooker Players Championship
23:00 BBC News at Ten	23:00 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing	19:30 ITV Evening News	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars	19:00 A Place in the Sun	Snooker's top 16 players
23:30 BBC London	23:30 Newsnight	20:30 New: Deal or No Deal: Banker's...	23:05 Family Guy	20:00 Channel 4 News	21:00 Alice Roberts: Our Hospital Through Time
23:40 UEFA Champions League	00:00 Unspun World with John Simpson	21:00 Emmerdale	00:30 Gogglebox	21:00 New: Kirstie and Phil's Love It...	22:00 The Surgeon
Newcastle head to Azerbaijan to take on Qarabag in the Champions League play-offs as some	00:30 The Rescue	21:30 Coronation Street		22:00 New: The Tony Blair Story	23:00 The Curfew
		22:00 The Summit		23:30 New: Fukushima: Days That...	00:05 Ambulance: Code Red
		23:00 ITV News at Ten			
		23:30 ITV News London			
		23:45 Barry Humphries: The Last Laugh			
		00:40 The Summit			

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	Sky Family	D&U Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Hold The Front Page	11:30 Stardust	10:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	10:00 Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters	10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
12:00 Wildlife ER	11:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV	13:40 Paul Blart: Mall Cop	11:00 Speed with Guy Martin	11:00 Deadliest Catch	11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
13:00 The Flash	12:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	15:20 My Penguin Friend	12:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends	Hampered by damage, Sig must outmanoeuvre an	12:15 Keeping Up Appearances
14:00 A League Of Their Own	13:00 The Flash	17:05 Monster Trucks	13:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	13:00 Cooper's Treasure	12:50 Leaders' Questions
16:00 Magnum P.I.	14:00 Hold The Front Page	19:00 Look Who's Talking	Officers hand over a convict to Mexican authorities in the middle of the Juarez Lincoln bridge, and a man	14:00 Expedition Unknown: Hunt...	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
18:00 The Simpsons	15:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV	20:45 Cats & Dogs	15:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads	16:00 Homestead Rescue: Raney Ranch	14:30 Home and Away
18:30 The Office (US)	16:00 There's Something About...	22:20 The Witches	16:00 Top Gear	18:00 Outback Opal Hunters	15:00 Shortland Street
20:00 The Simpsons	17:05 A League Of Their Own Road Trip: Southeast Asia	00:00 Bookworm (2024)	18:00 Hairy Bikers' Chicken and Egg	20:00 Deadliest Catch Masters	15:30 Fair City
21:00 New: Landscape Artist Of The...	18:10 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	nat Sky Nature HD	19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends	22:00 New: Maine Cabin Builders	16:00 EastEnders
22:00 The Bee Gees: How Can You Mend A Broken Heart	19:10 Stargate Origins: Catherine	10:00 Hope For Wildlife	Rick Stein visits Bologna and learns how to make fresh egg pasta used for tortellini, tagliatelle, ravioli	23:00 New: Barnwood Builders	16:30 Today
00:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks	11:00 Great Blue Wild	20:00 Would I Lie To You?	00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
	22:00 47 Meters Down	12:00 Wildlife ER	20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games	10:00 Young Sheldon	18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
	00:00 Joe Lycett's United States Of Birmingham	13:00 Undiscovered Vistas	22:00 QI XL	11:00 The Big Bang Theory	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
	Joe Lycett continues his	14:00 Monkey Life	23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	15:00 Mike & Molly	20:00 Nationwide
		The ninth season of the	00:00 Taskmaster	16:30 Young Sheldon	20:30 EastEnders
		15:00 Africa's Underwater Wonders		18:00 The Big Bang Theory	21:00 Mark Moriarty: Cook Like a Chef
		16:00 Hope For Wildlife		22:00 New: The Bad Skin...	21:30 Neven's English Food Tour
		17:00 Great Blue Wild		23:00 The Bad Skin...	22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
		18:00 Wildlife Icons		...Clinic. Robert has a golf-ball-sized lump on his forehead. Other doctors have told him it's	22:35 Swindlers
		19:00 Undiscovered Vistas			23:35 The Case I Can't Forget
		20:00 Monkey Life			00:40 Call The Midwife
		21:00 Islands			
		22:00 Arctic From Above			
		23:00 Undiscovered Vistas			
		00:00 Wildlife Icons			

Movies

Sky Premiere	Film4
11:15 The Naked Gun (2025)	12:00 Shadow of a Doubt
12:45 Reckless (2025)	14:15 The Virginian
14:30 King Ivory	16:00 Fixed Bayonets!
16:50 Xeno	(1951) Korean War drama
18:45 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)	17:50 Anzio
	20:10 10 Things I Hate About You

TV Guide

Thursday 19th February 2026

BBC

BBC ONE

10:00 Winter Olympics 2026
 14:00 BBC News at One
 The latest national and international news from the BBC.
 15:00 Winter Olympics 2026
 18:15 Pointless
 19:00 BBC News at Six
 19:30 BBC London
 The latest news, sport and weather from London.
 19:55 Party Political Broadcasts: Green Party
 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
 Lighthearted discussion of

BBC TWO

10:00 Breakfast
 10:30 Morning Live
 Conversation, advice and tips to make your day that little bit easier.
 11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure
 Hundreds of women end up
 12:15 Homes Under the Hammer
 13:15 Bargain Hunt
 14:00 Winter Olympics 2026
 15:00 Unbeatable
 15:45 Escape to the Country
 16:30 Bears About the House
 17:30 Flog It!
 18:15 Winter Olympics 2026
 23:00 The Apprentice: Unfinished Business
 23:30 Newsnight
 00:00 Long Shot

ITV

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 New: Riddiculous
 17:00 Tipping Point
 18:00 The Chase
 19:00 ITV News London
 19:25 Party Political Broadcast: Green Party
 A Party Political Broadcast
 19:30 ITV Evening News
 20:30 Online Reviews: Can You Trust...
 21:00 Emmerdale
 21:30 Coronation Street
 22:00 Grantchester
 23:00 ITV News at Ten
 23:30 ITV News London
 23:45 Safe House

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
 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 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
 13:05 Channel 4 News Summary
 13:10 Car S.O.S
 14:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It
 15:10 Countdown
 Colin Murray, Rachel Riley and Susie Dent host, with Chris Packham in
 16:00 A Place in the Sun
 Ben Hillman helps Lisa and Neil fulfil their dream of buying a holiday home on the Costa Cálida to share
 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 George Clarke's Building Home
 22:00 New: The Tony Blair Story
 23:00 New: Cecil: The Lion and the...

Channel 5

5

10:05 Milkshake! Story Den
 10:10 Entertainment News on 5
 A daily round-up of showbiz news and gossip from around the world, focusing on celebrities, movies,
 10:15 Jeremy Vine
 12:30 Storm & Alexis
 Two of 5's much-loved faces team up to focus on the issues that matter most
 13:30 Live: Snooker Players Championship
 18:30 5 News at 5
 19:30 Live: Snooker Players Championship
 21:00 New: Spain with Michael Portillo
 22:00 Murder Trial: The Suffolk Strangler
 23:30 A Killer Makes a Call
 00:30 New: Killer on the Run

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase

10:00 Stargate SG-1
 12:00 Ningaloo: Australia's Ocean Wonder

 13:00 The Simpsons

 14:00 A League Of Their Own

 16:00 Magnum P.I.

 18:00 The Simpsons





 18:30 The Office (US)

 20:00 The Simpsons


 The Otto Show: Bart and
 21:00 Rob & Romesh Vs...
 22:00 Never Mind The Buzzcocks

 00:00 The Pacific


Sky Max HD

10:00 Hold The Front Page
 11:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV
 12:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2
 13:00 Flintoff's Road To Nowhere
 14:00 Hold The Front Page
 15:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV
 16:00 There's Something About Movies

 17:05 A League Of Their Own Road Trip: Southeast Asia
 18:10 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2
 19:10 FILM: Stargate: Continuum

 21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks

 22:00 A League Of Their Own
 23:00 Evil


Sky Family

10:20 Yogi Bear
 11:50 Ride On
 14:00 Look Who's Talking
 15:45 Cats & Dogs
 17:20 Daddy Day Care
 19:00 Look Who's Talking Too
 20:35 The Last Airbender
 22:35 Cats & Dogs: The Revenge Of...
 00:10 Yogi Bear

 10:00 Hope For Wildlife
 11:00 Great Blue Wild
 12:00 Wildlife ER
 13:00 Undiscovered Vistas
 14:00 Monkey Life
 15:00 Africa's Claws And Jaws
 16:00 Hope For Wildlife
 17:00 Great Blue Wild
 18:00 Wildlife Icons
 19:00 Undiscovered Vistas
 20:00 Monkey Life
 21:00 My Best Friend's An Animal
 22:00 A Wild Year On Earth
 23:00 Undiscovered Vistas
 00:00 Wildlife Icons

Da U&Dave

10:25 Speed with Guy Martin
 The motoring enthusiast takes his battered transit van to the USA to enter the fastest road race on the
 12:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends
 13:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers
 15:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads
 Celebs take on treacherous tracks. Angus Deayton and Mariella Frostrup battle across broken bridges as
 16:00 Top Gear
 18:00 Hairy Bikers' Chicken and Egg
 19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends
 Rick Stein visits Lisbon on the banks of the River Tagus, a city in love with its seafood and possibly the
 20:00 Would I Lie To You?
 Rob Brydon hosts a festive
 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 Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters
 11:00 Deadliest Catch
 13:00 Cooper's Treasure
 14:00 Expedition Unknown: Hunt for the Yeti
 Josh Gates heads into the
 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

 10:00 Young Sheldon
 11:00 The Big Bang Theory
 15:00 Mike & Molly
 16:30 Young Sheldon
 Sheldon and Missy both run away from home, while Mary gets some upsetting news about her husband,
 18:00 The Big Bang Theory
 22:00 New: 90 Day Fiancé UK
 Phin broadcasts his love for Sandra publicly, but he's on the wrong wavelength. After a showdown with Adnand,

RTÉ One

10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
 11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
 12:15 Keeping Up Appearances
 12:50 Leaders' Questions
 13:45 Telly Bingo
 14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
 14:30 Home and Away
 15:00 Shortland Street
 15:30 Super Garden
 16:00 EastEnders
 16:30 Today
 18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
 18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
 19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
 20:00 Ear to The Ground
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 Fair City
 Fergal and Sash help Gwen
 21:30 Cheap Irish Homes
 22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
 22:35 Prime Time
 23:15 SisterS
 23:45 We Hunt Together
 00:45 Death In Paradise

Movies

Sky Premiere

10:20 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)
 12:35 King Ivory
 14:55 Prisoner Of War (2025)
 16:55 The Cut (2024)

TV Guide

Friday 20th 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	10:05 Milkshake! Story Den
14:00 BBC News at One	10:30 Morning Live	11:00 This Morning	11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami	10:40 Frasier	10:10 Entertainment News on 5
15:00 Winter Olympics 2026	11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure Dr Xand investigates a	13:30 Loose Women	12:20 The Real Housewives of	11:10 American Pickers	10:15 Jeremy Vine
18:15 Pointless	12:15 Homes Under the Hammer	14:30 ITV Lunchtime News	13:15 Dinner Date	12:10 Car S.O.S	12:30 Storm & Alexis Two of 5's much-loved faces team up to focus on the issues that matter most to viewers - with your
19:00 BBC News at Six	13:15 Bargain Hunt Roo Irvine and the teams shop for antiques in Northamptonshire with experts Gary Pe and Tim	14:55 ITV News London	15:15 The Only Way is Essex	13:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It	
19:30 BBC London The latest news, sport and weather from London.	14:00 Winter Olympics 2026	15:00 Dickinson's Real Deal	16:15 The Real Housewives of	14:10 Countdown	
19:55 Party Political Broadcasts - Reform UK	15:00 Political Thinking with Nick Robinson	16:00 New: Riddiculous	17:10 The Real Housewives of Miami	15:00 A Place in the Sun	
20:00 The One Show JB Gill and Clara Amfo bring you the stories that	15:30 Escape to the Country	17:00 Tipping Point	18:00 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills	16:00 A New Life in the Sun	
20:30 MasterChef: The Professionals	16:30 Bears About the House	18:00 The Chase	19:00 Celebrity Catchphrase	17:00 Chateau DIY: Win the Dream	13:30 Live: Snooker Players Championship Live Quarter Final action from the Players Championship. An elite field includes former champions
21:30 Would I Lie to You?	17:30 Flog It!	19:00 ITV News London	20:00 Deal or No Deal	18:00 A Place in the Sun	
22:00 Death in Paradise	18:15 Winter Olympics 2026	19:25 Party Political Broadcast: Reform	21:00 The Real Housewives of	19:00 Channel 4 News	
23:00 BBC News at Ten	23:00 Live at the Apollo	20:30 New: It'll Be Alright on the Night	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars	20:00 Walkers Unpacked: Inside the Crisp Factory	
23:30 BBC London	23:30 Newsnight	21:00 Emmerdale	23:05 Olivia Attwood: Getting Filthy Rich	21:00 Gogglebox	18:30 5 News at 5 Join Dan Walker and the team for the news that matters to you.[S]
23:40 The Graham Norton Show	00:00 The Damned United	22:00 Beat the Chasers	00:05 Family Guy	22:00 The Last Leg	
00:30 RuPaul's Drag Race UK vs the World		23:00 ITV News London		23:10 Joe Lycett: I'm About to Lose Control and I Think Joe Lycett	19:30 Live: Snooker Players Championship
		23:45 Devil In Disguise: John Wayne Gacy		00:10 Bill Bailey: Bewilderness	00:05 New: Piers Morgan: Uncensored The bold, opinion-led news and debate show hosted by Piers Morgan. Piers blends journalism, debates and
		00:45 The Jonathan Ross Show		01:05 Travel Man: 48 Hours in Malmo	

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	Sky Family	D&U&Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Stargate SG-1	10:00 Hold The Front Page	11:30 Paul Blart: Mall Cop	10:30 Speed with Guy Martin The motoring fan tries to become the first person to cross the English Channel in a human-powered airship	10:00 Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters Fisherman and adventurer, Jeremy Wade, travels to western Australia to discover what is wiping out	10:35 The Drew Barrymore Show
12:00 Ningaloo: Australia's Ocean Wonder	11:00 Rob Beckett's Smart TV	13:10 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2	12:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends	11:00 Deadliest Catch It's a bad start to the crab	11:25 The Kelly Clarkson Show
13:00 The Simpsons	12:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	14:50 Sonic The Hedgehog 3	13:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers	13:00 Cooper's Treasure	12:20 Father Brown
14:00 A League Of Their Own	13:00 Flintoff's Road To Nowhere	16:50 Stardust	15:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads Twenty Twelve co-stars Hugh Bonneville and Jessica Hynes face an Olympic-sized task as they	14:00 Expedition Unknown: Hunt for the Yeti	13:15 Nico's Cook In, Cook Out
16:00 Magnum P.I.	14:00 TV's Greatest Gameshows	19:00 E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial	16:00 Top Gear	16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue	13:45 Telly Bingo
18:00 The Simpsons	16:05 There's Something About...	21:00 Paul Blart: Mall Cop	18:00 The Hairy Bikers' Asian Adventure	18:00 Outback Opal Hunters Desperate to move more rock, the rookies get a lesson in the dangerous art of bomb-making. Plus, Kelly	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
18:30 The Office (US)	17:05 A League Of Their Own Road Trip: Southeast Asia	22:35 Journey To The Center Of The Earth	19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends	20:00 Deadliest Catch	14:30 Home and Away
20:00 The Simpsons	18:10 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	00:10 Sonic The Hedgehog 3	20:00 Would I Lie To You? With comedian David Baddiel, former MP Ed Balls, stand-up and actress Jo Brand and ex-Pussycat	22:00 Saving Lives At Sea	15:00 Shortland Street
21:00 A League Of Their Own: The Rally	19:10 FILM: Stargate: The Ark Of Truth	10:00 Hope For Wildlife	20:40 Richard Osman's House of Games Sian Gibson, Jean Johansson, Iain Stirling and Rav Wilding make another trip into the Thursday	00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters	15:30 Fair City
22:00 Ted	21:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks	11:00 Great Blue Wild	22:00 QI XL Being quite interesting wins	00:00 Young Sheldon	16:00 EastEnders
00:00 True Blood	22:00 Movie Megastars:..	12:00 Ningaloo: Australia's Ocean Wonder	23:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	11:00 The Big Bang Theory	16:30 Today
	00:00 Joe Lycett's United States Of Birmingham	13:00 Undiscovered Vistas	00:00 Taskmaster	15:00 Mike & Molly While Meemaw opens a secret gambling room, Sheldon, Missy and Georgie adapt to new living	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
		14:00 Monkey Life		18:00 The Big Bang Theory	18:55 RTÉ News with Signing
		15:00 Africa's Claws And Jaws		22:00 New: 90 Day Fiancé: Before The 90 Days	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
		16:00 Hope For Wildlife		00:00 Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage	20:00 Nationwide
		17:00 Great Blue Wild			20:30 Fair City
		18:00 Wildlife Icons			21:00 The Zoo
		19:00 Undiscovered Vistas			21:30 Tracks and Trails
		20:00 Monkey Life			22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
		21:00 Extraordinary Animals			22:35 The Late Late Show
		22:00 Patrick Aryee's Wild World			00:15 Garage
		23:00 Undiscovered Vistas			
		00:00 Wildlife Icons			

Movies

Sky Premiere	Film4
10:50 King Ivory	12:00 The Comancheros
13:10 The Cut (2024)	14:10 Sea Wife

TV Guide

Saturday 21st February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	4-Channel 4 HD	5
11:00 Saturday Kitchen 12:30 Bargain Hunt 13:00 Football Focus 13:45 BBC Weekend News 13:55 BBC Weather 14:00 Winter Olympics 2026 16:40 BBC Weekend News 16:50 BBC London 16:55 BBC Weather 17:00 Six Nations Rugby 20:15 Gladiators 21:15 Michael McIntyre's Big Show 22:15 The Walsh Sisters Anna and Rachel share a 23:05 BBC Weekend News 23:20 BBC Weather 23:25 Match of the Day 00:40 The Football Interview 00:55 The Kingdom: Kansas City Chiefs	10:00 Winter Olympics 2026 14:00 Escape to the Country 14:45 Flog It! Paul Martin presents from the Bowes Museum at 15:05 We Dive at Dawn 16:40 Winter Olympics 2026 17:30 Final Score 18:15 Winter Olympics 2026 23:00 Songs Inspired by the Movies at the BBC A collection of hits from the BBC archives that highlight how films and movie stars have always influenced the 00:50 Movie Themes at the BBC A selection of some of the best BBC moments and classic archive performances from those	10:25 ITV News 10:30 New: James Martin's Saturday Morning 13:15 Ainsley's Taste Of The Bahamas 13:45 ITV News 14:00 Men's Six Nations: England v Ireland 17:30 ITV Evening News 17:45 ITV News London 18:00 The Chase Celebrity Special 19:00 New: Wheel of Fortune 20:00 New: Britain's Got Talent 21:25 New: The 1% Club 22:25 New: The Jonathan Ross Show 23:30 It'll Be Alright on the Night 23:55 ITV News 00:15 English Football League Highlights	10:55 The Only Way is Essex 11:55 Deal or No Deal 14:55 The Floor 33 contestants remain and the trivia duels are more intense than ever - Rob Brydon leads another 15:55 Ant & Dec's Limitless Win 16:55 Hotel Transylvania 3: A Monster Vacation 17:55 FYI Daily 18:00 Hotel Transylvania 3: A Monster Vacation 18:50 Evan Almighty 19:50 FYI Daily 19:55 Evan Almighty 20:45 Godzilla vs Kong 21:45 FYI Daily 21:50 Godzilla vs Kong 23:00 New: Love Island All Stars: Unseen Bits 00:05 Family Guy	10:10 The Simpsons 10:40 The Simpsons 11:10 The Simpsons 11:40 The Simpsons 12:05 Couples Come Dine with Me 13:10 Four in a Bed 13:40 Four in a Bed 14:10 Four in a Bed 14:40 Four in a Bed 15:45 Dad's Army 17:45 Channel 4 News 18:15 Sailing the Shipping Forecast with the Rev Richard Coles 19:15 The Great Icelandic Swim with Ross Edgley 20:15 Roman Empire by Train with Alice Roberts 21:15 The Fabelmans 00:15 Predator	10:10 Cruising With Jane McDonald 10:30 Tales from the Riverbank 11:25 Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild 12:30 Catching Up with the Royals with Rev Richard Coles & Emily Andrews We kick off with a topic inspired by a fan who asks: 'What is the most surprising or 'hidden' protocol you've 13:30 Snooker Players Championship Live Quarter Final action from the Players Championship. An elite field includes former champions 18:30 Police Interceptors 19:25 5 News Weekend 19:30 Snooker Players Championship 00:05 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase	Sky Max HD	nat Sky Nature HD	Da U&Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 Macaque Island  13:00 Gillette Soccer Saturday: Build-Up  16:00 Gillette Soccer Sat: Live Scores  18:00 The Simpsons  The Otto Show: Bart and 20:00 Landscape Artist Of The... 21:00 Rob & Romesh Vs Fashion  22:00 Riddick  00:10 Never Mind The Buzzcocks 	11:00 Romesh: Can't Knock The Hustle 13:30 Joe Lycett's United States Of Birmingham 17:00 A League Of Their Own - European Road Trip 23:00 Peacemaker 00:50 The Force: North East  Sky Family 10:25 The Portable Door 12:25 The Cat In The Hat 13:55 A Dog's Purpose 15:45 Twist 17:25 Stuart Little 19:00 Stuart Little 2 20:25 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 22:10 The Golden Compass 00:05 The Cat In The Hat	10:00 Kalahari: Land Of Secret Alliances 13:00 Extraordinary Animals  14:00 My Best Friend's An Animal  15:00 Bugs That Rule The World 17:00 Seasons Of The Wild  Everglades - The Season of 19:00 Attenborough: Behind The Lens  20:00 Obama And Attenborough 21:00 Battle Of The Alphas 22:00 Super Shark Highway 23:00 Big Cats An Amazing Animal Family	10:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends Rick Stein visits Copenhagen, the home of new Nordic cuisine, and 11:00 Top Gear 13:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads 15:00 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs 16:00 Would I Lie To You? Mark Bonnar, Sheila Hancock, Stephen Mangan and Anita Rani join team captains David Mitchell and 20:00 Not Going Out Some might say that Lee and Lucy were foolish to try to buy tickets to see Oasis in concert when they start 22:00 Gavin and Stacey Gavin is uncomfortable with Gwen and Bryn knowing the details of his and Stacey's sex life. Pete and 00:00 Would I Lie To You? Mark Bonnar, Sheila Hancock, Stephen Mangan and Anita Rani join team captains David Mitchell and	10:00 Deadliest Catch 11:00 Outback Opal Hunters The Cheals take on their most dangerous dig ever. The Bushmen trial a rookie to operate their exploration 14:00 Outback Crystal Hunters 17:00 Aussie Gold Hunters 20:00 Hoarding: Buried Alive 22:00 New: Paranormal Caught On Camera 23:00 New: Ghost Adventures HGTV 10:00 Young Sheldon 11:00 Georgie & Mandy's First Marriage 12:00 The Big Bang Theory 22:00 Zoolander 00:00 Mock The Week Dara Ó Briain hosts topical chat and hilarious games with guests Rhys James,	11:45 Ros na Rún 12:50 MasterChef: The Professionals 14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock 14:10 High Road, Low Road 14:40 The Shelter: Animal SOS 15:10 Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond The Lobby 16:10 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 19:35 Kung Fu Panda 2 21:10 DIY SOS: The Bigger Build Ireland 22:10 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock 22:40 The Tommy Tiernan Show 23:50 IFTA Awards 2026

Movies







Sky Premiere	Film4
10:50 I Know What You Did Last...	12:00 The Son of Robin Hood
12:50 M3GAN 2.0	13:40 The Perfect Catch (2005) Comedy. Ben (Jimmy Fallon) must choose between his two
14:55 King Ivory	15:45 The Call of the Wild
17:10 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)	17:40 Mrs Doubtfire
19:20 One More Shot (2025)	20:05 Jerry & Marge Go Large
21:00 I Know What You Did Last...	22:00 Django Unchained
23:00 M3GAN 2.0	

TV Guide

Sunday 22nd February 2026

BBC		ITV		Channel 4	Channel 5
BBC ONE	BBC TWO	ITV1 HD	ITV2	4-Channel 4 HD	5
10:00 Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg	10:00 Winter Olympics 2026 Coverage of day 16 of the Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games.	10:25 ITV News	10:40 The Only Way is Essex	10:00 Sunday Brunch	10:00 Entertainment News on 5
11:00 Sunday Morning Live		10:30 New: Love Your Weekend with...	11:40 Deal or No Deal	13:00 The Simpsons	10:10 Goodbye Bargain-Loving Brits...
12:00 Homes Under the Hammer		12:25 Fletchers' Family Farm	13:45 Celebrity Catchphrase	13:30 The Simpsons	
13:00 Bargain Hunt	17:30 Mosquito Squadron World War II drama in which an RAF pilot heads a special mission behind enemy lines to destroy a	13:30 ITV News	14:45 Wheel of Fortune	14:00 The Simpsons	11:30 Cruising With Jane McDonald Jane rides a sumptuous steam train built at the peak of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, boards a luxury
14:00 BBC Weekend News		13:45 New: Julia Bradbury's Wonders... ...of the Frozen South. South Georgia: Documentary series. Julia Bradbury scales South	15:45 Britain's Got Talent	14:30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces	
14:10 Weather for the Week Ahead	19:00 Six Nations Rugby Ugo Monye, John Barclay and Sam Warburton round-up the third weekend of the Six Nations. Action	14:50 Love Your Garden	17:10 To Be Announced	16:00 Women's FA Cup Liverpool Women v Everton Women	
14:15 Songs of Praise		15:20 Men's Six Nations: France v Italy	17:35 Trolls	18:45 The Dog House	13:30 Snooker Players Championship Live coverage of the Players Championship Final. An elite field includes
14:50 Gladiators	20:00 Winter Olympics 2026 The closing ceremony of the 2026 Winter Olympics, held at Verona Arena.	18:35 The Chase Celebrity Special	18:40 FYI Daily Latest news from the world of entertainment.	19:45 The Great Pottery Throw Down	
15:50 Spider-Man	23:00 Calendar Girls Knapely, North Yorkshire. Firm friends Chris and Annie are part of the local Womens' Institute, where	19:30 ITV Evening News	18:45 Trolls	21:00 Secret Genius	
17:45 Asia		19:45 ITV News London	19:25 Jurassic World	22:00 Gogglebox	
18:35 BBC Weekend News	00:40 Women Talking Following a brutal realisation, the women of an isolated religious community come together	20:00 The Floor	20:25 FYI Daily	23:00 Dog US Army Ranger Briggs escorts a military working dog along America's Pacific Coast to attend the funeral of her handler. Comedy, starring Channing Tatum	18:30 Inside the Tower of London
18:50 BBC London		21:00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?	20:30 Jurassic World Action-adventure sequel.	00:55 Magid/Zafar Short film exploring rising tensions amidst the heat of a busy Pakistani takeaway. Starring Eben Figueiredo and Gurjeet Singh	19:25 5 News Weekend
18:55 BBC Weather		22:00 New: The Lady	22:00 New: Love Island All Stars		19:30 Snooker Players Championship
19:00 Countryfile		23:00 ITV News	23:05 Olivia Attwood: Getting Filthy Rich It's estimated that the adult entertainment industry will be worth over 100 billion dollars by 2029 - in this		22:00 Rich House, Poor House
20:00 The BAFTA Film Awards		23:15 The Hitman's Bodyguard	00:05 Family Guy		23:30 The World's Most Luxurious Cruise
22:00 Lord of the Flies					00:30 Murder Trial: The Suffolk Strangler
23:00 BBC Weekend News					
23:25 BBC London					
23:30 Match of the Day					
00:40 BBC Radio 1Xtra Comedy Gala					

Entertainment

how Sky Showcase	Sky Family	nat Sky Nature HD	D&U&Dave	DMAX	RTÉ One
10:00 The Office (US)	10:00 The Golden Compass	10:00 Australia's Hidden Islands	10:00 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone...	10:00 Baggage Battles	10:35 The Frankie Drake Mysteries
12:00 FILM: The Amazing Maurice	11:55 Stuart Little		11:20 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs	11:00 Chasing Classic Cars	11:30 Fóram
14:00 David Attenborough's Wild City	13:25 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	12:00 The Secret Life Of The Hermit...	12:20 Top Gear	15:00 Kindig Customs	12:00 Sunday Worship
16:00 The Simpsons		13:00 Big Cats An Amazing Animal Family	14:20 Richard Osman's House of Games	18:00 Ant Anstead: Born Mechanic	13:00 The Week In Politics
19:00 Hill	The ninja turtles emerge	15:00 Extreme Animals: One Wild Day	Comedians Jen Brister and Ian Moore, actor Kelvin Fletcher, and Dr Zoe Williams join the genial	A 1964 T-Bird needs pricey American parts to restore it	14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
21:00 A League Of Their Own: The Rally	15:10 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles:...		15:35 Hairy Bikers' Best of British	20:00 Mysteries Of The Deep	14:10 Ear to The Ground
22:00 Rob & Romesh Vs...		16:00 Wild Battlegrounds	17:40 Mediterranean with Simon Reeve	Jeremy explores the loss of a NASA space capsule deep in the Atlantic. And, what is the underwater	14:40 Neven's English Food Tour
00:00 Karl Pilkington: The Moaning of Life 2	17:10 The Smurfs	17:00 Untamed Valley	18:40 Greece with Simon Reeve	22:00 In Search Of Monsters	15:10 Beyond Paradise
		18:00 New: My Best Friend's An Animal	In the first episode of the series, Simon Reeve travels from the islands of	00:00 Expedition X	16:10 Only Fools and Horses
Time: Karl investigates how	19:00 The Smurfs 2	19:00 New: Extraordinary Animals	19:40 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone...		16:40 My Girl
Sky Max HD		20:00 David Attenborough's Conquest of the Skies	21:00 Guy Martin: Proper Jobs	10:00 Young Sheldon	18:40 Nuacht RTÉ
10:00 A League Of Their Own:	20:50 A Minecraft Movie	23:00 The Secret Life Of The Hermit...	22:00 Have I Got A Bit More News For You?	11:00 The Big Bang Theory	18:50 RTÉ News with Signing
11:00 A League Of Their Own: The Rally		00:00 New: My Best Friend's An Animal	23:00 QI	21:00 New: Georgie & Mandy's First...	19:01 RTÉ News: Six One
13:00 Movie Megastars:..	22:35 Stardust		23:40 Mock the Week	22:00 New: Mock The Week	19:30 Dancing with The Stars
15:00 Never Mind The Buzzcocks				23:00 Mock The Week	21:30 Fair City
21:00 Friends: The Reunion	00:45 Spy Kids 2: Island Of Lost...			00:00 Guz Khan's Custom Cars	22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
23:00 FILM: Timecop (1994)					22:30 These Sacred Vows

Movies

Sky Premiere

- 10:40 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)
- 12:55 One More Shot (2025)
- 14:35 I Know What You Did Last...
- 16:35 How To Train Your Dragon (2025)
- 18:50 M3GAN 2.0

TV Guide

Monday 23rd February 2026

BBC

BBC ONE

10:30 Morning Live
 11:45 Dr Xand's Con or Cure
 12:15 Homes Under the Hammer
 13:15 Bargain Hunt: Down on the Farm
 14:00 BBC News at One including BBC...
 15:00 Bear Grylls - Wild Reckoning
 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
 19:30 BBC London News
 20:00 The One Show
 20:30 EastEnders
 21:00 The Rising Cost of Health...
 21:30 Trace, Track, Get My Car Back
 22:00 Silent Witness
 23:00 BBC News and Weather
 23:30 BBC London News
 23:40 Industry
 00:40 The Traitors Ireland

BBC TWO

10:00 BBC News
 13:15 Politics Live
 14:00 Impossible
 14:45 Unbeatable
 15:15 The Boss
 16:00 The Vintage French Farmhouse
 16:45 Villages by the Sea - Clovelly
 17:15 Oceans: Sea of Cortez
 18:15 Flog It!
 19:00 New: Richard Osman's House of... Games. 76/100. Michelle Ackerley, Katie Derham, Karen Hauer and Geoff Norcott test their trivia
 19:30 Do You Know Your Place?
 20:00 Global Eye
 20:30 Grand Tours of Scotland's Rivers
 21:00 Mastermind
 21:30 University Challenge
 22:00 AI Confidential with Hannah Fry
 1/3. Revealing the story of the British teenager whose
 23:00 Small Prophets
 23:30 Newsnight, followed by Weather
 00:05 Dark Waters

ITV

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
 David Dickinson and his team of dealers and valuers are in Stoke-on-Trent as sellers are looking to cash
 16:00 New: Riddiculous
 17:00 Tipping Point
 18:00 The Chase
 Bradley Walsh hosts the show where thousands of pounds are at stake - all that stands between Gillian
 19:00 ITV News London
 The latest news and weather from London and the South East. [S,HD]
 19:30 ITV Evening News
 20:30 New: Fletchers' Family Farm
 21:00 Emmerdale
 21:30 Coronation Street
 22:00 New: The Lady
 23:00 ITV News at Ten
 23:30 ITV News London
 23:45 Cold Case Forensics
 The murder of Lynette
 00:35 Olivia Attwood: The Price of Perfection

ITV2

10:25 The Only Way is Essex
 11:25 The Real Housewives of Miami
 12:15 The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills
 13:10 Dinner Date
 15:10 The Only Way is Essex
 16:10 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
 20:00 Deal or No Deal
 21:00 The 1% Club
 22:00 New: Love Island All Stars: The...
 ...Live Final. Join host Maya Jama for all the drama in the big one - as the curtain falls on the Villa, you
 23:35 Family Guy
 00:30 American Dad!
 US animated comedy series. When Stan becomes envious after a neighbour's house is

Channel 4

Channel 4 HD

10:10 Frasier
 10:40 Frasier
 11:10 American Pickers
 12:05 Channel 4 News Summary
 12:10 Car S.O.S
 13:10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It
 14:10 Countdown
 15:00 A Place in the Sun
 16:00 A New Life in the Sun
 17:00 Four in a Bed
 17:30 Come Dine With Me
 18:00 A Place in the Sun
 19:00 Channel 4 News
 20:00 Batch from Scratch: Cooking for Less
 21:00 Dirty Business
 23:10 Night Coppers
 00:10 Walter Presents: Obsessed
 Drama about a mother and daughter who move to a new area and become the focus of a seemingly friendly new neighbour's dangerous obsession. Starring Cecile Bois
 01:05 Nostalgie
 Short film, starring Aidan Gillen as a former one-hit wonder who discovers one of his B-sides has acquired a dark association with a Belfast battalion during the Troubles

Channel 5

5

10:00 Come & Play with Pip and Posy
 10:05 Milkshake! Story Den
 10:15 Jeremy Vine
 12:30 Storm & Alexis
 13:45 5 News at Lunchtime
 13:50 Matt Allwright
 Matt looks at the big news stories developing during the day and offers help and advice to save you money
 15:00 Vanessa
 16:00 The Good Ship Murder
 17:00 Goodbye Bargain-Loving Brits...
 18:00 5 News at 5
 Join Dan Walker and the team for the news that matters to you.
 19:00 Love Nature
 19:05 The Motorway
 20:00 Celebrity Puzzling
 21:00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders
 22:00 Police Interceptors: Taking Down The Shoplifting Gangs
 23:00 The Curfew
 00:05 Traffic Cops
 Car thieves go out of control and on the run, a

Entertainment

how SkyShowcase

10:00 Stargate SG-1

 12:00 Ningaloo: Australia's Ocean Wonder
 13:00 The Simpsons

 14:00 A League Of Their Own
 16:00 Magnum P.I.
 18:00 The Simpsons
 19:00 The Office (US)
 20:00 The Simpsons

 21:00 Rise Of Animals With David Attenborough
 22:00 Force Of Nature: The Dry 2

 When five women embark
 00:00 New: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver
 00:45 The Essex Murders: Who Killed.

Sky Max HD

10:00 A League Of Their Own
 15:00 Stargate Origins: Catherine
 17:00 FILM: Stargate: Continuum
 19:00 FILM: Stargate: The Ark Of Truth
 21:00 A League Of Their Own
 22:00 New: Last Week Tonight with John
 22:50 Harry Potter 20th...
 00:50 Never Mind The Buzzcocks

Sky Family

11:00 The Smurfs
 12:55 Blithe Spirit (2020)
 14:50 Stardust
 17:05 A Minecraft Movie
 19:00 Lemony Snicket's A Series Of...
 21:00 The Borrowers
 22:35 The Wiz
 00:55 Save The Cinema

nat Sky Nature HD

10:00 Hope For Wildlife

 11:00 Great Blue Wild

 12:00 Ningaloo: Australia's Ocean Wonder
 13:00 Brazil Untamed
 14:00 Monkey Life
 15:00 Africa's Claws And Jaws
 16:00 Hope For Wildlife

 17:00 Great Blue Wild


 18:00 Wildlife Icons
 19:00 Brazil Untamed
 20:00 Monkey Life
 21:00 Rise Of Animals With David Attenborough
 22:00 Extraordinary Animals

 23:00 Brazil Untamed
 00:00 Wildlife Icons

U&Dave

10:30 Speed with Guy Martin
 12:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends
 13:00 Border Force America's Gatekeepers
 15:00 World's Most Dangerous Roads
 16:00 Top Gear
 Opinionated motoring news, views and features with Jeremy Clarkson,
 18:00 The Hairy Bikers' Asian Adventure
 19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends
 20:00 Would I Lie To You?
 20:35 Richard Osman's House of Games
 Former winners Yasmine Akram, Stephen Mangan, Ingrid Oliver and Tom Rosenthal return to the
 22:00 Will and Ralf Should Know Better
 23:00 QI XL
 00:00 Taskmaster

DMAX

10:00 Jeremy Wade's Dark Waters
 11:00 Deadliest Catch
 13:00 Cooper's Treasure
 14:00 Expedition Unknown
 16:00 Alaska: Homestead Rescue
 18:00 Outback Opal Hunters
 20:00 Deadliest Catch
 A menacing storm moves into the fleet, with a rogue wave ripping steel at the Cape Caution. Jake, a
 22:00 Body Bizarre
 00:00 Aussie Gold Hunters

 10:00 Young Sheldon
 11:00 The Big Bang Theory
 Sheldon goes head-to-head
 15:00 Mike & Molly
 16:30 Young Sheldon
 18:00 The Big Bang Theory
 22:00 New: Hollywood Demons
 00:00 Death By Fame

RTÉ One

10:50 The Drew Barrymore Show
 11:40 The Kelly Clarkson Show
 12:35 Father Brown
 13:30 10 Things to Know About...
 14:00 RTÉ News: One O'Clock
 14:30 Home and Away
 15:00 Shortland Street
 15:30 Fair City
 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 Scéalta na Lochanna
 21:30 Saol Na Feirme
 22:00 RTÉ News: Nine O'Clock
 22:35 CrimeCall
 23:35 Swindlers
 00:40 The Dry

Movies

Sky Premiere

10:00 One More Shot (2025)
 11:40 The Gentleman



Visit Valencia

Valencia has spent years playing the understudy. While travellers flocked, almost by default, to Barcelona or Seville, Spain's third-largest city quietly got on with being brilliant: effortlessly liveable, deeply proud of its food, and blessed with that rare combination of coastal ease and big-city culture.

Now, the world has finally caught up. Valencia, the birthplace of paella, has been climbing the ranks as one of the best places to live for expats for the past four years or so. And it's not just the long-stayers taking notice: visitor numbers across the wider Valencian Community have surged steadily, reaching a record-breaking 30 million tourists in 2024.

If Valencia has a signature celebration, it's Las Fallas: a fiery, chaotic, utterly unforgettable spring festival where towering sculptures are paraded, adored, and then spectacularly set alight. In 2026, the festival marks a decade since being recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage tradition.

But this year, Las Fallas may have to share the spotlight. Because on 12th August 2026, Valencia becomes one of the best places in Spain, possibly in Europe, to witness something genuinely historic: Spain's first total solar eclipse since 1905. While major cities like Madrid and Barcelona fall outside the path of totality, Valencia will experience the eclipse in full for almost two minutes. The city is already planning events around it, from conferences to organised viewing experiences, turning what could be a quiet astronomical phenomenon into a full-scale cultural moment.

The moon's shadow is expected to cover the sun at around 8.32pm, with the sun setting over the water shortly afterwards, meaning the best views will come from western viewpoints. In Valencia, that essentially translates to one thing: grab a spot on the beach, look out across the Mediterranean, and watch daylight disappear in a way you'll remember for the rest of your life.

The city hosts the 12th edition of the international Gay Games from 27th June to 4th July, adding another major draw to a sporting calendar that already includes the Ironman competition on 19th April, a half-marathon in October, and the full marathon in December.

Then, in early September, the city leans into its maritime identity as it hosts Sail Grand Prix, one of the most prestigious international sailing competitions, for the first of three consecutive years. The 2026 dates are 5th – 6th September, and the spectacle promises speed, drama, and a postcard-perfect Mediterranean backdrop.

All that said, Valencia's real magic is what it offers when there isn't a festival. It's the day-to-day pleasures that make people come for a weekend and start browsing apartment listings by day three.

Its location on the Mediterranean gives it a laid-back coastal rhythm, but the city itself is com-

pact enough to feel personal. It's walkable in a way many Spanish cities aren't, with neighbourhoods that blend into each other naturally, with no long metro commutes required.

Then there's the Turia Gardens: a green ribbon that cuts right through the city, created in the former riverbed of the Turia - part park, part cycling highway, part open-air living room. Combined with a flat landscape and ever-expanding green spaces, it makes getting around by bike not

only easy, but genuinely enjoyable.

And of course, Valencia eats well...really well. This is a city fiercely proud of its local produce and culinary traditions, whether that's paella cooked the way it was meant to be, horchata (a sweet, milky drink made from tigernuts), or esmorzaret, Valencia's beloved answer to brunch: a mid-morning feast that's less about aesthetics and more about appetite.



Best airlines for long-haul

Long-haul flights may be the price of admission for bucket-list travel, but a new report suggests some airlines are making those marathon journeys far more comfortable than others, even for economy passengers.

In late December, travel insurance provider MoneySuperMarket released its annual list of the best airlines for long-haul flights, ranking carriers based on passenger reviews and performance data across 26 airlines.

The company said it analysed a mix of reliability and onboard experience metrics, including timeliness, likelihood of cancellation, value for money, and customer ratings for seat comfort, in-flight entertainment, and food and beverages. The data was pulled from major review platforms including TrustPilot, TripAdvisor, AirlineQuality, and Skytrax.

After reviewing the results, Singapore Airlines was named as the best overall airline for long-haul travel. The carrier scored four out of five or higher across every key category, including value for money, reliability, customer ratings, onboard experience, and food and beverages. The survey also noted that Singapore Airlines was the only airline to earn a 4/5 value-for-money score.

The full top 10 list included:

1. Singapore Airlines
2. Qatar Airways

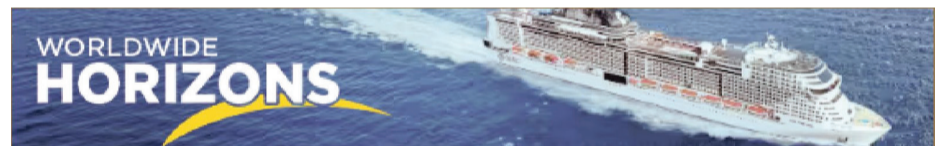
3. Cathay Pacific
4. TUI
5. Emirates
6. Qantas
7. Malaysia Airlines
8. Virgin Atlantic
9. Delta Air Lines
10. Air France

At the bottom of the rankings, American Airlines scored the lowest overall among popular airlines, particularly in categories tied to comfort and onboard experience. MoneySuperMarket cited weak performance in seat comfort, in-flight entertainment, food and beverages, and TripAdvisor ratings.

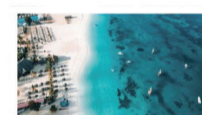
However, the airline did score well for timeliness - offering what the report described as a small bright spot for travellers who prioritise punctuality above all else.

The rankings are designed to help travellers look beyond on-time performance when booking flights that can stretch beyond 10 hours.

"These rankings matter because they give travellers a clear picture of the overall long-haul experience, not just punctuality," she said. "They highlight comfort, service, and value for money—factors that can make or break flights longer than 10 hours."



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Wetherspoon opens first Spanish pub at Alicante Airport

British pub giant Wetherspoon has opened its first ever outlet in Spain, bringing full English breakfasts and cheap(ish) pints to Alicante Airport's departure lounge.

The new pub, called Castell de Santa Bàrbara, is the chain's first venture into mainland Europe and looks set to be a massive hit with the 2.6 million Brits who passed through the Costa Blanca airport last year on their way home from Benidorm and other holiday hotspots.

Located opposite gate B30, the pub will open its doors every day at 6am and will serve customers seven days a week until 9pm. It has nearly 1,000 square feet of indoor space plus an outdoor terrace where smokers can enjoy their drinks, giving the nearby Budweiser Bar, which also has a smoking area, a run for its money.

One of the very first customers through the door was Kelvin Nicholas, who had the honour of sampling the pub's first ever pint of Guinness.

"When the taxi dropped me off I saw the sign for Wetherspoons from the outside and thought: perfect. I headed straight here," he said. Kelvin, who visits his local Spoons a couple of times a month back home, was on his way home to Southampton after a holiday in Alicante.

Builder Paul Denovan, 54, from Basingstoke in Hampshire, was another early punter. He'd been visiting his mum and sister who live in Spain and was delighted to find a Wetherspoon waiting for him.

"I've flown out here 12 times in the past six months, so I'm really pleased this has opened. I'll definitely be using it again. The great thing is that it's only a stone's throw from my boarding gate," he said.

Andrea and Warlen Duque from Dublin were tucking into pizza and chips before their return flight. The couple, who own a villa in Spain, were impressed by what was on offer. Retired teacher Mrs Duque, 56, said: "I'm delighted as we don't

normally go for the food there is at the airport here. I like the variety of what's on the menu."

And that menu is probably the pub's biggest draw for homesick Brits. Around 90% of what you'd find in a typical Wetherspoon back in the UK is available, including a traditional breakfast with fried eggs, bacon, Lincolnshire sausage and baked beans for €10.25 (around £8.94). That's more expensive than the £5.09 average at British branches but the company says it's cheaper than most of its UK airport locations. Bacon, sausage or vegetarian butties are all €5.95 (£5.19).

There are a few notable absences though. Fish and chips didn't make the cut, apparently because the kitchen doesn't have a deep fat fryer. One of the real favourites, British-style curry, isn't on the menu either, but you can order a Japanese twist in the form of two Katsu curry options. The pub has also added some Spanish flavours including broken eggs (two fried eggs, chips and Iberian ham), Spanish tortilla and garlic prawns.

On the drinks front, a 550ml Amstel or 580ml Stella Artois will set you back €5.95, a Guinness is €7.50 and a BrewDog Punk IPA costs €4.95 (£4.32). Some beers come in cans, with Greene King Abbot Ale and John Smith's Extra Smooth both priced at €5.95. For those wanting to keep the holiday vibe going a bit longer, cocktails like Godfather, Woo Woo and Sex on the Beach are €9.95. Not exactly as cheap as you'll find in your favourite Spanish beach bar, but definitely on par with other airport pubs.

The Alicante branch looks quite different from your typical high street Spoons. Gone is the famous patterned carpet, replaced by Spanish tiles and cream paintwork. It's also considerably smaller than most UK outlets.

Wetherspoon founder and chairman Tim Martin said: "We are delighted to have opened in Spain. We believe the pub will be popular with a wide range of customers travelling home from Alicante Airport, including those travelling

home to the UK and those using the terminal for trips to England and beyond. We aim to open a number of pubs overseas in the coming months and years, including those at airports."

Mr Martin has previously suggested that Benidorm and Majorca could be next in line for Spanish Wetherspoons.

"It's early days. Since it's all so new, we're playing it by ear," he said.

He even floated the idea of the chain expanding to China, asking: "Given the population overseas, there is huge opportunity. Coffee shops have been fantastically successful in, for example, China. Could this be true of the UK pub?"

The Alicante pub will be run by franchise partner Lagardère Travel Retail. With easyJet, Ryanair, Jet2 and British Airways all offering direct flights to Alicante, it's perfectly positioned to serve the thousands of Brits passing through every week.

Best airlines for long-haul

Let's get one thing straight: wine isn't nearly as fussy as people make it out to be. You don't need to swirl like a sommelier, memorize grape varieties, or dramatically announce "notes of leather" to enjoy a glass.

But there are a few easy mistakes that can quietly sabotage your drink — and most of them come down to temperature, glassware, and old-school myths that deserve to be retired.

Here's how to make every glass taste better...

Freezing isn't cool

Wine is not meant to be served ice-cold, and it's definitely not meant to be warm enough to taste flat. When wine is too cold, the flavour becomes muted and dull. When it's too warm, it can taste heavy, overly sweet, or just... off.

Instead of sticking a bottle in the freezer and hoping for the best, try a gentler approach:

- * Chill it in the fridge for a short while
- * Or use an ice bucket to cool it gradually

White wine deserves a smaller glass

White wine is all about crispness and aroma — and the quickest way to lose that is by letting it warm up too fast. That's why smaller glasses work best. A smaller bowl helps keep the wine cool longer, protecting its flavour. And unlike red wine, white doesn't need a ton of

oxygen exposure to shine. It's happier staying fresh, bright, and chilled.

Go wide on reds

Red wine, on the other hand, is basically the extrovert of the wine world. It needs space. It needs air. It wants to breathe. A wider glass gives red wine a larger surface area, letting oxygen do its thing. This gentle oxidation helps soften the wine, release richer aromas, and bring out deeper flavours.

Hold the glass by the stem

When you hold a wine glass by the bowl, your body heat slowly warms the wine. That can dull the flavour, especially with whites and sparkling wines.

Create your own pairings

We've all heard the "rules" ...red wine with steak, white wine with fish. But wine pairing isn't a law, it's a suggestion and often outdated. What matters most is the wine's flavour and your own preferences. If a bold white works with your steak, go for it. If a light red tastes perfect with your salmon, enjoy it.

Screw caps aren't sacrilege

Let's end one of the biggest wine myths: screw-capped wines are not automatically cheap, bad, or inferior. In fact, many fresh wines, especially those meant to be enjoyed young, are better suited to screw caps than corks.

Drop in beer drinkers sees Heineken cut jobs

Heineken is set to cut up to 6,000 jobs worldwide over the next two years as the Dutch brewer grapples with weakening beer demand and tougher market conditions.

The company, which employs about 87,000 people globally and owns brands including Heineken, Amstel and Tiger, said the reductions would affect both brewing and white-collar roles. The cuts amount to nearly 7% of its workforce and will include positions in Europe as well as other regions.

The announcement came alongside Heineken's annual results, in which the world's second-largest brewer by market value also lowered its outlook for profit growth in 2026. The company now expects profit to rise between 2% and 6% this year, down from the 4% to 8% growth it had forecast for 2025.

Heineken said the measures were aimed at improving efficiency and delivering savings by "accelerating productivity at scale." Finance chief Harold van den Broek told reporters the job losses were designed to strengthen the company's operations and support future investment.

"We really do this to strengthen our operations and to be able to invest in growth," van den Broek said.

Some of the reductions will come from previously announced restructuring plans involving Heineken's supply network, head office and regional divisions. The restructuring follows the surprise resignation of chief executive Dolf van den Brink in January, after six years in the role. Van den Brink, who is due to step down in May, had faced increasing pressure from investors to improve growth and productivity, with critics arguing the brewer had become less efficient.

Heineken's move comes as the company and its rivals contend with declining beer sales, particularly in Europe and North America. The brewer reported a 1.2% fall in total beer volumes last year compared with 2024.

Falling demand has been driven by a mix of factors, including squeezed household budgets, health concerns prompting some consumers to drink less alcohol, and lifestyle changes linked to the growing use of weight-loss drugs such as Mounjaro and Wegovy.

Despite the weaker outlook, investors reacted positively to the cost-cutting plan. Heineken shares rose as much as 4% in Amsterdam, reaching their highest level in more than six months, as markets welcomed the prospect of further savings.

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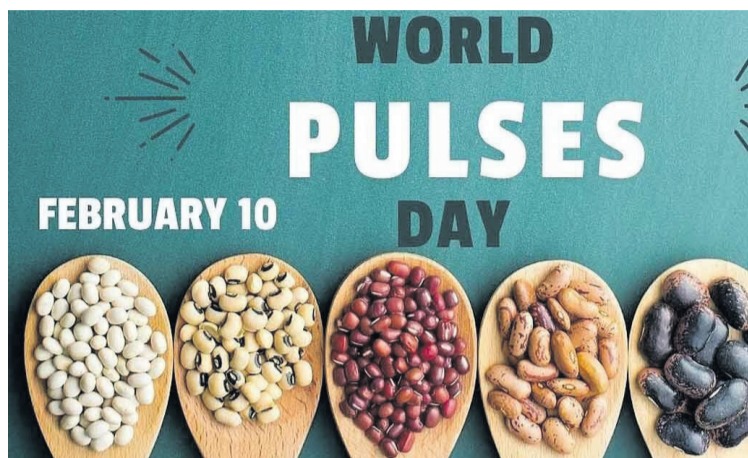
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Spain marks World Pulses Day



Spain hosted the opening ceremony for World Pulses Day, bringing together the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), pulse champions, experts and partners from around the world for an international event in Valladolid.

Organisers said the celebration offered a timely chance to boost public awareness of pulses and the key role they can play in

transforming agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable – supporting better production, better nutrition, a healthier environment and improved livelihoods, “leaving no one behind.”

In a video message, FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu described pulses as “potent functional foods” capable of tackling modern health and environmen-

tal challenges at the same time. While pulses have been part of diets for centuries and are deeply rooted in cultures worldwide, he noted that global consumption remains low.

“This year’s theme, Pulses of the world: from modesty to excellence, invites us to rethink the value of pulses and to recognize that they are versatile, nutrient-dense foods,” Qu said, adding that global commitment to promoting pulses “has remained strong and continues to grow.”

FAO officials also emphasised the role pulses can play in fighting hunger and malnutrition. Yurdi Yasmi, Director of FAO’s Plant Production and Protection Division, opened his remarks in Spanish in recognition of the host country and highlighted pulses as an affordable source of protein and essential nutrients.

“Pulses offer an affordable source of protein and essential nutrients while improving soil health and supporting more resilient agrifood systems,” Yasmi said. He stressed the need to reverse declining consumption and reaffirmed FAO’s commitment to helping countries through stronger seed systems, sustainable agronomic practices and innovation across the value chain.

Also addressing the event, Luis Suárez de Lezo, President of Spain’s Royal Academy of Gastronomy, urged people to include more pulses in their diets and help promote their benefits. Pulses support both human health and environmental sustainability, he said, adding that increased consumption could help create “a better world.”

Four facts about goodness-packed pulses:

*The common bean (*Phaseolus*

vulgaris) comes in many varieties around the world. Examples are black beans, red kidney beans and pinto beans – they look different, but they are the same species.

*Pulses are nutrient-dense, providing a good source of vitamins and minerals that are vital for good health

*The pea (*Pisum sativum*) is among the oldest domesticated crops in the world. It contributed to the understanding of genetics, thanks to Gregor Mendel’s famous experiment with pea plants.

*Many pulses are drought tolerant and use less water for production than animal-sourced proteins. This special ability to grow where water is scarce is more prominent in wild species of chickpea. Wild chickpeas can also tolerate temperatures up to 40°C.

Treat ultra processed foods like cigarettes, says study

Ultra-processed foods have more in common with cigarettes than with fruit and vegetables and should face far stricter regulation, according to a new report from US researchers.

Scientists from Harvard University, the University of Michigan and Duke University say ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and cigarettes share key similarities in the way they are designed to drive repeated consumption and potential

addiction - and in the widespread health harms linked to both.

UPFs are industrially manufactured products that often contain additives such as emulsifiers, artificial colours and flavourings. The category includes items like soft drinks and packaged snacks, including crisps and biscuits, which are widely available around the world.

In the paper, the researchers argue that the production

processes behind UPFs mirror those used in cigarette manufacturing, with companies working to optimise product “doses” and how rapidly they trigger reward pathways in the body.

The authors drew on evidence from addiction science, nutrition and public health history to support the comparison.

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Lamb Tagine

Lamb Tagine is the best of all the Tagines! The ras el hanout spice mix is sheer perfection with lamb, and slow cooking works wonders to develop rich flavours in the sauce. Serve over couscous for a stunning Moroccan meal.

Ingredients

Use one of these lambs:

- 1.6 kg/ 3.2lb boneless lamb shoulder, trim the fat, then cut in 3.5cm / 1.5" cubes (1kg/2lb after trimming)
- 1 kg / 2 lb lamb stewing meat or shoulder, already trimmed of fat cut in 3.5cm / 1.5" cubes

Tagine:

- 1 tsp cooking/kosher salt
- 0.5 tsp black pepper
- 3 tbsp canola oil
- 3 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 2 brown onions, diced (1cm / 0.3)
- 1.5 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp grated ginger
- 2 cinnamon sticks

- 625 ml chicken stock/broth, low sodium
- 170 g dried apricots
- 2 - 3 tsp lemon zest

Ras el hanout:

- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp ground cardamom
- 2 tsp turmeric powder
- 1.5 tsp fennel powder
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper (can reduce for less spicy)
- 0.25 tsp ground cloves
- 0.25 tsp ground ginger
- 0.5 tsp cooking/kosher salt

For serving:

- 80 g slivered almonds, toasted
- 10 g coriander/cilantro leaves roughly chopped
- 1.5 batches couscous (I just use plain, but you can add the fruit and nuts if you want)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 180°F/350°F (160°C

fan).

Spice mix – Mix the ingredients in a bowl then set aside.

Brown lamb – Toss lamb with the salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large oven-proof Dutch oven (with a lid) over high heat. Brown the lamb in 3 batches, turning to colour the pieces all over, about 3 minutes. Remove into a bowl, then repeat with remaining lamb. Set aside.

Aromatics – Turn heat down to medium high. Add onion and garlic, cook for 3 minutes until soft. Add tomato paste, ginger, cinnamon and your prepared spice mix. Cook for 1 1/2 minutes, stirring constantly.

Sauce – Add chicken stock and water, stir, then return the lamb into the pot. Slow cook 1 hr 45 min – Bring to a simmer, cover with a lid then cook in the oven for 45 minutes. Add apricots, put the lid back on and cook for another 1 hour, checking halfway to ensure the sauce hasn't reduced all the way (if you're concerned, add 1/2 cup water). Lemon finish – Lamb should be tender – check! Gently stir in lemon zest. Serve over plain couscous, sprinkled with almonds and coriander.



Baked Brie

Introducing the world's easiest party starter – Baked Brie! This is how you transform a good value brie into a spectacular brie. It's the best cheese dip you will ever have! An excellent option for a shared entree or party food that's super quick and easy to prepare and has that wow factor.

Ingredients

- 250 – 500g / 8 – 16 oz round brie or camembert
- 2 tbsp honey or maple syrup (optional)
- 1 thyme sprig (optional)

For Serving:

- Crostini or other sturdy crackers
- 1 bunch purple grapes (or green, optional)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F (all oven types).

Unwrap brie and place in a small, shallow ovenproof dish slightly larger than the

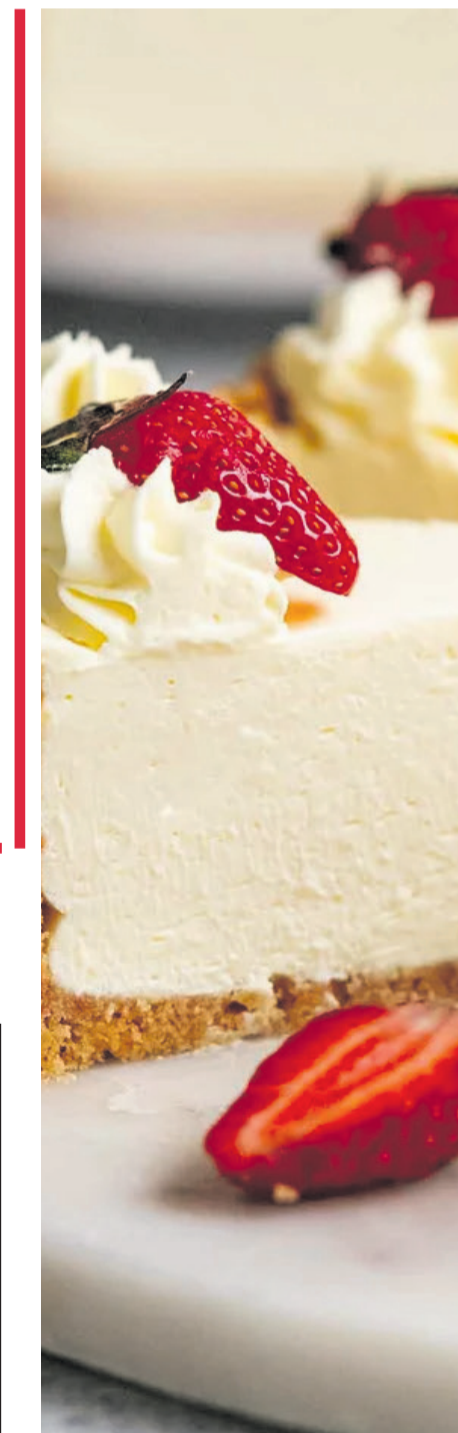
brie (to be used for serving) or a piece of crumpled baking / parchment paper (for transference).

Oven: Bake for 15 to 20 minutes (for 250g/8oz), or until melted through. For 500g/1lb brie, increase to 25 minutes. To check, gently touch the centre of the brie – it should feel very soft, like it is about to collapse if you press any harder.

Microwave option: 2 minutes on high (no one will know!) in 30 second increments. Carefully transfer to serving plate / board – it's delicate (transfer on paper if you used paper).

Drizzle with honey, top with sprig of thyme (if using).

Serve immediately with crostini on the side for scooping. Provide a knife to cut through the rind and a cheese or pate knife (or similar) to scoop cheese up onto crostini or crackers (plain or fruit/nut flavoured).



No Bake Cheesecake

This is a No Bake Cheesecake that tastes very similar to a classic Baked Cheesecake, made without the fuss of baking! It boasts an exceptionally smooth, light-yet-creamy filling and a buttery, crumbly crust

Ingredients

Biscuit crust:

- 200g/7 oz digestive biscuits (13 pieces, 1 2/3 cups crumbs), or other plain biscuits/cookies
- 90g (6 tbsp) unsalted butter, melted
- 0.5 tsp cinnamon powder (optional)
- 1 tbsp brown sugar

- Pinch of salt

No-bake cheesecake filling:

- 2.25 tsp (9 g) gelatine powder, unflavoured
- 2 tbsp cold tap water
- 250 ml thickened or heavy cream, or any whipping cream, FRIDGE COLD
- 500g/ 16 oz cream cheese block (not tub), well softened at room temperature
- 150 g caster sugar / superfine sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

Optional decorations:

- 6 strawberries, halved (plus extra for

serving)

- Whipped cream (half batch for decorating, or full batch for extra to serving on side)

Instructions

Blitz crumb ingredients. Press into 20cm/8" inverted base lined springform. Soak gelatine in the water, re-melt. Whip cream. In separate bowl whip cream cheese + sugar, then vanilla, lemon, a pinch of salt and gelatine. Fold in 1/4 cream, then remaining cream. Fill crust, pop in fridge for 6 hours.



Fish oil supplement: pros and cons

Fish oil has had a glow-up. Once the domain of cod-liver-oil loyalists and “health nuts,” omega-3 supplements are now a pharmacy staple—stacked beside multivitamins, probiotics and protein powders, quietly promising a better heart, a calmer mind, less inflammation and a longer, healthier life.

But behind the glossy marketing is a more interesting story: fish oil can be genuinely useful in certain situations... and surprisingly underwhelming in others. The difference comes down to what’s in the capsule, how much you take, and what you’re taking it for.

People have been using oils from fish for centuries, but fish oil’s modern fame began in the 1970s. Researchers studying Inuit diets noticed something intriguing: despite eating a diet high in fat, Inuit populations had relatively low rates of heart disease. The key appeared to be omega-3 fatty acids—particularly two types found in oily fish. By the 1980s, fish oil capsules were everywhere: an easy, swallowable shortcut to those “heart-healthy fats,” without needing to eat sardines for breakfast.

Fish oil is extracted from oily fish such as:

- * Salmon
- * Sardines
- * Tuna
- * Herring
- * Mackerel

These fish are rich in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs), mainly: EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). EPA and DHA are the star ingredients. They’re the reason fish oil exists as a supplement in the first place.

Every cell in your body is wrapped in a thin, flexible outer layer called a cell membrane. Think of it as the cell’s security gate and communications hub: it protects what’s inside, controls what enters and exits, and helps cells send and receive signals.

Omega-3s don’t “build” the membrane, but they slot into it, becoming part of its structure. This helps keep the membrane fluid and flexible, which matters most in tissues that rely on fast, precise signalling—especially the brain and eyes. And because the body can’t make enough omega-3s on its own, we need to get them from food—or sometimes supplements.

From fish to capsule
After fish are caught, their tissues are cooked and pressed to

release oil. That oil is then:

1. Purified and refined to remove impurities
2. Filtered to reduce contaminants like heavy metals (including mercury, copper and iron)
3. Sometimes concentrated to increase EPA and DHA levels
4. Packaged as soft gels or bottled liquid

Here’s the part most people don’t realise until they start reading labels. A 1,000 mg fish oil capsule usually refers to the total weight of the oil, not the active omega-3 dose. Most standard capsules contain only about 300 mg of combined EPA + DHA. The rest is other fats. So if you’re taking one capsule a day, you may not be getting a meaningful therapeutic dose, depending on the goal.

Fish oil’s best-supported benefit is its ability to lower triglycerides, a type of fat in the blood. High triglycerides are associated with increased cardiovascular risk, and omega-3s can reduce them.

But for otherwise healthy people, the evidence that standard fish oil supplements prevent heart attacks or strokes is much less convincing. In other words: fish oil isn’t a guaranteed heart “shield” just because it’s popular.

The inflammation angle
Omega-3s also have mild anti-inflammatory effects, and this is where fish oil can shine—particularly for **inflammatory arthritis**, such as rheumatoid arthritis.

Studies show omega-3s can reduce:

- * Joint tenderness
- * Morning stiffness

But the catch is consistency and dose. The benefits typically require around 2.7 grams of EPA + DHA per day, taken daily for 8 to 12 weeks. That’s roughly the equivalent of nine standard 1,000 mg capsules per day, not exactly the casual “one a day” most people are taking.

Fish oil has also been studied for mental health, especially depression. Some research suggests omega-3s - particularly EPA-rich formulations - can modestly reduce symptoms of clinical depression when used alongside antidepressants.

A 2019 review of 26 trials (over 2,000 people) found a small overall benefit, mainly for EPA-heavy products at doses up to about 1 gram per day. DHA-only products didn’t show clear effects. That said, omega-3s aren’t a universal mood booster. In people without

diagnosed depression, fish oil hasn’t been shown to reliably lift mood or prevent depression.

Up to 3 grams per day of combined EPA + DHA from supplements is generally considered safe for most adults. Higher doses, especially for medical conditions, should be taken under medical supervision.

For most people, the best first move isn’t a supplement. It’s food. The Heart Foundation recommends eating two to three servings of oily fish per week, which provides roughly 250–500 mg of EPA + DHA per day. If you don’t eat fish, a supplement can help, or algal oil if you’re vegetarian or vegan.

Fish oil supplements may be especially worth considering if you:

- * Have heart disease with high triglycerides
- * Have inflammatory arthritis
- * Have diagnosed depression and are using it as an add-on treatment (especially EPA-rich formulas)

But dose and product type matter, so it’s worth discussing with a health professional, especially if you’re aiming for higher therapeutic doses.

Withdrawn infant milk leaves babies ill in Spain

Eight babies in Spain have suffered vomiting and other gastrointestinal symptoms after consuming baby milk formula that was later withdrawn from the market over the possible presence of cereulide toxin. This is according to an alert bulletin from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Five of the infants required hospitalisation.

The information had not previously been made public by Spanish authorities. The Ministry of Health has since clarified that the cases are considered “suspected,” were identified in December, and that all of the babies have now recovered.

In its report, the ECDC states that Spain “has reported eight cases of vomiting after the consumption of potentially

affected products, of which five required hospitalisation.” The agency notes that while the onset of symptoms coincided with consumption of the formula, the cases have not been confirmed through laboratory testing. This, it adds, is common in food safety alerts due to the complexity of the analysis and the fact that patients often recover quickly.

The ECDC also warns that additional notifications may emerge in Spain, though it says no definitive causal relationship has been established between symptoms and the affected batches in these further reports.

The alert highlights that the recalled infant formulas have been widely distributed across the European Union and other countries, increasing the likelihood of exposure among

infant consumers to a moderate or high level. However, the agency considers the probability of developing gastrointestinal symptoms after exposure to be low to moderate, depending on age.

Newborns and babies under six months are considered particularly vulnerable due to the risk of dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. Overall, the ECDC classifies the risk for children under one year of age in the EU as moderate.

The report also details cases in other countries. In France, 11 babies have been hospitalized after consuming the formula under investigation. The United Kingdom has recorded 36 cases, although the outcomes were not specified. Belgium has reported five cases, and Denmark

has registered several more. Spain has seen a series of infant formula recalls in recent weeks. The first was announced on December 12, when Nestlé withdrew a batch of Nidina 1 as a precaution due to the possible presence of cereulide. The company said the decision followed detection of a potential risk in an ingredient from a supplier and that it acted under stricter criteria than those later established by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

The recall began in France, where authorities are investigating the deaths of two babies. Nestlé has said there is currently no medical confirmation linking those deaths to its products, and that French authorities have not found evidence connecting the cases to the formula.

Spain’s Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (Aesan) later expanded the alert to other brands, including Lactalis Nutrition, Babybio Caprea 1, Babybio Optima 1, Almiron, and Bledina. Industry sources indicated that contamination was detected in a specific ingredient used in infant formulas and that many of the recalls were triggered through internal quality controls, preventing numerous products from reaching consumers.

Aesan has noted that EFSA has assessed cereulide risk in infants and established concentration levels that may pose food safety concerns. That evaluation is being used as a reference for authorities in deciding whether additional preventive recalls may be necessary in the coming weeks.

The walking challenge that is going viral

Eight babies in Spain have already known walking is good for you. The evidence is everywhere: it can ease back pain, support heart health, dial down stress and anxiety, and even help protect your brain as you age. Some research suggests that even short, consistent walks may boost longevity.

And yet, there's a familiar gap between *knowing* and *doing*. Because while walking is one of the most accessible forms of exercise, it's also one of the easiest to postpone. The shoes stay by the door. The treadmill gathers dust.

That's where walking challenges come in; those neat, social-media-friendly routines that promise structure, simplicity, and a little extra motivation. The latest one gaining attention is the "6-6-6 walking challenge" and its appeal is obvious: it's straightforward, repeatable, and requires almost no planning. Unlike vague wellness goals like "walk more," the 6-6-6 challenge gives you a clear blueprint.

- * A 6-minute warm-up
- * A 60-minute brisk walk
- * A 6-minute cool-down

Some versions add an extra

layer of structure: completing the walk at 6am or 6pm. For some people, that time-based rule is what makes it feel like a "real" challenge rather than just another fitness suggestion floating in the background.

Health and fitness experts generally agree that the 6-6-6 walking challenge can be a strong tool for building momentum, particularly for people who are currently inactive or inconsistent with exercise. Done regularly, it can improve overall physical activity levels, cardiovascular health, endurance and daily consistency with movement. In other words: it's a simple routine that can help people go from nothing to something and that's often the most important leap.

But while the 6-6-6 challenge can be an excellent foundation, experts caution that it has limits as a standalone programme. Walking alone typically doesn't provide enough stimulus to meaningfully improve strength and power, flexibility and mobility, balance and coordination, bone density, joint support and stability. That's why other forms of exercise, especially strength training, are consistently linked to better long-term health outcomes, including longer lifespan, improved balance, and

stronger joints.

The idea of adding strength training on top of a daily hour-long walk can sound overwhelming and experts stress that it doesn't have to happen all in one day. The goal is a well-rounded routine, not an exhausting one. A smarter approach is to dedicate one day to walking and another day to strength training or split your movement, so everything fits into a 60-minute window. This way, you get the benefits without spending hours at the gym - because that kind of volume isn't required to see results.

Walking is often treated like the most beginner-friendly form of exercise and in many ways, it is. But intensity and duration matter, and this challenge isn't as gentle as it looks. Experts warn that these routines can appear flashy and fun, almost like a cute starter challenge, whilst they are actually high-volume.

Going from little to no exercise to six hours of brisk walking a week is a considerable increase. Beginners are typically advised to work up to that kind of load gradually, because it places real strain on the body, including the heart, muscles, and connective tissues.

Modification

If you're new to exercise, or returning after time off, experts recommend easing in with the 3-3-3 walking challenge, a modified version designed to be more manageable.

The idea is simple:

- * Warm up for as long as you need
- * Walk for 30 minutes
- * Cool down for as long as you need

From there, you can slowly build up until you're ready for a full 60-minute walk. And even at the beginner level, experts emphasise not neglecting other forms of exercise, especially strength training, to protect muscle mass and bone density.

If you already walk regularly, the 6-6-6 challenge may feel more like maintenance than progression, unless you deliberately make it harder.

Experts suggest levelling up by experimenting with:

- * Faster pace intervals
- * Hilly terrain
- * Longer routes with varied surfaces
- * A weighted vest
- * Combining walks with strength

training

Experts also note that your age and physical condition should influence whether the 6-6-6 challenge is right for you. For older adults, the priority should be shortening total walking time if needed, choosing safe, even surfaces, wearing supportive footwear, focusing on posture, balance, and putting comfort over speed. In this case, the challenge can still be useful, but it should be adapted to support longevity, not chase intensity.

Weight Loss

This challenge can support weight loss, especially because it increases daily energy expenditure and supports metabolic health when done consistently. But experts are clear: walking alone rarely tells the whole weight-loss story. Walking may help by increasing metabolism, reducing cravings for sugary snacks and improving mood and stress regulation (which can influence eating habits).

However, meaningful and sustainable weight loss depends heavily on other lifestyle factors such as adequate nutrition (especially protein, fibre, and micronutrients), quality sleep and resistance training (to maintain muscle and support metabolism).



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Turn to page 36 for all puzzle results

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	F I S H	START
2	
3	
4	
5	B I R D	END

Word Ladder — Hard (6 letters)

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

1	G A R D E N	START
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	P O C K E T	END

WORD SEARCH

J	H	E	O	R	E	E	P	B	F	P	P	L	O	H	Q	I	M	E	X
R	S	A	O	Q	E	G	H	S	N	O	P	E	N	T	G	J	U	Y	U
U	U	E	I	L	W	V	D	I	O	U	O	O	M	R	D	G	A	Y	V
W	G	O	S	A	V	C	F	A	Q	S	I	X	H	L	H	D	M	Q	Q
W	A	Y	L	U	D	J	O	T	B	Z	C	G	U	S	I	X	V	U	F
D	R	J	U	O	O	F	M	F	S	S	I	Z	O	L	K	I	I	M	T
D	D	E	Y	S	C	H	V	I	N	X	F	N	O	G	O	O	M	S	L
U	E	B	L	L	R	R	S	Z	E	A	F	H	I	Y	O	J	O	Y	N
D	N	W	H	E	D	E	E	P	K	K	A	R	E	K	P	Q	K	B	K
B	Y	H	Y	L	R	P	W	T	W	C	R	E	K	P	S	E	Q	M	H
T	Y	C	Y	N	F	F	Q	I	A	Q	T	L	G	L	U	O	U	D	B
R	C	L	Q	R	E	B	F	U	F	W	X	Z	L	A	G	H	M	Q	C
O	D	R	U	L	I	W	Y	T	G	Q	A	Z	P	N	H	I	B	U	X
M	V	Z	V	I	L	H	S	L	L	U	N	U	B	T	H	J	R	O	J
F	Z	R	M	Q	T	N	A	P	P	L	U	P	Y	W	X	Q	E	V	T
B	U	F	O	X	Q	S	C	Q	A	R	U	Q	D	J	J	A	L	T	K
M	P	P	Y	R	S	P	N	D	B	P	S	S	I	J	D	R	L	P	W
I	H	U	G	O	R	M	S	E	I	L	E	F	T	P	V	H	A	Z	C
K	W	I	V	F	K	I	E	M	Q	S	F	R	Q	Q	M	P	B	X	N
P	Q	O	X	M	J	R	M	R	W	V	Q	W	P	R	C	D	C	A	W

1. WATERCOLOUR 2. NEWSPAPER 3. UMBRELLA 4. BOOKSHOP 5. HOLIDAY
6. TRAFFIC 7. GARDEN 8. MIRROR 9. PUZZLE 10. PLANT 11. HOUSE 12. GLASS

SUDOKU

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



Alicante Airport's new taxiway set to begin construction

Construction of a new taxiway at Alicante-Elche Miguel Hernández Airport is set to begin between late February and early March, marking the next major step in the airport's ongoing expansion plans.

The project, designed to improve aircraft movement on the ground before take-off and after landing, should reduce turnaround times and free up additional flight slots for airlines. Valencian company Pavasal won the contract last August with a bid of just over €16.7 million, well below the initial budget of €21 million.

After nearly two months of planning and topographic surveys, technicians from Aena and Pavasal have agreed that the construction camp will be set up by the end of February in the area parallel to the existing taxiway.

The first phase will involve laying drainage pipes and other service installations, followed by land filling to level out the existing slope.



After that, workers will install lighting, new mega-light towers and extend the perimeter fence and FOD (Foreign Object Damage) barrier. The final phase will see the apron area paved and painted.

The entire project has been scheduled over a maximum of 27 months, with most work carried

out at night and during quieter periods to minimise disruption to operations. The aim is to avoid altering flight schedules as much as possible, which means construction will take place during both this winter and next winter.

The new taxiway is in addition to almost €11.3 million worth of

improvements already contracted at the airport since late 2023. These include a new Airport Management Centre to coordinate operations in real time, renovated air conditioning in the jetways, solar panels on parking canopy roofs and the expansion of ten boarding gates to allow simultaneous front and rear boarding.

A contract to restore and reopen the VIP lounge, which closed after a fire in 2020, is expected to be awarded to Acciona shortly for another €5 million. Combined with the taxiway project, total investment now stands at over €33 million.

Most importantly for passengers, the airport is in the final stages of awarding a contract to design its major terminal expansion, which will involve a total investment of €1.154 billion.

The expansion plans include building a new boarding pier as an extension of Terminal 2, running parallel to the runway. This will require demolishing the old, disused Terminal 1 and the smaller General Aviation terminal building.

Once complete, the airport should be able to handle at least 26 million passengers, up from the current record of 19.9 million set in 2025.

Car thieves turn attention to Spain's new V16 emergency beacon

Spain's new V16 emergency beacon, now compulsory for drivers, is fast becoming an unexpected prize for car thieves, with police reporting a sharp rise in thefts from inside vehicles since the start of the year.

According to police sources, nearly a thousand reports have already been filed nationwide for thefts from inside vehicles and stolen V16 beacons since 1st January. Officers say the figure is higher than normal for this time of year, even though they have not broken down how many cases are directly linked to the beacon itself.

"What we are seeing, especially in southern Spain, is a clear increase in thefts and break-ins that coincides with the widespread introduction of this system," National Police sources explained. "Thieves know that every car has, or should have, a V16 beacon, so it has become another incentive."

The problem has become particularly visible in Granada, where the Policía Nacional set up a dedicated unit after 109 vehicle break-ins were reported in just one month. A police spokesperson said the unit includes both

uniformed and plainclothes officers patrolling at night in the most affected areas. "These thefts usually happen overnight, with side windows smashed in cars parked on the street," they said.

In San Vicente del Raspeig in Alicante, around 20 vehicles were found with smashed windows in a vacant parking area. Increases have also been detected in Alicante city, Madrid and Malaga.

Police in Granada have arrested 12 people in recent weeks in connection with these crimes. One suspect was arrested four times in a matter of days. "Because the stolen items are low value, the courts have not ordered prison," police sources added.

The Policía Nacional stresses these crimes are not linked to organised gangs. "The people we arrest are usually men addicted

to narcotics, mainly heroin, who are looking for something they can quickly exchange for a dose," a police source said. Sunglasses, handbags and emergency beacons are all taken if found.

To help tackle the growing black market, police are urging drivers to write down the IMEI number of their V16 beacon, a 15-digit code that can be used to identify recovered devices. Officers also warn they will seek court approval to track stolen beacons via their geolocation systems.

With official prices around €40, stolen V16 beacons are reportedly being resold for as little as €5 to €10, often through informal channels, something police have already warned about in relation to stolen and resold devices. Drivers are advised to buy only from authorised sellers and avoid leaving the beacon visible inside the car.



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Aries (21 Mar – 19 Apr)

Life

Your enthusiasm is contagious this week, Aries! Channel it into a new hobby or project. Avoid spontaneous karaoke unless you're ready for a standing ovation—or something less harmonious. Spice up your routine with a small adventure.

Mind

This week, Aries, focus on balance by organizing your daily routine. Engage in activities that boost your energy, like a brisk walk or a new hobby. Remember, taking breaks is just as important as staying busy. A bit of rest will enhance your creativity and productivity.

Heart

This week, Aries, your fiery charm is magnetic. Romantic possibilities may arise unexpectedly, so remain open to new connections. Spend quality time with loved ones, and let your playful side shine. A small gesture can mean a lot, so express your affection creatively.

Taurus (20 Apr – 20 May)

Life

This week, your ability to sniff out bargains is unparalleled, Taurus. Use it to find a quirky treasure for your home. Remember, though, not everything has to be a masterpiece—embrace imperfections as part of the charm.

Mind

Taurus, this is a great week to connect with nature. Spend some time gardening or going for a stroll in the park. Simple acts like enjoying a cup of tea outdoors can ground you and bring peace. Let nature recharge your spirit.

Heart

Taurus, your steady nature provides a comforting presence for those around you. Deepening your current relationships may bring great joy. Share your thoughts and listen intently; a meaningful conversation awaits. Remember, a cozy evening with someone special can warm the soul.

Gemini (21 May – 20 Jun)

Life

You're buzzing with ideas, Gemini, but try not to overwhelm your friends with all your genius at once. Share a fascinating tidbit each day, and consider starting a journal to keep track of your brilliant insights.

Mind

Gemini, your curiosity is your

superpower this week. Dive into a book or explore a new topic online. Engaging with new ideas will invigorate your mind. Keep communication open with friends—sharing thoughts can lead to delightful insights.

Heart

This week, Gemini, your curiosity leads to delightful discoveries in love. Embrace spontaneous adventures with friends or your partner. A light-hearted approach will open doors to deeper connections. Keep communication flowing and share your dreams, fostering an atmosphere of trust.

Cancer (21 Jun – 22 Jul)

Life

Nurture your inner world, Cancer, as you'll find it even more rewarding than a tub of ice cream, albeit less delicious. Create a cozy nook for reading or meditation and invite a friend for a cozy chat.

Mind

Cancer, focus on nurturing yourself this week. Create a cozy space at home where you can unwind. Simple self-care rituals, like a soothing bath or meditative music, can enhance your mood. Reach out to loved ones for support and warmth.

Heart

Cancer, your nurturing instincts are in full bloom. Take time this week to care for your loved ones, as your empathy is a cherished gift. Plan an intimate gathering to strengthen bonds and create cherished memories. Your kindness will have a lasting impact.

Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)

Life

Your charisma is shining bright, Leo, so use it to rally your friends for a fun group activity. If your local karaoke bar is within reach, you might want to let your inner rock star loose. Just be sure to share the mic!

Mind

Leo, let your natural enthusiasm shine through creative pursuits this week. Whether it's painting, writing, or dancing, expressing yourself will bring joy. Schedule some downtime too, balancing your vibrant energy with relaxation. Your radiance inspires others!

Heart

Leo, your radiant energy draws admiration from all corners. This week, express your appreciation for those who uplift and support you. Be generous with

compliments and affection, and watch relationships blossom. A heartfelt gesture can deepen connections and bring joy to everyone involved.

Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sep)

Life

You're in a decluttering mood, Virgo! Take this chance to clear out old emails or organize your closet with military precision. Just remember: nobody's perfect, and that's perfectly okay.

Mind

Virgo, this week is perfect for organizing and decluttering. A tidy environment can lead to a clearer mind. Consider starting a simple journal to track your thoughts and goals. Small, steady steps will lead you to big achievements.

Heart

Virgo, your attention to detail can help enhance your relationships this week. A thoughtful note or planned outing will be well-received by those you care about. Strengthening your emotional bonds can create a secure foundation for future happiness. Balance your time between work and personal connections to maintain harmony.

Libra (23 Sep – 22 Oct)

Life

Your social calendar might be full, Libra, but make time for some solo reflection. Consider a scenic walk or diving into a novel. As the week progresses, balance your charm with authenticity.

Mind

Libra, harmony is key this week. Spend time nurturing relationships that uplift you. Whether it's a chat with a friend or a shared meal with family, connection feeds your soul. Balance your social time with moments of quiet reflection.

Heart

Libra, harmony is your guiding star this week. Focus on finding balance in your relationships by being fair and open-hearted. Plan a peaceful activity with your partner or friends to enjoy each other's company. Your natural charm will facilitate positive interactions, fostering a more profound sense of connection.

Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)

Life

Mystery is your middle name, Scorpio! Delve into a captivating book or binge a suspense series. Let curiosity guide you, but remember to return to the real world for the occasional errand.

Mind

Scorpio, channel your intense energy into passion projects this week. Delve deep into activities that truly excite you. Make time for introspection, perhaps through journaling. Your focus can lead to powerful insights and personal growth.

Heart

Scorpio, your intense emotion and passion are powerful tools in love. This week, channel them into nurturing your closest relationships. Sharing your feelings openly can lead to transformative experiences. Trust your intuition to guide you towards meaningful connections and let vulnerability be your strength.

Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)

Life

Feeling adventurous, Sagittarius? Plan a mini getaway or explore a new café in town. Your spontaneous spirit is brimming, but don't forget to charge your phone for those essential GPS moments.

Mind

Sagittarius, adventure calls, even in simple forms this week. Try a new dish or explore a nearby locale you've never visited. Keep your mind open to fresh experiences and ideas. Sharing these moments with friends can amplify the fun.

Heart

Sagittarius, adventure calls this week, perhaps in the realm of love. Engage in exciting activities with your partner or friends that spark joy and laughter. Embrace opportunities for growth by stepping outside your comfort zone. Your enthusiasm will attract positivity, creating unforgettable moments.

Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)

Life

Ambition is key this week, Capricorn. Set a practical goal and break it into manageable steps. Celebrate small victories with little rewards—chocolate anyone? And remember, even CEOs need downtime.

Mind

Capricorn, invest time in setting realistic goals this week. Break tasks into manageable steps to maintain momentum. Make sure to balance ambition with relaxation; a calm mind will aid productivity. Remember, persistence leads to success.

Heart

Capricorn, your steadfast approach to relationships shines brightly this week. Show

appreciation for those who stand by you through thick and thin. A sincere conversation can strengthen ties and build trust. Invest time in nurturing your connections, knowing that small efforts yield significant rewards.

Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)

Life

Your inventive mind is working overtime, Aquarius! Channel it into a creative project or brainstorm with like-minded individuals. Just remember to ground those ideas with a reality check now and then.

Mind

Aquarius, this week is ideal for innovation. Dive into creative problem-solving or brainstorm new ideas. Engage with like-minded people to exchange perspectives. Keep your routine flexible to accommodate unexpected opportunities for growth.

Heart

Aquarius, your inventive mind can bring fresh perspectives to relationships this week. Engage in artistic or intellectual pursuits with loved ones to spark new conversations. Sharing your unique vision encourages deeper connections. Embrace your individuality, as it brings vibrancy to your interactions.

Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)

Life

Your empathy is in full bloom, Pisces, making you a great listener. Spend time with loved ones, lending an ear. Just don't forget to protect your own energy and take time for daydreaming—a favorite pastime.

Mind

Pisces, let your intuition guide you this week. Spend some moments in quiet reflection or meditation to enhance your inner calm. Engage in artistic or musical activities to express your emotions creatively. Trust in your instincts; they're particularly sharp now.

Heart

Pisces, your empathetic heart is a beacon of warmth this week. Show kindness and understanding to those around you, as your gentle nature is a source of comfort. Plan a creative date or enjoy quiet moments with loved ones. Let your imagination lead you to beautiful expressions of love.

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Drug trafficking network used marble to smuggle cocaine into Spain

Spain's National Police, working alongside the Tax Agency's Customs Surveillance and Brazil's Federal Police, has dismantled a criminal organisation accused of attempting to smuggle massive quantities of cocaine into Spain hidden inside marble products.

The joint operation led to three arrests – two of whom have been remanded in custody – and the seizure of nearly 1,500 kilograms of cocaine.

The investigation began last November after officers detected signs of a trafficking network operating through apparently legal companies. According to investigators, the group imported marble tables, countertops and sinks from Brazil, using the stone pieces as concealment for the drug.

To make detection harder, the suspects allegedly treated the

shipments with perfumes and air fresheners in an attempt to mask the smell of cocaine during air transport.

Police say the organisation even carried out a trial run, sending a shipment containing only construction materials and no narcotics. The goal was to determine whether the route was under law enforcement scrutiny.

Once the group believed it was safe, the marble cargo was flown to Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport and later transported by road to industrial warehouses across Spain.

International cooperation proved key in stopping one of the largest loads. At Belo Horizonte airport in Brazil, authorities intercepted and seized 1,200 kilograms of cocaine hidden inside marble tables bound for Spain.

At the same time, Spanish investigators tracked a separate shipment of marble toilets that had been held in the cargo terminal at Madrid airport while awaiting customs clearance.

That shipment was later moved to an industrial warehouse in Vilanova i la Geltrú (Barcelona), where police carried out a search with support from specialist units including GEO and GOES.

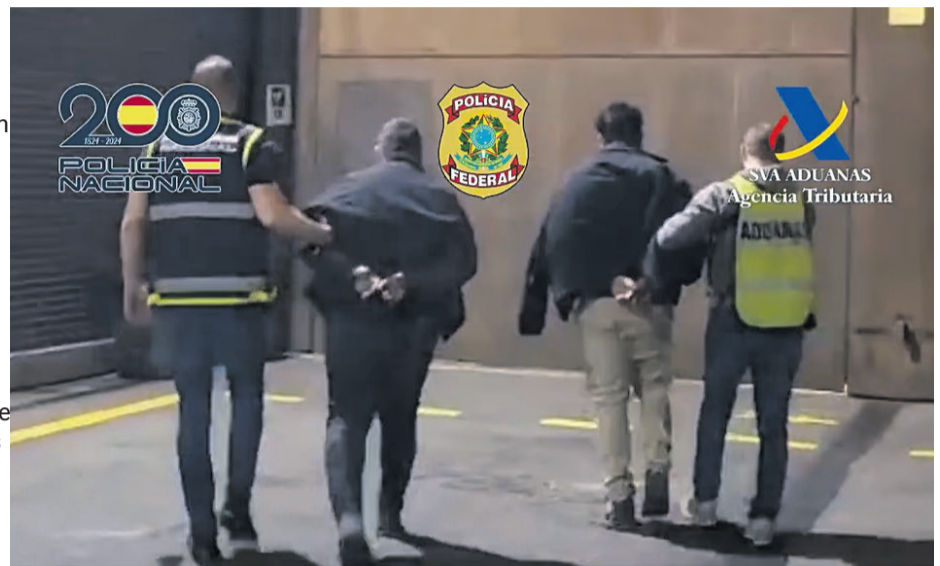
Inside the warehouse, officers found 250 kilograms of cocaine spread across more than 200 packages hidden in marble countertops and sinks. Police also

seized a van, a truck, several mobile phones and cash.

Two men were arrested during the raid after allegedly attempting to destroy their mobile phones when police moved in. A third suspected member of the organisation was

arrested later.

All three have been brought before the courts on suspicion of drug trafficking and membership of a criminal organisation. A judge ordered provisional detention for two of the detainees.



Saudi Arabia orders 20 more high-speed trains from Spain

Saudi Arabia has placed an order for 20 new high-speed trains from Spain's Talgo in a deal worth €1.33 billion. This will bolster the manufacturer's order backlog and extending its role on the Haramain High Speed Railway, Spain's transport minister said.

Talgo said the contract lifts its total order book to nearly €6 billion – the highest in the company's history – and covers both the production of the trains and their long-term maintenance. The new rolling stock will be deployed on the high-speed corridor linking Mecca, Medina and Jeddah, where

Talgo trains have been in service since the line opened in 2018.

Spain's Transport Minister Óscar Puente welcomed the agreement in a post on X, describing it as a significant boost for Spanish industry. He said the deal ensures the continued role of Spain's national rail operator RENFE in managing the Saudi high-speed service through 2038 and estimated the overall value for Spanish companies at more than €2.8 billion.

The announcement comes at a delicate time for Spain's rail sector, which has faced increased

scrutiny following a fatal train collision near Córdoba last month that killed 46 people and reignited debate over whether infrastructure maintenance spending is keeping pace with rising passenger demand.

A three-day strike planned by Spain's train drivers' union from 9–11 February was also averted late on Monday after a last-minute agreement with the Transport Ministry that included additional funding for safety measures and track upkeep.

Talgo said the 20 trains will be

delivered to Saudi Arabia Railways and will match the specifications of the 35 Talgo units already operating on the Haramain route. Each train will include two power cars and 13 passenger coaches, providing 417 seats across two classes, along with dedicated areas for catering and passengers with reduced mobility.

Talgo's trains currently operate at a maximum commercial speed of 300 km/h on the 450-kilometre line, which is built and operated to standards comparable to Spain's own high-speed rail network.

The Haramain service runs more than 100 trains per day under normal conditions, rising to over 140 daily services during the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Talgo said nearly two million passengers were carried during the 2025 Hajj period alone.

Under its maintenance responsibilities, Talgo operates two maintenance facilities in Saudi Arabia and employs more than 270 staff in the country.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Word Ladder — Easy Solution

- 1 **FISH** START
- 2 **BISH**
- 3 **BISK**
- 4 **BIRK**
- 5 **BIRD** END

Word Ladder — Hard Solution

- 1 **GARDEN** START
- 2 **FARDEN**
- 3 **FARDED**
- 4 **PARDED**
- 5 **PARKED**
- 6 **PACKED**
- 7 **PACKET**
- 8 **POCKET** END

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

D	A	Z	A	O	A	A	W	A	M	B	N	U	I	X	G	S	L	S	
B	T	B	R	Q	X	X	Z	O	Y	T	T	Z	X	I	O	K	Y	A	J
W	R	L	Q	R	Z	Y	C	I	R	T	Y	H	R	L	H	O	S	S	X
G	L	U	U	R	B	A	C	K	Y	A	R	D	W	P	X	G	I	R	U
U	I	E	Q	U	Q	Y	T	E	Z	O	V	V	W	X	K	R	F	N	G
S	Q	B	R	E	M	Q	A	L	D	A	R	R	M	O	Z	A	Q	R	N
O	L	I	T	H	K	S	G	D	J	V	U	K	N	O	C	A	X	W	
K	D	R	Q	G	F	I	A	K	O	Z	O	L	B	F	G	N	I	O	O
R	U	D	B	B	C	E	R	Y	V	T	B	G	C	C	I	X	D	E	S
C	U	B	O	T	O	O	D	O	B	Z	H	D	O	T	Z	N	P	A	J
M	J	T	O	A	B	R	E	A	D	H	G	T	E	U	J	K	E	D	V
N	K	L	K	R	N	Z	N	Z	T	J	I	A	E	W	B	G	Y	O	T
O	E	M	K	P	Y	D	C	R	M	Z	E	O	Y	K	V	F	K	R	U
P	P	I	E	P	Z	C	E	S	R	Z	N	C	Y	U	R	Q	T	U	O
W	O	A	E	U	U	I	A	J	S	M	T	R	D	N	A	H	A	K	
Q	U	O	P	V	M	Y	A	U	E	F	G	V	T	W	R	I	M	V	Z
J	N	W	E	G	O	H	C	Z	V	K	P	V	N	U	W	S	Q	V	S
Y	C	H	R	V	C	B	N	D	R	D	K	B	U	J	F	H	P	Q	H
Y	S	R	J	T	M	Q	W	H	H	A	B	I	O	I	G	D	R	O	K
S	R	C	V	O	T	Z	K	A	N	S	Y	V	C	W	S	D	W	U	X



Windy day on Roda Golf

An extremely windy day saw 48 golfers head to Roda Golf with The Stray Sod Golf Society and battle with the blustery conditions. Roda is a very open course and near to the coast, so it was never going to be easy but with the high winds it was very testing to say the least. It was definitely the day to have an extra sleeve or two of balls handy.

The weather was certainly reflected in the scores with at least 60% of the golfers scoring around the mid-twenties. A couple of exceptions were last week's winner Oliver Ohara and Danny Divers scoring well into the thirties, each

winning their own category. Best Guest was Greame Millington with 24 points and our Struggler of the Day had a score of eleven points. After the round, it was back to The Sod for a hearty Irish stew with mash and some Guinness to wash it down. Although the play was tough everyone seemed to have a great day out and all were in high spirits for the presentation.

Next outing is Lo Romero on Friday 20th Feb. If you would like to join The Stray Sod Golf Society, please call into The Stray Sod Green Fees shop at the La Fuente Centre. Alternatively, call 966 775 920.



San Miguel Golf Society at El Plantio



After being rained off for the last two weeks, we were all itching to get back out there. El Plantio is a bit of a Marmite course. Some love it, some... absolutely don't. You can't win them all. Still, the morning greeted us with a beautiful sunrise and by tee time we were already down to t-shirts. Hard to complain about that. A slightly smaller "Winter" field of



34 took on the opening tee, most opting for the sensible dogleg-left route still steering clear of the lurking water hazard. It quickly became clear the course was not at its sparkling best. The greens were decent enough, and the fairways improved as the round went on, but there were a few grumbles drifting around the fairways. The pace was very leisurely(!),

but everyone returned intact. The sunshine lifted spirits and the terrace did the rest, with well-earned drinks all round. On to the scores... Two "Twos" earned a tidy prize for Drew Niblock on the 14th and Darren Strugnell on the 18th. Darren's was a chip in, not even a putt on the green. Very tidy indeed. Nearest the Pins went to Samantha Brammer (7th), Tony Smale

(9th) and Drew Niblock (15th). No takers on the 18th.

A very proud Mick Roscoe claimed the McBride Bottle as the only player posting a Net score in the 90s. Meanwhile, Paul Lambert "graciously" accepted the football card spoils with Birmingham this week... although we understand his wife may have had a guiding hand.

Gold: Drew Niblock – Net 73 (and lowest gross with 83)

Silver: Stephen Locke – Net 74

Bronze: Sandra Dibble – Net 69.

Yes, yes... get the giggles out of the way.

Next week we head north again to Font del Llop.

Keep up to date with SMGS at www.smgs.org. Sponsorship opportunities are available for upcoming games. If interested, contact smgs91info@gmail.com. We are also proud to be supported

by Michaela Schmidt at www.golf-hotspots.com for all your golf travel needs.

Last week we were delighted to present Sylvia from Help at Home with a donation of €670. This included €220 from members' generous Blob Tin contributions and €450 raised at last year's Captain's Dinner Auction and Raffle. Help at Home is a wonderful local charity supporting people in need through vital services, charity shops and mobility aid rentals. Pictured with Sylvia are Mick Pryke (SMGS Captain) and Sandra Dibble (SMGS Secretary).

Also, winners pictured (L-R): Sandra Dibble (Bronze), Mick Roscoe ("McBride Bottle"), Drew Niblock (Gold), Mick Pryke (Captain) and Stephen Locke (Silver). Well done all!

Local cycling race cancelled due to gale-force winds

Stage 2 of the 2026 Vuelta a Murcia was abandoned on Saturday after powerful winds swept across the region, forcing organisers to halt the peloton and replace the day's racing with a short, symbolic ride into the finish town.

Race officials confirmed the decision on the event's website shortly after the stage rolled out from Fortuna. With conditions worsening, organisers said it was "impossible to continue" and announced that riders would instead travel to Santomera for a 10-kilometre neutralised run to the line.

Although no times were taken, organisers said a stage winner would still be named and the jerseys

would be awarded, ensuring the race would still produce an overall champion.

The stage had already been shortened earlier in the day, reduced from its planned 180 kilometres to 147 in an attempt to manage the severe weather. A mid-stage loop was removed, though the route's key climbs – the iconic Collado Bermejo and the Cresta del Gallo – had remained on the schedule.

However, the race came to a complete stop around 23 kilometres after the start, in an exposed, flat area south-west of Murcia's regional capital. With no break-away formed, the peloton waited in place for roughly half an hour

before organisers issued a brief update: "Corredores parados por el momento" – riders stopped for now.

Officials later confirmed the entire convoy would be transported by team vehicles to Santomera for the ceremonial finale.

With no competitive racing on the second day, Stage 1 winner Marc Soler (UAE Team Emirates-XRG) was declared the overall winner of the revived two-day event.

The cancellation came as much of eastern Spain remained under an orange weather warning, with forecasts predicting winds of up to 90 km/h across Murcia.



This year marked Murcia's first expansion after decades of contraction, having shrunk from a five-day stage race in the 1990s to a one-day Classic in recent editions. Organisers had brought the event back to two stages in 2026,

with local media reporting plans to extend it to three days in 2027 – though Saturday's disruption raises fresh uncertainty over how the race will develop after such a major setback.

Asteroid set to smash into Moon

Mark your calendars for a once-in-a-lifetime event on December 22, 2032. That's the day a massive asteroid is expected to slam into the Moon in what scientists are calling the most violent cosmic event humanity has ever seen.

Asteroid 2024 YR4, roughly the size of a 15-storey building, will hurtle towards the lunar surface at a staggering 48,000 km/h after more than eight years of anxious monitoring since its discovery. The impact will release energy equivalent to 8 megatons, a force greater than any nuclear explosion ever recorded.

Andrew Rivkin, a researcher at Johns Hopkins University, has been emphatic about the scale of what's coming.

"It is the greatest impact ever witnessed by humankind," he said, underlining just how exceptional this event will be.

When 2024 YR4 was first detected in late 2024, there were fears it might be heading for Earth.



Thankfully, scientists quickly determined the Moon would take the hit instead. Since then, observatories and space agencies around the world, including NASA, have been tracking its every move.

The James Webb Space Telescope has played a crucial role in refining our understanding of the asteroid's trajectory. The

asteroid itself measures around 60 metres in diameter and will leave a permanent scar on the Moon's surface in the form of a new crater that will be visible for generations to come.

Estimates suggest that an impact of this magnitude hasn't occurred on the Moon for at least 5,000 years. This means we'll have front-row seats to

witness a phenomenon not seen in millennia, armed with technology capable of measuring every phase of the collision. Scientists will gain invaluable insights into how energy disperses during high-power impacts and how the lunar regolith behaves under extreme forces.

If the collision happens as predicted, observers on Earth should be able to see an optical

flash with ground-based telescopes, followed by an infrared emission that could last for hours. It's a unique opportunity to study the physics of impacts in real time.

What's a little worrying is that models suggest the force of the collision could eject up to 100 million kilos of lunar material into space. Some of those fragments might be pulled towards Earth by gravity, creating an artificial meteor shower that will light up our skies weeks after the impact.

While that part sounds spectacular, there's a definite downside. The cloud of debris could temporarily increase the risk to satellites and orbital stations, so space agencies are already studying preventative measures to protect vital communication and navigation infrastructure.

For now, the scientific community is watching and waiting. December 2032 might seem far away, but when it arrives, humanity will witness something truly extraordinary.

Silent lung cancer risk in Spain

World Cancer Day, celebrated last week, has once again turned the spotlight on lung cancer in Spain and on a risk factor many people have never heard of. Specialists estimate that around 3.8% of lung cancer deaths in the country, close to a thousand cases a year, may be linked to exposure to radon gas. In regions with the highest exposure, that share can rise to about 7% of all lung cancer deaths.

Lung cancer is now the leading cause of cancer death in women in Spain for the first time, ahead of breast cancer. Tobacco remains the main culprit and is responsible for about 90% of lung tumours, but experts stress that radon is the main lung cancer risk factor for people who have never smoked and the second most important for smokers, after tobacco itself.

Radon is a radioactive gas that forms naturally in certain rocks in the Earth's crust, particularly where there is uranium in granite. It seeps from the subsoil into buildings, accumulating mainly inside homes. It has no smell, taste or colour, so you cannot detect it without a test. Doctors explain that the gas emits alpha radiation and when we inhale the particles they hit the lining of the lungs and damage DNA, which

"can generate genetic alterations that may lead to lung cancer."

The Nuclear Safety Council drew up Spain's first national radon potential map in 2017 using around 12,000 measurements, geological information and natural radiation data. According to that work, roughly 17% of Spanish territory has elevated radon levels and the areas most affected are Galicia, Extremadura, the Community of Madrid, Castile and León and the Canary Islands. The highest levels are generally seen in north west Spain, northern and central Extremadura, parts of Castile and León, northern Madrid and some Pyrenean and Costa Brava zones.

The map highlights municipalities where at least 10% of homes on ground and first floors are expected to exceed 300 becquerels per cubic metre, the legal reference level in Spain. The World Health Organization recommends aiming for an annual average of 100 Bq/m³ where possible to minimise health risks.

Even so, scientists are cautious about relying too heavily on maps. One oncologist involved in recent research describes radon levels as "very heterogeneous" and points out that two neighbouring houses can have

very different results depending on cracks, construction details or the rock directly underneath. She warns that maps may "overestimate the levels in some sparsely populated areas" while downplaying small but densely populated zones.

A physicist who studies radon agrees and calls current maps "very inaccurate because they contain little data." He stresses that "high radon levels can exist anywhere" and that "you can never use a map to determine whether a building has a problem or not." The only reliable way to know is to measure the gas inside each property.

Population density and building type also change the picture. When researchers adjusted for building height, they found that the apparent risk in places like Madrid, where many people live in multi storey blocks, fell sharply because upper floors usually have lower radon levels. By contrast, rural municipalities dominated by single storey or single family homes remained in the high risk category because more residents live close to the ground.

Experts explain that radon levels fluctuate over hours and days, so long term measurements are essential. The recommendation is to use passive detectors for at

least three months, preferably in autumn or winter when homes are more closed up, to obtain a realistic annual average. These tests should be carried out by accredited laboratories, in a similar way to a gas inspection.

The specialists also underline that the concern is long term exposure, not brief visits. One physicist notes that even if a building shows a short term reading as high as 3,000 Bq/m³ "you can go in perfectly fine," because "the problem is long term exposure," which is why regulations focus on yearly averages. He also reminds us that "there is no building with zero radon."

From a health point of view, oncologists say that radioactivity from radon and other sources "has no safe limit." The longer someone is exposed and the higher the dose, the greater the chance of developing cancer. They add that radon interacts

with other risks rather than acting alone, which is why its main impact is seen in smokers and ex smokers, even though it is also the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.

Spanish rules so far have mainly targeted workplaces and new buildings, and specialists argue that regulation has arrived "late and poorly," scattered across several decrees and plans. They believe authorities need to invest more in explaining the risk and encouraging measurements, especially in ground floor premises open to the public and in homes in priority areas.

For now, the clear message this World Cancer Day is that radon is an invisible hazard which can be measured and, in many cases, reduced with relatively simple building adjustments once it has been identified.



Elche University at forefront of battle against alcoholism

Researchers at the Institute of Neurosciences (IN) in Spain have identified what they describe as “key” genetic alterations in the brains of people with long-term alcoholism, shedding new light on how decades of alcohol use may reshape the brain’s reward and decision-making circuits.

The research, led by scientists from the IN – a joint centre of Miguel Hernández University of Elche (UMH) and the Spanish National Research Council – was published in the journal *Addiction*. It concludes that chronic alcohol consumption “profoundly alters” the activity of genes linked to the endocannabinoid system in major brain regions tied to impulse control, motivation and relapse risk.

Alcoholism is one of the leading causes of disease and death in the world, but despite its social and health impact, the therapeutic options available are still limited, the research shows. Understanding what changes in the brain after decades of alcohol consumption is critical to developing more effective treatments.

To investigate the neurobiology

of alcohol use disorder, the team analysed postmortem brain tissue from individuals who had consumed alcohol chronically for an average of 35 years. The researchers focused on the endocannabinoid system, a chemical signalling network involved in pleasure, memory, mood and stress response.

The system includes receptors such as CB1 and CB2, as well as enzymes that break down naturally produced cannabinoids in the body, including FAAH and MGLL. According to Manzanares, it plays a central role in reward and motivation and acts as a “fine modulator” of brain function.

While previous studies had shown alcohol interacts with the endocannabinoid system, the IN said evidence directly based on the human brain had been limited. The new findings, researchers said, provide a detailed view of how chronic alcohol use alters key genes in brain regions involved in addiction.

Two brain regions at the centre of addiction
The study examined two major

areas of the mesocorticolimbic system: the prefrontal cortex, which is involved in planning, judgment and decision-making, and the nucleus accumbens, a core hub for reward and habit formation.

When researchers compared samples from people with alcohol use disorder with those from individuals without addiction, they found what they described as a “notable imbalance” in gene expression across the endocannabinoid system.

One of the strongest changes was in the CB1 receptor, which showed sharply higher gene expression – rising 125% in the prefrontal cortex and 78% in the nucleus accumbens. Researcher María Salud Gutiérrez García, the study’s first author, said CB1 is closely linked to reinforcement of addictive behaviour and relapse risk.

By contrast, the CB2 receptor gene dropped by around 50% in both brain regions. Because CB2 is associated with neuro-protective and anti-inflammatory effects, García Gutiérrez said the

decline could point to weakened brain defences against alcohol-related damage.

The researchers also reported significant changes in the GPR55 receptor, sometimes referred to as an “orphan” receptor because its natural ligand was unclear for years.

In the prefrontal cortex, GPR55 gene expression rose by 19%, while in the nucleus accumbens it fell by 51%. The IN said the work is the first to document these changes in humans with alcohol use disorder.

The study also found shifts in FAAH, an enzyme responsible for breaking down anandamide – a naturally produced cannabinoid involved in anxiety and pleasure. FAAH gene expression was lower in the prefrontal cortex but 24% higher in the nucleus accumbens, a pattern that could affect how these regulatory chemicals are available in the brain.

Samples selected to isolate alcohol’s effects
The IN said one of the study’s strengths was its use of brain

tissue from the New South Wales Tissue Resource Centre in Sydney, Australia. The samples came from people with chronic alcoholism who had not used other illicit drugs, allowing researchers to examine alcohol’s effects without the usual complication of polydrug use.

This approach provides a clearer picture of how alcohol, on its own, remodels gene expression in key brain regions for addiction.

The researchers said the findings may help explain why people with alcohol use disorder often show greater vulnerability to relapse and weaker executive control. They also argue that identifying which parts of the endocannabinoid system are disrupted – and where in the brain – could lead to more targeted and personalized treatment strategies.

The researchers believe that identifying which components of the endocannabinoid system are altered and in which brain regions opens the door to new, more specific and personalised therapeutic targets.

Guardia Civil chiefs charged in Pegasus case

A court in Barcelona has, for the first time, charged two former directors of Spain’s Civil Guard over their alleged involvement in computer espionage linked to the country’s ongoing “Pegasus case,” which concerns surveillance of the Catalan independence movement using the Pegasus and Candiru spyware programmes.

The decision marks a major development in the judicial probe, which already includes officials from Spain’s National Intelligence Centre (CNI) and now also reaches the highest levels of command within the Civil Guard.

Investigating magistrate Miriam de Rosa Palacio, who heads Barcelona Court of Instruction No. 2, has summoned Félix Vicente Azón and María Gámez as suspects. Azón led the Civil Guard from 2018 to 2020, while Gámez served from 2020 to 2023. The judge is examining potential crimes related to the disclosure of computer secrets and illegal access to computer systems.

The case stems from a complaint filed by five technolo-



gy-sector businessmen who claim they were targeted without legal authorization through the installation of surveillance software on their devices. One of the complainants is businessman

and former Junts senator Joan Matamala, who is represented by the international group Sentinel Alliance.

Alongside the two former Civil

Guard chiefs, the judge has also charged former CNI director Paz Esteban, who is already facing multiple accusations in separate proceedings tied to Pegasus and other digital spying systems.

In another unprecedented step for Spain, the investigation also includes executives from Israeli firms linked to the spyware tools at the centre of the case. These include NSO Group, the developer of Pegasus, and Saito Tech Ltd, associated with the Candiru spyware allegedly used in the operations under scrutiny.

The Pegasus scandal became a national issue after reports revealed the use of advanced spyware to monitor pro-independence leaders and other individuals, allegedly without proper judicial authorization. The revelations triggered intense political and legal controversy and ultimately led to Esteban’s dismissal as head of the CNI in 2022.

With the complaint now accepted and senior Civil Guard officials formally under investigation, the case is entering a new phase – opening additional lines of inquiry into possible responsibility for the misuse of digital surveillance technology.

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