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ISSUE 77
APRIL 2023

FREE

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Town**

Blanca

**North
Town**

Campoamor

Top 10

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**Wine
Article**

Let's Talk Wine



Image by Quality homes, see ad on page 46

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A Life in SPAIN

Welcome to the April edition of ALIS.

Winters finally over and we are heading for summer. Swimming pools are being prepared and BBQ's cleaned. Vamos A La Playa

The region of Murcia seems to be on the up. Does this mark an end to the last few years of builders and other companies going into receivership?

This month we have an article on the incredible changes being put forward for Condado De Alhama. From new homes to football pitches. See pages 43-47 for more details

We then have the take over and re-opening of the hotel in Hacienda Del Alamo. A Life In Spain magazine was invited along to the opening party. See page 22

Could this mean a revival of other urbanisations in the area, or maybe the whole of Spain?

Enjoy!

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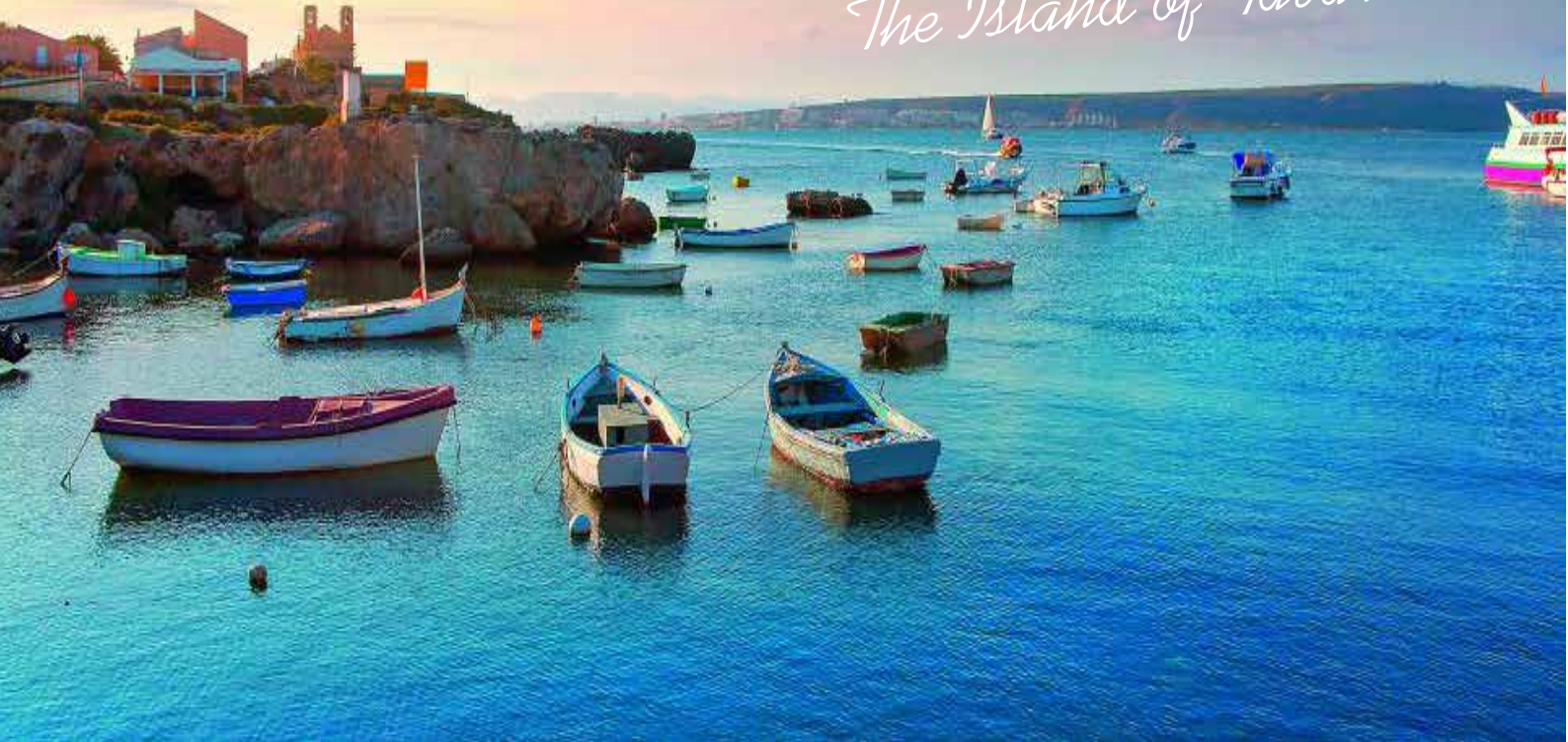
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Places to visit in a day:

The Island of Tabarca



TAKE A DAY TRIP TO the gorgeous Island of Tabarca, one of the Costa Blanca's top tourist attractions and summer destinations.

The historic Island of Tabarca is a 40 minute boat trip from Torrevieja and after the cosmopolitan and vibrant modern ambiance of Torrevieja city, you will feel like you have stepped back in time. Enjoy your journey over to the island from Torrevieja's port on a glass bottomed boat allowing you to view the amazing creatures and fauna of the Mediterranean Sea.

In 1986 the Island of Tabarca and the surrounding inshore seawater's were declared a protected marina and bird reserve, the first of it's kind in Spain.

Just 4km's away from Santa Pola's bleached white sandy beaches, the Island of Tabarca has an interesting history which is today reflected in the historic and weathered architecture.

During the 18th century the island became a refuge for Barbary pirates until the Spanish king, King Charles III, decreed the fortification of Tabarca to protect against the pirates. The remains of the wall and the fortress are still visible, and they are one of the first sights you will see as you arrive at the island.

The Costa Blanca's favourite island destination

In the heat of a Spanish summer the milder climate of Tabarca will be a welcome relief for the day. The island is renowned for it's fabulous clear waters, the sandy beaches, and it's coves and cliffs which

surround the island. You will definitely need to remember to pack your swimwear, as Tabarca is perfect for watersports, snorkelling, and swimming in the beautiful clear Mediterranean seawater.

The village, which occupies the western-most tip of the island, is laid out in a square pattern, with narrow streets lined with old fishing houses. Take a visit to the lighthouse, observe the many rare species of birds which live on the Island of Tabarca, and look at the amazing natural panoramic views on offer.

Find the historic buildings: the Baroque church of St Peter and Paul, the Casa del Gobernador (the old Governor's house), and explore the old fort and gate houses. The museum is well worth a visit.

Whilst wandering around the village stop at one of the many Barbary pirate-themed cafes, bars and restaurants to sample the traditional Spanish seafood on offer.



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Let's Learn Spanish

Butcher

Phrases

How can I help you?

Who's next?

I'd like one kilo of sausages, please?

How much does this weigh?

¿Algo más?

Give me half a kilo.

How much is this?

¿Qué desea?

¿El siguiente?

Quería un kilo de salchichas por favor.

¿Esto, cuánto pesa?

Anything else.

Ponme medio kilo.

¿Esto, cuánto es?

Kay day-**say**-ah?

El See-**guin**-tea

Key-**er**-oh oon **key**-lo day sal-**chee**-chas,

Ess-toe, **kwan**-toe **pes**-sah

Al-go mahs

Pohn-me **mey**-dee-oh **key**-lo

Ess-toe **kwan**-toe **ess**

Vocab

Albóndigas

Hamburguesa

Salchicha

Chuletas

Pechuga de pollo

Pollo

Ternera

Cerdo

Cordero

Carne picada

Fiambre

Deshuesado

Cabrito

Jamón

Hígado

Bistéc

Lechón

Pavo

Meatballs

Burger

Sausage

Chops

Chicken Breast

Chicken

Beef

Pork

Lamb

Minced meat

Cold meat

Boneless

Goat

Ham

Liver

steak

Suckling pig

Turkey

Al-**bon**-dee-gas

Am-boor-**gay**-sah

Sal-**chee**-cha

Chew-**lay**-tas

pey-**chew**-gaday **po**-yo

Poy-yo

Tear-**nay**-ra

Ther-doh

cor-**dare**-ro

Car-nay pea-**ca**-dah

Fee-**am**-brey

Des-wey-**sa**-doh

Ca-**bree**-toh

Ha-**mon**

Ee-ga-doe

Bis-**tec**

Lay-**chon**

Pav-oh



Now try our wordsearch:

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

Albondigas

Pavo

Higado

Fiambre

Pollo

Ternera

Chuletas

Salchicha

Bistec

Cordero



Mazarron Country Club.ref. 2010. 3bed 2bath detached villa, 96m2 build, 300m2 plot, mountain views, private pool, off road parking **189,950€**



Isla Plana. ref. 1992. 2 bed, 2 bath apartment, 73m2 build, sea views, walk to beach. **179,000€**



Puerto de Mazarron.ref. 2014. 2 bed 2 bath terraced house, great location, walk to beach and all amenities, **120,000€**

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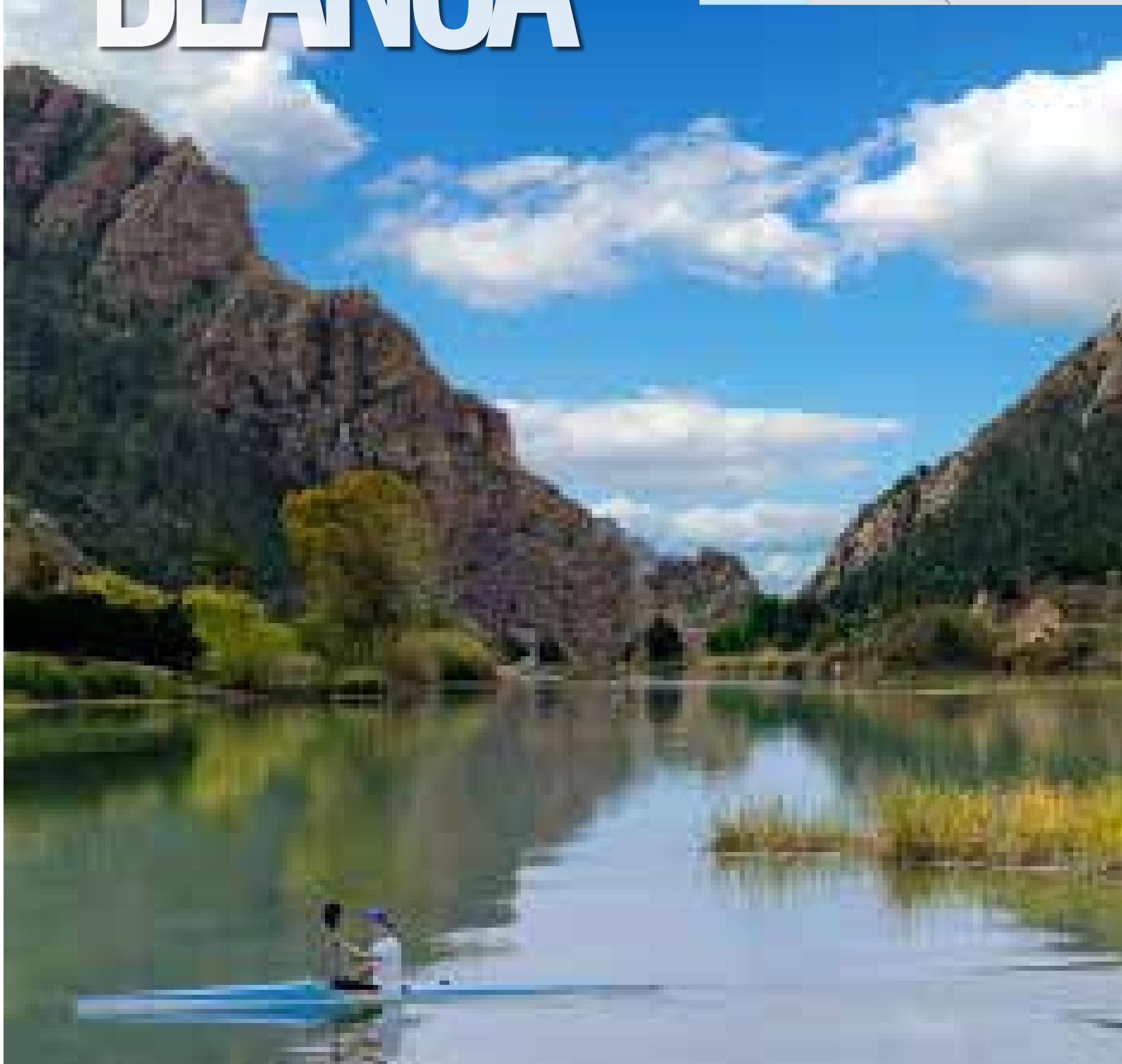
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South Town...

BLANCA



Right in the heart of the Ricote Valley, on the banks of the River Segura, lies Blanca, known to our ancestors as La Negra or “The Black”, due to the colour of the mountain where it lies.

The castle which reigns over the town was built by the Moslems in the twelfth century; before it lies the valley in all its splendour. It can be reached by setting out from the old quarter where the traveller can get to know the ancient medieval layout of the town and, at the same time, the warmth of its people.

Outstanding among its buildings are the Church of St. John the Evangelist, from the sixteenth century; the Hermitage of Saint Roque with its Baroque style; the Favorita ("Favourite") House, built in an eclectic style during the nineteenth century; the Count's house, a faithful example of nineteenth century neoclassicism, now turned into the Hostería Conde de la Vallesa; and last, but not least, the Victoria Theatre, which has recently reopened its doors after a period of restoration.

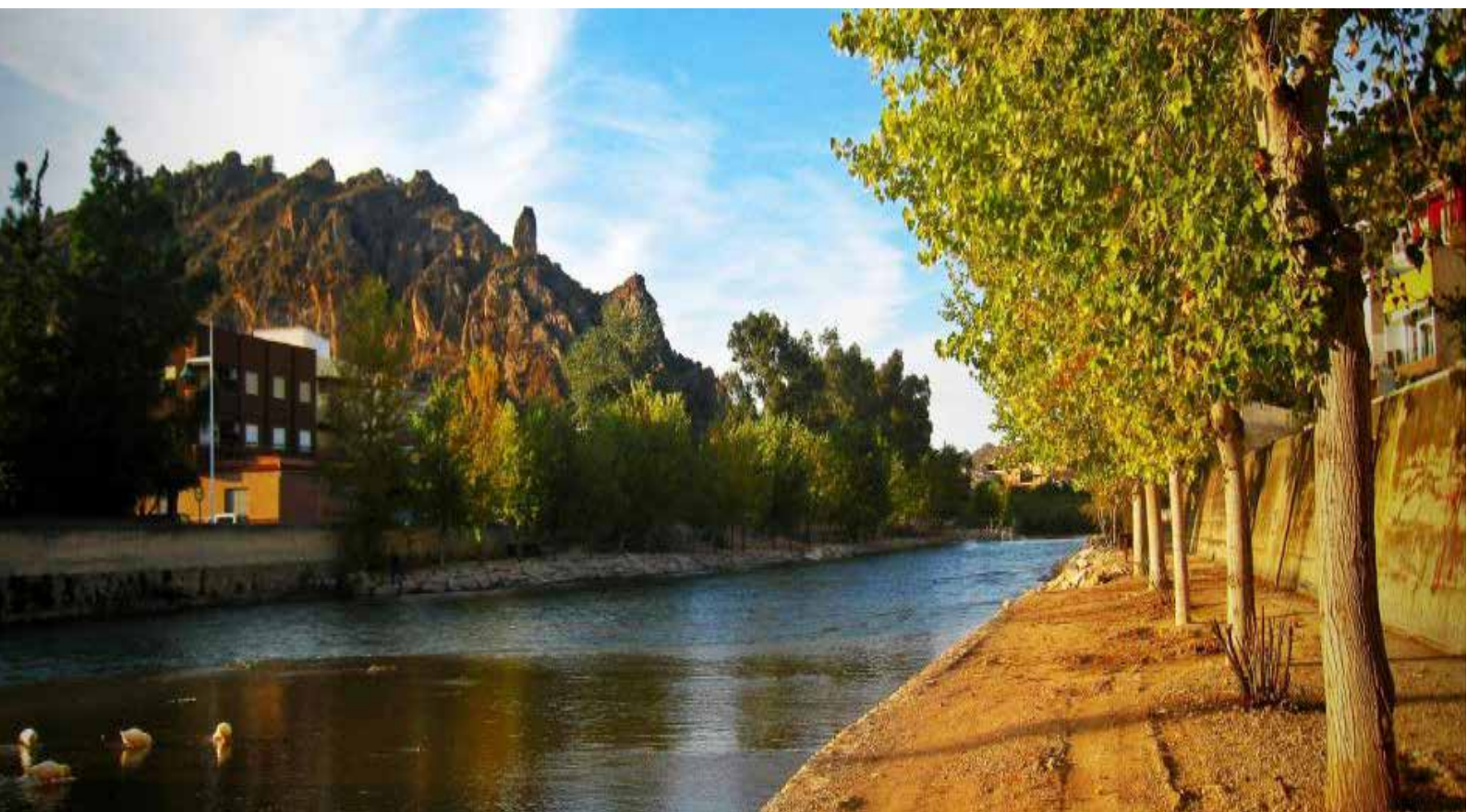
The Fundación Pedro Cano

Pedro Cano Foundation is a must: its location is great, since it is in an extraordinary building on the bank of the River Segura; it houses some of the best works of Pedro Cano, the artist from Blanca. In addition, it has temporary exhibition rooms,

workshop rooms, a library and an auditorium. The Centro de Interpretación de la Luz y el Agua is also very interesting for the visitor, since it shows the ways of exploitation of water through history in this locality.

Blanca, where natural beauty and historical tradition meet to offer the traveller the chance to enjoy an adventurous type of tourism which includes a descent of the River Segura, hiking and pony trekking among others.

'Source: murciaturistica.es'



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The village of Daya Nueva is small enough to easily get to know people, but also large enough to maintain your privacy. There is a well-balanced and harmonious Spanish/Expat mix making up the resident population, a harmony clearly demonstrated during the annual Fiestas.

The village has all that you need, including a supermarket, several shops, butcher, bank, hairdresser, doctor, chemist, church, school, garage, bars, restaurants, bodega and social centre. It's extremely easy to get around, as everything is on the level. There is little traffic, so many locals use the bicycles to get around, all at a very leisurely pace!

The nearest large town Almoradì, only 2 kilometres away with several major supermarkets, lots of shops and a huge Saturday market selling pretty much everything, including fresh locally grown produce.

There is a fantastic road and motorway network on our doorstep. A 10 minutes' drive will take you to the outstanding beaches of Guardamar, or to the

heritage city of Elche. 35 minutes to the airports of Alicante and Murcia, and 40 minutes to the cities of Alicante, Cartagena and Murcia.

In close proximity, there are three excellent golf courses, and several others in the area, as well as horse riding, cycling, bowling, paragliding, coarse fishing and all forms of sporting activities connected with the sea. Many different social clubs and activities going on in the village, should you wish to become involved, or just chill out, relax and enjoy the big blue skies and a tranquil village life.



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All you need to know about Drones

Let's start with the basics. In case you don't know, a drone is the common way of referring to an unmanned aerial vehicle, or in other words, a type of vehicle that's usually piloted by remote control or with a device such as a mobile phone or tablet.

Through this, they are able to maintain autonomous, controlled and sustainable flight, powered by an engine.

Current drone regulations in Spain

Despite the great potential of drones in Spain, it's important to comply with current legal regulations to avoid committing an offence. The fundamental aspects to bear in mind are:

- A flight licence is not required for basic drones used for recreational purposes. However, if they're used professionally, a certified licence is required.
- This certification must be obtained through an intensive course of a specific duration, depending on the specialisation being covered, and be certified by AESA (the Spanish Aviation Safety and Security Agency).
- Drones can be flown in Spain in cities or rural areas, day or night, but are subject to conditions such as weight and height, visual range, safe distances, airspace control, flight conditions, etc.

- You should be aware of which flight zones are permitted, as there are areas that may be subject to permits and bans.

- All drones must have a flame-retardant plate that can identify them.

You should also be aware that the regulations in each country may differ. So, if you're thinking about travelling with a drone, it's best to make sure beforehand that its use is permitted and that you can abide by the regulations that apply in each place.

What are the benefits for society?

This type of device has multiple features and benefits, not only for entertainment, but for society too.

Some of the most important are:

- Capturing high quality images and videos over known terrain, but especially over unexplored locations, allowing a thorough study of the areas. They can be used in a wide range of fields, such as

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the environment, urban areas, entertainment, etc.

- Saving lives and distributing supplies. Drones in Spain are capable of transporting emergency rescue supplies, as well as distributing medicines or basic supplies to people in need or who find themselves in difficult to access locations.
- Use in services related, for example, to infrastructure, civil works, roads or airports.

Types of drones

We know that drones in Spain and elsewhere are advanced flying devices, but there are different types of drones too. Broadly speaking, they can be classified as follows:

- According to use: for military, civilian, commercial purposes, etc.
- According to wing type: rotating (the most common type) or fixed.
- According to their medium: air, land or sea.
- According to the way they're controlled: autonomous, remote-controlled or monitored.
- Other factors: by their features (with or without camera...), size and weight, etc.

As you can see, flying drones in Spain is something that anyone can do, although sound advanced knowledge is required for professional use. Do you think they'll be a key part of our society in the future? Use them to rediscover the world!

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Architects are too expensive!!



This is a common fallacy heard too often not only among the expats but also among the Spaniards.

To start with, a firm of experienced architects are able to anticipate to any planning or construction problem before it occurs and will advise you well ahead of time saving you headaches and money.

Apart from good design architects have an overall picture of the project without losing sight of the nitty-gritty parts. We architects can save you much more money than the cost of our fees. Find below just a few examples which could be easily amplified.

How can an architect save me real money?

If we consider a simple rehab job for a home, if it is the architects who collect the estimates from local contractors and not "Mr. Expat John Smith" most probably will save you at least 10% of the total price just on the offset. It shouldn't be so, but unfortunately local contractors feel that dealing with non-Spanish speaker clients would delay the works due to the lack of communication and cause possible confusions during the execution of the job. With an architect involved the contractor feels reassured that all the relevant construction info is available from the offset and most important, the main decisions about the works have been taken well in advance avoiding unforeseen circumstances and expensive delays difficult to charge the client once the work has started.

In our long experience when any of our clients have tried to obtain different bids from local contractors and then we have followed exactly the same procedure our prices have been at least 10% cheaper and in some cases much more.

A firm of architects worth their salt has big data banks of building materials and labour prices around Spain divided by provinces and locally by individual towns, so any tender prices from contractors can be scrutinized by our staff and renegotiated down to a standard level. On the other extreme we can detect

when prices obtained are so ridiculously cheap that will represent a future problem.

When architects prepare a bid it does so by presenting a full bill of quantities so that all tenders received are based on exactly the same materials and labour so that you can compare like with like. Most often contractors prepare their own specifications and materials and it is terribly difficult for a non-expert to differentiate the disparity in prices and in quality.

When clients are told that they can obtain big discounts on materials, sometimes as much as 30% etc they think that with those savings they have made a good deal and by subcontracting the labour direct no one will do it cheaper. First, think if the building store will do that reduction in price to the one-off client that most probably will never see again, what discount will give to a local contractor who has been buying materials for the last 10 years and probably will continue doing so for the next 20!!.

Most expats have had construction works done by contracting directly without the supervision of an architect, and when I have asked them about the time they have spent supervising and managing the job and asked them to put a price on the hours spent, they become very surprised concerning the total amount of money that they could have saved by engaging an architect. And here I am not talking about the hustle and problems encountered in the development of the works.

Paper works. Yes, I personally spend 60% of my working time "lobbying" and managing building licenses, planning approval etc, and I know by their Christian names practically all the civil servants of all the town halls in Costa Blanca and Costa Cálida. After 25 years of professional practice even I have to arm myself with patience and breathe ten times before I answer back (usually young technicians) at the town hall who do not know their jobs and pretend that my clients carry out absurd construction solutions.



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Let me quickly add here that the majority of civil servants (especially those who have been at the post for a number of years) are very helpful and try to provide fair solutions for both parties, the town hall and the citizen involved. However inexperienced town hall technicians may propose very expensive solutions that may be counter argued and thus making great savings.

There are many other ways which due to the limitation of this article I cannot extend on. There is in addition one more important factor; an architect can make the process of designing your home from zero, adding an extension or rehabilitating it in an enjoyable process. Now days we use very sophisticated software and it is very rewarding to see in 3D how your ideas take shape in front of your very own eyes or you can have a walk about through future spaces becoming aware of perhaps unexpected problems that by visualizing before it is constructed may also save you money.

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Hacienda Del Alamo - Hotel opening

Ona Hotels & Apartments presents its new resort in Fuente Álamo (Murcia). ALIS representatives were officially invited and attended this prestigious opening

The new four-star category establishment was born with the aim of becoming a destination for sports and well-being.

The inauguration was attended by Juana María Martínez, mayoress of Fuente Álamo, José Antonio Oliver, deputy mayor of the municipality, and M^a del Mar Martínez, director of Tourism Promotion for the Region of Murcia.

Fuente Álamo (Murcia), March 31, 2023.- With the hope of contributing to promoting the Costa Cálida as a tourist destination and revitalizing the local economy, the new Ona Hacienda del Álamo hotel was officially opened, in Fuente Álamo (Murcia). The inauguration was a success with the attendance and was also attended by local authorities, representatives of companies in the area and the media.




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12 Tapas bars in Murcia

Murcia was the Spanish Gastronomic Capital 2020. A good reason to visit. Although you don't need excuses to get out of tapas. The bars of Murcia are famous for their bars full of tapas and for the quality of the raw materials: vegetables from the garden, fish and seafood from Cartagena and Mazarrón, wines from Jumilla, Yecla or Bullas, Mar Menor... Here are 12 of the best tapas bars in Murcia to give you that epicurean pleasure of eating standing whilst talking with some good friends.

La Parranda

(plaza de San Juan, 7)

Of the many taverns in Murcian style, this one in St. John's Square is one of my two favorites.

Careful service and raw materials of the first quality since 1975, with a bar full of viandas that gives joy to see it.

La Pequeña tavern

(General Margallo, s/n)

This is my other favorite tavern, adjoining La Parranda, in the surroundings of the Plaza de San Juan, the perfect place for dinner time.

The sources of vegetables that it tends to have exposed - in addition to being a visual pleasure - would open the appetite to the most inapetent.





El pasaje de Zabalburu (plaza de San Pedro, 3)

Another of the new bars that has renewed the Murcian recipe.

It's nice to stand at the bar and to look at the great variety of tapas available. They even have Iranian caviar Beluga. A guaranteed success.

Los Zagales (Polo de Medina, 4)

A historic tavern run by the same family since 1926 that keeps the traditional Huertano tapas in a bar always full of good food and people, because at peak times it is difficult to catch a table.

Essentials: french cheese, salads and octopus. Café Bar Gran Vía (Gran Vía Alfonso X el Sabio, 1) store.



La Tapa (plaza de las Flores,13)

The classic among the classics of the Plaza de Las Flores, the perfect place for the noon snack.

A bar that was always able to be reconverted and modernized.

Gran Rhin (plaza de San Pedro, 5)

A popular historical bar that was also among the first to be popularised.

It is in St. Peter's Square and is distinguished by the quality of the raw material: red shrimp from Denia or Santa Pola, Galician oysters, mullet saltings and a scandal-baked octopus.

El Sabio, A kiosk (Gran Vía Alfonso X)

Probably the best seafood in the area.

A must visit, narrow and uncomfortable, yes, but where the concept of midday aperitif is sublimated. You're nobody in town if you don't stop by once in a while.



La tienda de Susano (plaza de la Cruz, s/n)

Located in an emblematic place, just in front of one of the facades of the cathedral.

It has a super nice terrace at any time of the day, The best anchovies in town.



La barra del Salzillo (Cánovas del Castillo, 28)

As the name suggests, it's the bar of the Salzillo restaurant, where you can have a exquisite ham, pochado eggs or a boiled pickle thats to die for.

Innovation cuisine with excellent raw materials.



La tapeoteca (plaza de los Apóstoles, 16)

Alternative and modern tapas with one of the most extensive and original menus in the city.

The evolution of the Huertano tapa is one of the essential places of the new Murcian cuisine.



Hispana

(Radio Murcia, 2)

The new generation of the Abellán family renovated one of the most classic Murcian restaurants ever. Raised by the parents, to create a modern bar where the raw material is pampered.

Be sure to order cod orly, tuna sashimi or mini burgers.

La Bien Paga

One of those bars of new baking that has managed to maintain the tradition of Orchard and the essence of the raw material, but modernising the recipe.

Market cuisine and incredible winery, with great variety in addition to vermús. My favorite: tomato salad with salted cod.



LA TOMATINA (tomato festival)

La Tomatina or tomato fight in Buñol near Valencia happens every year on the last Wednesday in August, though the partying starts earlier in the week. The highlight of the festival is the tomato fight which takes place between 11am and 1pm on that day. The event has become one of the highlights on Spain's summer festivals calendar with thousands of people flocking to this little Valencian town for this chaotic event.

Such are the numbers going to La Tomatina that the event has become a victim of its own success. The sheer number of people means that it's extremely difficult to get anywhere near the central area where the tomato lorries arrive so you may well find yourself a few streets away from the main action. Never mind, there are plenty of people in the same boat and the street partying goes on no matter where you are.

History of La Tomatina

The origins of La Tomatina aren't clear with several theories explaining how Bunyol has become home to the world's biggest tomato fight. However, the most plausible suggests that the most likely explanation dates back to 1945 when an annual parade of enormous figures with big heads (Gigantes y Cabezudos) was passing through the streets of Bunyol. It seems that some youngsters tried to join in the parade and accidentally knocked over one of the giants who got to his feet and started swinging out at everyone around him. In retaliation the youngsters grabbed some tomatoes from a nearby vegetable stall and started throwing them at him until the police arrived to break things up.

The following year on the same last Wednesday of August these young people returned to the town hall square and started another tomato fight using their own tomatoes. Again the police intervened and in subsequent years the local council tried to ban the 'El Día de la Tomatina' but with little success as the event continued to grow year after year reaching the ludicrous size it is today.

Practical Information

Getting There ... Most young visitors book cheap accommodation in Valencia then take the train to Bunyol for the day. On the morning of the festival there are trains from Valencia Central Station, which is about 40km away, at eight minutes past the hour (check at www.renfe.es just in case this has changed). There is no need to book tickets in advance and the journey takes 50 minutes. The actual tomato fight lasts little over an hour beginning at midday and continuing until shortly after 1pm. Get there early, the earlier the better as the trains do get full. Alternatively, you can arrive by local bus or car though this might not be a great idea considering the mess you're likely to be in after the tomato battle.

Tomatina Tickets

Until a few years ago the numbers visiting the Tomatina festival were large but manageable. However, in recent times the event has become a victim of its own success with upwards of 50,000 people trying to cram themselves into this small Valencian town which has inevitably caused security concerns. As a result the town council of Bunyol have been forced to limit numbers by issuing tickets to those wishing to take part. Tickets cost €10 each and can be reserved and printed out on the Bunyol Town Council website. Alternatively, you can book an organised tour to La Tomatina with numerous companies who will include tickets in their package.

Rules of La Tomatina

In spite of the mayhem there actually are a few rules and regulations that need to be adhered to during La Tomatina in order to ensure that the maximum number of people get the maximum enjoyment from the day. These rules are set out by the Bunyol Town Council:

Courtesy of Spanish-fiestas.com



Pandemic theme: PHYLLOXERA

First of all, it is necessary to explain what phylloxera is. The bug in question is an insect similar in size and "aesthetics" to the ugly aphid and somewhat smaller than it, being its deep yellow color. Its objective, basically - perhaps it is in love with the plant or likes the underground flavours - is to attack leaves and filaments of the roots of the vine in addition of a very quick proliferation, as if it was a locusts plague. It means that they can destroy large areas of vineyards in a very short time. This term -phylloxera- also refers to the disease of the vine caused by these voracious animals of nature. It comes from North America, naturally XD

This bug likes to eat the roots of the native European vines, killing them in a short time. But in the American vine the insect eats the dust! There, the vines are more resistant to this whipper snapper, because american vines are made of harder wood. It is necessary to explain that the American vine is different from the European one in substance and form, in fact, the american vine was not even useful for decoration. It didn't work to make wine, it's that simple. Its fruits do not have the capacity to be vinified. In the European case, the vine belongs to the *Vitis Vinifera* species, while the American vines come from another species, *Vitis Labrusca*.

A historical plague

This plague appears in the history discreetly around 1860 and its geographical origin first dates from its activity in the agriculture of the eastern United States, entering Europe around 1863 with an innocent shipment of plants imported from that country. As soon as it touched solid ground - that seemed to be the landing of Normandy - it left the ancient and proud French vineyards in a catatonic state.

The appearance of the phylloxera plague brutally changed world viticulture. For Europe it was a catastrophe to see how in 10 years its old vineyards were devastated and the wine areas, ruined with the consequent unmitigated social disaster. It was literally an Armageddon for the sector, for the entrepreneurs and the lives of the farmers who grow vines.

The consequences of the disease lead to an infection of the vine by phylloxera and cause its death in just under three years. As if that were not enough, it generates serious damage in roots and foliage, acting literally as if it were an atomic bomb due to its devastating effects, and this, without any exaggeration. Thanks to carrying North American grafts, that were obviously resistant to phylloxera, the strains of the european vines were made. Consequently, the part of the plant that is underground is North American vine, and on it, the graft resides and *Vitis Vinifera* survives.

The ruin of the French vineyard, started in the 1860s, but it had as a consequence the exponential exports growth of Spanish wines and the significant increase of the Spanish vineyard. But we also got this biblical plague. Around the 1878 year, this bug arrived to our country. By Portugal through Duero river and also from the north, by Gerona, an insect wave came from our Gallic neighbour.

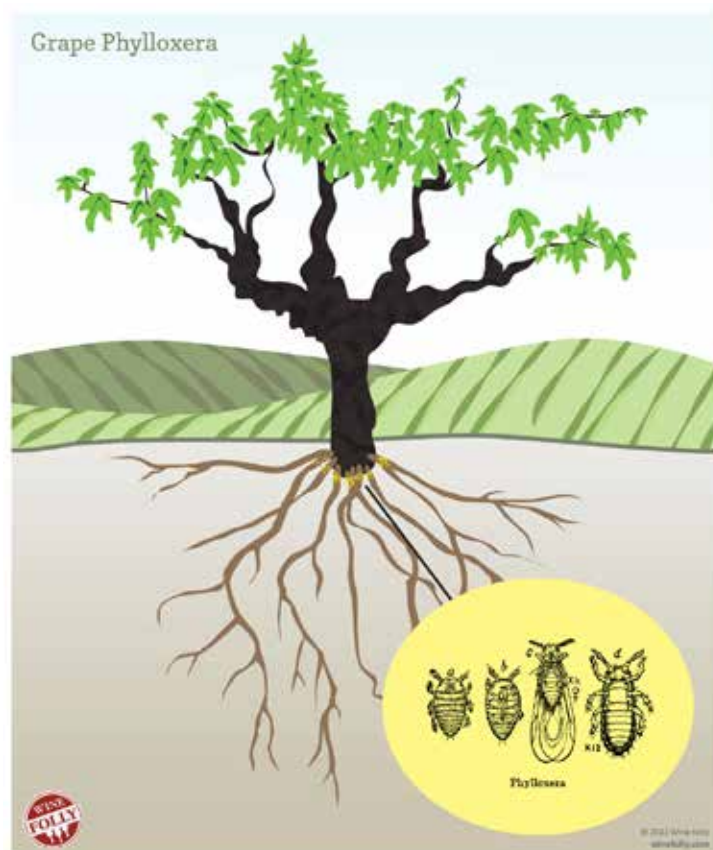
In Spain

The spread of the disease progressed slowly, with Jumilla, La Mancha, La Rioja and Cariñena severely affected. This invasion began to subside towards the end of 1930, having caused damage for nearly 50 years that turned the word "important" into a minimalist concept. The surface of the Spanish vineyard and its wine making changed radically forever, from being an almost primary and manual activity to an emerging and effective industrialization process.

Perhaps the most beneficial effect of the plague was the one derived from supplying wine to the French market. A trade agreement was signed with the French country, a fact that triggered exports. Without going any further, in La Rioja, French merchants built a train station in Haro to transport "the goods" to France smoothly and reducing costs.

The Solution?

The practically entire renovation of the vineyards provided varieties such as Garnacha and Palomino, the production methods underwent modifications for the better. Technology was invested and designed and a solid commercial structure was created throughout the value chain, projecting Spanish wines to the international market with presence and solvency and conquering markets previously dominated by the French and their glamorous marketing. This leads us to conclude that this fearful destruction brought progress and an unforeseen international relaunch.



Wine of the month

Cárabo Black Label 2019

Grape variety: Tempranillo, Viura & Mazuelo. DOCa Rioja

“Cárabo” is a kind of small owl which normally lives close to the vineyards in the North Rioja area. It is also the “vine protector” because it eats all the flies and plagues in the vineyards during harvest season. Because of it all grapes are perfectly ripe and in good health at this time. Nice job Cárabo!

This is a single vineyard wine, numbered edition from a state in “La Guardia” city. An idyllic place in Rioja where old vineyards like this one make exceptional wines. The 3 grape varieties, mostly Tempranillo, are a perfect assembly to make this “crianza” wine. 12 months ageing in French oak barrels make the aromas of the fruits influenced by the mountains and the Ebro valley fit perfectly.

Tasting: Visual phase: It has a bright ruby colour, with purple reflections. Olfactory phase: Aromas are mostly fresh red fruits like strawberries and raspberry, with fresh herbal notes like laurel and other beautiful smells like licorice. Because of the barrel ageing you can also appreciate some pepper, butter, smoky and oaky subtle notes.

Gustatory phase: It is a fresh and dry red wine, with medium body and gentle ending. It can delight an afternoon with friends or an informal dinner.

You can find and buy this wine in LA DILIGENTE.

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North Town...



CAMPOAMOR

Campoamor is an excellent location for people who want to appreciate an element of real Spanish culture. The stunning scenery, green woodland and beautiful beaches make Campoamor one of the most popular areas on the Costa Blanca.

CAMPOAMOR

Located south of Alicante off the A-7 on the way down towards the Mar Menor; the nearest large city is Torrevieja, at 6 km away, 25 minutes drive will get you to the Airport at Corvera and 40 minutes to the international airport of Alicante.

Beaches

The beautiful blue flag beach Playa Dehesa is just 5 minutes walk away and is still a relatively undiscovered stretch of sand. With its many amenities: showers, volleyball, climbing frame, football, bars and restaurants, families can enjoy a full day out on this lovely, safe and clean beach, which also has a first aid post with lifeguard.

Puerto Deportivo

The marina at the southern end of the Playa Dehesa is where you can practice water sports.

Horse Riding

For those who enjoy equestrian pursuits there is a riding school in Campoamor.

Golf

The local golf club, Real Club de Campoamor is an 18-hole championship golf course. The golf course is located on the road between Alicante and Cartagena (km 48) and is built on a large area in beautiful surroundings. As a visitor, an advanced booking is recommended, plus proof of handicap is necessary.

Situated in two valleys and surrounded by small hills that protect it from the wind, the course enjoys a special micro-climate that makes it possible to practice golf at any time of year.

The wonderful Restaurant and Coffee Shop Golf Campoamor offers a delicious, high quality Mediterranean menu. From its two large terraces you can enjoy panoramic views across the golf course and across the Costa Blanca.

Cuisine

The local cuisine in Campoamor is typically that of the Costa Blanca, which combines delicacies from both land and the Mediterranean Sea. Many civilizations have lived in this area (Celts, Iberians, Greeks, Romans, Muslims), all of which have all left their mark on the gastronomy.

The diet is a typically, healthy Mediterranean one; the Costa Blanca is rich in fish, vegetables, olive-oil, rice and fruit and the ingredients which are all used to prepare delicious, healthy dishes, such as Paella Valenciana, Arroz Negro (black rice), Arroz al horno (Oven baked rice), Arroz a banda (fish and rice stew), Arroz del Señoret (Princes rice).

If you have a sweet tooth then you will enjoy the local homemade pastries and deserts that the area is famous for. Or Jijona ice-cream (Nougat), which is made with the almonds of the region.

While on the Costa Blanca you can delight the palate with the wonderful regional wine selection. It's worth giving a special mention to the local wine 'Jalon', due to its quality and bouquet.

There are many international restaurants close by offering a wide choice of different cuisines from around the world.

Climate

Campoamor enjoys a typical Mediterranean climate, with cool sea breezes in summer and protection by surrounding mountains against the cold North winds in winter. The area averages nearly 3,000 hours of sunshine each year and the average temperature easily exceeds 20 degrees.

In 1986 the World Health Organisation recommended the climate of the area as one of the most equitable in the world - neither too hot in the summer nor too cold in the winter. On average it can boast 325 sunny days each year making it an ideal all year round destination





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CAA1378

A beautifully presented Extended Neptuno Deluxe Style Villa, on 783m2 plot, walking distance to amenities, 3 bed, 3 bath, extended lounge, glazed terrace, private 10x5 heated pool, games room, oil central heating, dual A.C, summer kitchen, roof top solarium, stunning views. Being sold part furnished.



CAC1296

Beautifully presented Rosa Style Villa, 460m2 corner plot, 2 bed, 2.5 bath, gated entrances, off road parking, car port, part glazed terrace, private pool 8x3, oil central heating, ceiling fans, modern kitchen, under build, walking distance to golf club, low maintenance garden, solarium, amazing views. Being sold part furnished.



21st March

Close together, far from home

The Ocean Race is still racing close together as they approach the most isolated place on the planet. The four IMOCAs charging towards Cape Horn are approaching Point Nemo on Tuesday.

Defined as the most isolated, remote place on earth, Point Nemo is a spot in south Pacific Ocean, 2,688 kilometres from the nearest land. In fact, the closest sign of civilisation is the International Space Station, orbiting just over 400 kilometres above the sailors.

But it is unlikely the crews on The Ocean Race are feeling lonely. To the contrary, the race is as close as one could imagine. After more than three weeks of racing, the spread from first to fourth is still just 10 miles on the race tracker leaderboard, but on Tuesday there is a new leader - Team Malizia.

"It's an historic day today," said skipper Boris Herrmann. "The battle of Point Nemo!! We can see all the boats here through our windows. They are just a few boatlengths away and we're all racing towards Point Nemo. It's amazing to be sailing so close to our friends!" The crew on long time leader Team Holcim-PRB has come to terms with how the vagaries of the weather has meant a lead of nearly 600 miles has disappeared.

22nd March

There is some excitement and tension in the air at the moment. The wind is picking up and so is the sea state, as the fleet is approaching increasing winds this afternoon. There is a strong depression centred almost 1000nm to their south which starts to move east and they have just started feeling the effects of this weather system.

We see at the moment that Malizia and the other three boats have been switching between first and fourth over the last two days, with Malizia and Holcim PRB holding the lead over this period for the longest time. However, Malizia is currently 18 nm behind Holcim PRB who seem to have a better setup in VMG downwind, likely Malizia is missing the C0 they damaged early on in the race. With the increasing wind and waves (where Maizia performs the best) it is likely that we will be able to catch up soon.

Rosalin Kuiper messaged to land saying: "I want the storm to come now, we can see it coming on the data and sometimes the anticipation is worse". Skipper Boris Herrmann added in his podcast End of Watch

The teams will likely all settle onto a starboard gybe by tomorrow morning (all time references in UTC). As the depression progresses, we will see Malizia start to sail in a stronger SW wind.

To follow the race...

Visit www.thecoceanrace.com



26th March

Final push for the Horn

The fleet should make Drake Passage and Cape Horn on Monday...

After 48 hours of building wind and seas, with gusts over 40 knots and waves approaching 7 metres, conditions are starting to moderate on Sunday with the IMOCA fleet turning south to squeeze between Cape Horn and the ice exclusion zone.

The wind is in the 18-22 knot range and the waves are 5 metres and decreasing. That's still plenty of motion on an IMOCA, making movement on board difficult, but slightly better than over the past day.

And there is now a good chance the passage of Cape Horn could be quite light and tricky in very changeable conditions.

No matter the conditions, and whether this is a first passage or a fifth or sixth, Cape Horn remains an iconic milestone in the career of a sailor.

As conditions moderate, there will be time to make the necessary repairs and plan the passage north to Itajaí, but first it's time to push to Cape Horn - an iconic milestone for each of The Ocean Race sailors.

31st March

The tension mounts as racing remains painfully close

Nobody can break free on final push towards a Sunday finish

Tension, exhaustion, and extreme emotional swings through elation and despair.

That's likely to be the mood on board Team Holcim-PRB and Team Malizia all the way to the finish now.

Despite racing hard for over 33 days and over 14,000 miles sailed over ground, neither Boris Herrmann's Malizia, nor Kevin Escoffier's Holcim-PRB crew have managed to find a winning advantage.

To the contrary, they are often sailing within plain sight of each other, and have been exchanging the lead back and forth over the past 48 hours.

"We can see them on the computer, but we can also just see them out the window," said a very tired Sam Goodchild, speaking about a Malizia team that is staying close like a shadow.

Top 10 Destinations in Southern Spain

6. Malaga

From the outside, this city has a subdued and modern shell. The historic, Gothic heart of town is another world completely. This is the birthplace of Picasso, and has a large collection of museums to enjoy. Those seeking older historic sites will enjoy the Roman theater, and Azcalba, the Moorish castle. The grand 11th Century Gibralfaro castle is a must-see for those who love lavish manors. Malaga is well-known for its tapas bars and has a reputation of being one of the tastiest cities in the region when it comes to this kind of cuisine.

Beyond its 16 sunny beaches, this Andalusian city on the shores of the Mediterranean has a fascinating cultural side. And the birthplace of Pablo Picasso has reinvented itself in recent year, inaugurating museums for all tastes.

If you take the combination of sea and culture and add a lively atmosphere, plenty of tapas served in its bars, fashionable neighbourhoods like Soho, areas such as the port that have been transformed to offer a more modern image, and monuments with centuries of history, the result is an exciting city everyone would want to discover. Because if everyone says that Malaga is prettier than ever then it must be true.

A journey in time

Malaga is a city full of historical spots such as the Alcazaba, one of the largest Moorish fortresses in Andalusia, or Gibralfaro Castle, which offers the best views over the city. At the foot of the castle there is a Roman theatre and an old town to stroll around. Its streets offer attractions such as the Atarazanas Market to have a vermouth, and monuments like the Cathedral, known as 'La Manquita' (one-armed), due to its unfinished right tower. You can't miss visiting its roof; a unique experience. Here in the city of Picasso, you can visit the excellent Picasso Museum in the centre, and the home where he was born.

But Malaga doesn't only live on its past. In recent years it has inaugurated the Carmen Thyssen Museum, the only Pompidou Centre outside France -its coloured cubes have become an icon- or the Saint Petersburg Russian Museum Collection

.But anyone looking for a more underground culture simply must visit the Centre for Contemporary Art, the urban art on the city's buildings or the alternative establishments in Soho.

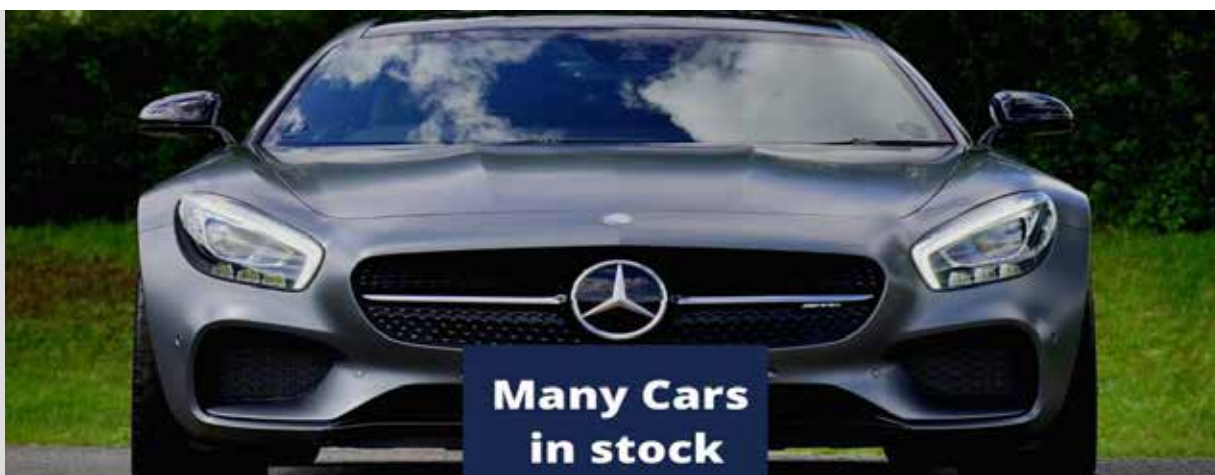
Essence of Malaga

Several things make Malaga a unique place. To start, beyond its monuments, a sunny day spent on the legendary La Malagueta urban beach is a must. Anyone who wants to delve into traditional flavours should visit the seaside neighbourhood of Pedregalejo and try the typical grilled sardines on skewers.

Back to La Malagueta, nearby you can find Muelle 1, a port promenade full of shops and restaurants that is perfect for a sunset stroll to La Farola, a lighthouse that is a symbol of the city.

Another emblem of Malaga? Without a doubt its pedestrian street Marqués de Larios, a busy thoroughfare decorated with flowers and which you must visit at least once on a trip to Malaga. At night, this area and its nearby streets become the perfect spot for tapas at establishments that have become an institution, such as Bodega El Pimpi; and for trying the ajoblanco chilled garlic soup.

Malaga is also known for its Film Festival, its Holy Week, its innovative restaurants... But above all, Malaga is joy. And it's catching.



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Spanish Walks

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The Purgatorio path

This walk goes first through the rugged Barranco de Enmedio and then into a more open landscape with some country houses surrounded by almond and olive groves. The area where you literally go over an old irrigation canal offers beautiful views of the plain of Totana and Aledo. Through a beautiful forest path you arrive at the recreational zone of Alquerias and then start a steep climb with beautiful views of the Sierra Espuna.

The route starts at the Mirador del Collado del Pilon and goes through a connecting link to the valley of Enmedio. You descend into the valley and eventually end up in a more open landscape where some houses are surrounded by almond and olive groves. From here you go on a paved road to the Finca Caruana. A short climb to an old irrigation canal starts at the Finca. You literally walk on the canal and get beautiful views on the plains of Totana and Aledo. At an old aqueduct you follow a beautiful forest path in the direction of the recreation area of Alquerias. Here is a strong climb to reach the Collado del Pilon via the Senda del Lentisco.

Courtesy of www.trailexplorer.eu

Distance: 12 km

Duration: 3.30 h

Grade: Moderate

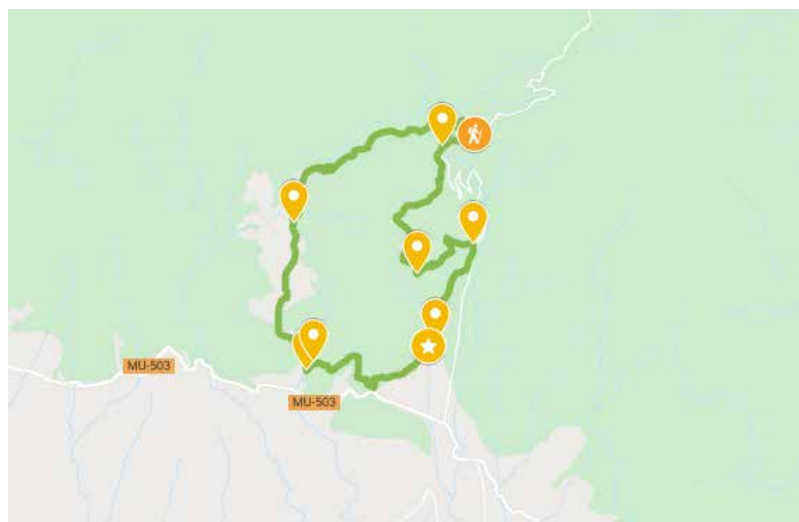
Type: Circular

Height gain: 353 meters

Way mark: PR-MU 62.1 - PR-MU 62 en PR-MU 61: White-Yellow dash

Wheelchair: Not suitable

Dog: Allowed on a lead





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Taquilla Tickets for March and April

By **Taquilla Tickets**

Hello everybody and welcome to the March article in the popular "A Life In Spain" magazine. So, where are we going in March and April?

Here we go: On the 24th, 25th, and 26th of March we are off to see the brilliant Robbie Williams in concert in beautiful Barcelona. We will be travelling by coach on the 24th with Mateo Coaches (we use nobody else). On the evening of the 25th, we will transport you to the Palau Sant Jordi Sporting Arena (and bring you back, of course) to see "Our Robbie". Mr Entertainer will be singing your favourite songs such as Angels, Back for Good, Love My Life, Rock DJ, and more. You can be a part of this experience. Tickets are selling fast. We can't guarantee a ticket, but we can try for you.

Next on our list is the visit to Lorca on the 2nd of April for "Semana Santa" (Easter). It is so hard to describe the events of this day. Easter Week is a huge event that covers the whole of Spain. On Sunday the 2nd the streets will be filled with Roman Soldiers and Roman Gods on huge platforms. You will see Egyptian Troops and Roman Chariots racing down the streets. So exciting!!!!

Easter Week is taken up with parades by the Local Religious Brotherhood Groups, and these are spectacular too. This all culminates with what is a magnificent spectacle of colour, intricate artwork on the platforms, and of course the thousands of people who take part. It is spectacular!! So, come and join us.

On Wednesday the 5th of April, we are going to the really lovely town of Mula. This lovely town is situated approximately one hour from Condado de Alhama. Every single year on this day "The Night Of The Drums" (Noche de la Tambores) is celebrated. "You can feel your skin vibrate", and "You can feel the passion of the drummers". Just two of many comments made about this parade.

The origin of the "Tamborada" (Drum Parade) is uncertain. However, it first appeared around the middle of the 19th century. The playing of the drums was banned, but the previous participants decided to argue this. So much so, that the parades continued to be held, and are now a regulated, yearly spectacle. The quality of those first drums was not very good, but the manufacturers were not looking for a perfect sound. The evolution of the tradition led to a search for improvements in the pieces and thus in the drums, resulting in the magnificent instruments that are currently manufactured. If you fancy something different, then this is it!!

We have our beach buses running again on the 7th and 8th of April and, on Sunday the 9th of April, we are off to Benidorm and the market. This is another very popular day out.

We will continue with our Beach Buses on the 14th and 15th of April, also on the 15th, we have what is probably the most bizarre parade happening in Murcia. It may be bizarre but it is spectacular. What are we talking about? "The Burial of the Sardine" of course! Never heard of it? Neither had we until a few years ago. Now we visit every year. This is a pagan festival where mythology and fire are mixed.

The carnival atmosphere is so intense and is visited by tens of thousands of people throughout Murcia. Music, Dragons and fire are on display here, and we would love you to join us to be a part of this breathtaking parade.

On Sunday the 16th of April we will be transporting you to the "Benidorm Palace" to see a tribute band celebrating the music of "Bon Jovi". We know that there are many Rock fans out there who love the music of Bon Jovi. With songs like Livin on a Prayer, Always, Bed of Roses, and You Give Love a Bad Name. Formed in 1983 Bon Jovi has made some good Rock music. We are not going to see the "real" Bon Jovi, but we are going to see a band that plays some of their unmistakable music. The price of this trip also includes a meal. So "Come and Rock Away" with us

Seville is our destination for the 18th, 19th and 20th of April. Seville is the largest city and capital of Andalusia. The Al Kazar, The King's Palace, The Magnificent Gothic Cathedral, The Open Top Bus Tours, and The famous Flamenco Dancing. Just some of the reasons why you should join us on this "Mini-Break". Said to be the birthplace of Tapas, this wonderful city is ready to be explored by you! Come and see for yourself.

Now, more colour, passion and entertainment will be seen in the wonderful "Moors and Christians" parades in the city of Alcoy. Taquilla Tickets will be visiting this spectacle on the 22nd of April. Celebrated since the 16th century, the festival commemorates a battle that took place in 1276 between the Arabs and the Christians and was dedicated to San Jorge. According to legend, San Jorge appeared and this gave the Christian Army victory.

The Christians were in armour and the Moors dressed in their colourful clothes. What a site to see this is!! La Diana (a military call to wake up the inhabitants), processions follow, setting the scene for the capture of the Castle by the Moors and the re-taking by the Christians. Colour, Spectacle and loads of fun.

So, there we have it. We think you will agree when we say that we have organised quite a mix of trips. Always remember, if there is somewhere that you would like to go that you think others might like to go to, then please let us know, and we will see if we can work something out.

Take care, everyone.

You can contact us by visiting our office situated within the office of "Sparkles" on Condado de Alhama. Open from 10.00 am-13.30 pm Monday to Friday

OR

See Nigel at "CATS BAR" on Camposol A Tuesday-Friday 10.15 am - 13.30 pm.

You can call us: Sally-0034 65734 6445. Nigel- 0034 64250 1568

Email us: taquillaticketscondado@gmail.com

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Condado De Alhama

CONDADO DE ALHAMA ALHAMA NATURE RESORT

In addition to the recent news about the purchase of the Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course and plans to build a new golf club, we have also learnt about their plans to provide a new treatment centre in the former Polaris World showroom on the other side of the resort. Alhama Nature have also just released plans to more new build apartments adjacent to the golf course to service the rental market for golfers.



Alhama Nature Resort have released plans for the development of a fantastic new sports facility. The Alhama Sports Arena will include several new football training pitches to facilitate warm weather training for professional football teams from across Europe. They will have access to the new treatment centre which will provide first class sports treatment, therapy, and rehabilitation services. The treatment centre will also be available to the wider community.

Condado De Alhama



The total number of new homes planned to be built by Alhama Nature Resort on Condado de Alhama is now more than 1,250 which is just fantastic news and testimony to Alhama Nature's commitment to the future of Condado de Alhama. The new homes will consist of 2,3 or 4 bed villas with private pools, luxury penthouses overlooking the Signature Golf Course and stunning bungalows with community pools.



The Condado Club, Condado de Alhama Call 603 179 007 or find us on Facebook



Homemade Food served every day from 10am



Thursday Tapas menu 2pm – 4pm

Every Friday Fish n Chips served from 1pm

Every Sunday, Fun Quiz at 7pm

Fresh cakes and pies, baked to order

Thursday 4th May Ukulele Sunshine Band 2pm

Saturday 6th May The Kings Coronation

Garden Party with live music from

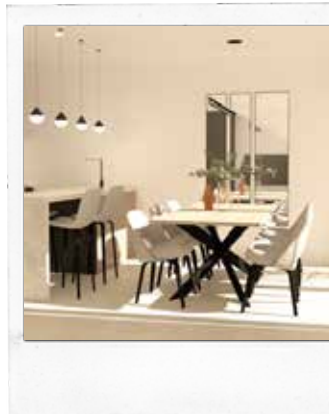
Karen Noble, 2pm

Charity Events, Birthday Parties, Kids Club,
Function Room available





“ Imagine yourself enjoying your morning coffee in the sun, sun bathing and enjoying the peace and quiet that defines Condado de Alhama, or dining al-fresco in the privacy of your terrace, watching the sun set beyond the mountain ranges across the Signature Golf Course... ”



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Quality Homes Costa Calida, established in 2001, is a multilingual and family-run business - who are the independent, fully licensed and registered estate agent based onsite here at Condado de Alhama resort. We are certified by and registered in the Official College of Estate Agents in Murcia, the COAPI. With years of know-how and expertise of the QHCC team, thousands have found their special place in this extraordinary corner of Spain. Let us find yours too!

We are here to help you to buy, sell or let your property and promise to make it as straight forward, uncomplicated and transparent as possible to create an altogether pleasant experience for you.



SEAN DUNNE

PROPERTY SALES - NEW DEVELOPMENTS

If you require any information regarding any of our new build properties please contact Sean via:

Mobile: +34 711 091 764 (including WhatsApp)

Office: +34 868 619 319

Email: sean@qualityhomescostacalida.com

Address: CC Al Kasar, Condado de Alhama, 30840, Alhama de Murcia

MIRADOR APARTMENTS

- Front-line golf position
- 4 floors available
- 2 Double Bedrooms with Built in wardrobes
- 2 Bathrooms (1 en-suite)
- South-West facing
- Lift access
- Private storage room
- Ducted air conditioning
- Open plan living/dining room
- Electrical shutters
- Fully fitted premium kitchen appliances and white goods
- Sliding patio doors
- Communal swimming pool
- Allocated parking plus electric charging points
- Nearby resort amenities at the Al Kasar

Price range: 116,900€ - 151,900€





EDIFICIO APARTMENTS

- Front-line golf position
- 4 floors available (ground floor with private garden and top floor with private solarium)
- 2 or 3 Double Bedrooms with built in wardrobes
- 2 Bathrooms (1 en-suite)
- South-West facing
- Fully fitted premium kitchen appliances and white goods
- Small outdoor summer kitchen
- Lift access
- Private storage room
- Pre-installation of air con
- Communal swimming pool
- Allocated parking plus electric charging points
- Gated community
- Nearby resort amenities at the Al Kasar

Price range: 149,500€ - 172,900€



VILLA ATENEA

- 2, 3 or 4 Double Bedrooms with Built in wardrobes
- 2 or 3 Bathrooms (1 en-suite)
- Private swimming pool plus solar shower
- South facing
- Small outdoor summer kitchen
- Pre-installation air con
- Electric aluminium window blinds
- Heated bathroom floor
- Satellite TV point
- Pre-installed Internet access
- Safety door
- Allocated parking plus electric charging point
- Gated community
- Nearby resort amenities at the Al Kasar

Price range: 259,900€ - 416,900€



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