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for all English speakers

Sept 2009 issue 17



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# EDITORIAL

## MEET BOB THE EDITOR

WELCOME TO THE  
SEPTEMBER ISSUE COVERING  
CATALUNYA AND COSTA  
AZAHAR.

September's birthstone is the  
sapphire. The meaning is clear  
thinking.

◇◇◇◇

Its flower is the aster or morning glory.

◇◇◇◇

Autumn Equinox Sept 22nd 21.18h UTC (GMT)

◇◇◇◇

Back to School

Early one morning, a mother went in to wake up her  
son. 'Wake up, son. It's time to go to school'

'But why, Mum? I don't want to go.'

'Give me two reasons why you don't want to go.'

'Well, the kids hate me for one, and the teachers hate  
me, too!'

'Oh, that's no reason not to go to school. Come on  
now and get ready.'

'Give me two reasons why I should go to  
school.'

'Well, for one, you're 52 years old. And for  
another, you're the Head teacher!'

◇◇◇◇  
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ARCIMBOLDO "AUTUMN 1573" AND  
SURROUNDED BY HARVEST THEMES**

4

# THE



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The exit of France and Germany from recession dominated the Spanish papers recently. El Mundo leads with the headlines that France and Germany are growing again, Spain remains sunk. The paper reports the GDP of the two grand European economies grew by 0.3% in the second quarter, while in Spain a fall of 0.9% is forecast. El Mundo notes that Spanish stock market went back above 11,000 yesterday in the reports that the recession had hit bottom. El País notes the European Central Bank considers the recession in Europe 'is hitting bottom'. The paper notes that in Spain the government is giving more help to the unemployed, with those who have used up their entitlement to dole money being given a further 420 € a month for a six month maximum provided the unemployment rate remains over 17%.

Málaga speed camera smashed in revenge attack. A witness saw the driver return to smash up the device after it snapped him speeding. An angry driver has been fined more than 1,000 € for smashing up a fixed radar which had just caught him breaking the speed limit on a street in Málaga. It happened on Calle Pacífico



in March this year, when EFE said a security guard at a nearby hotel saw F.J.J.L.'s van snapped by the camera and then saw the driver return to smash up the offending object. He's also

been ordered to reimburse Málaga City Hall the 478 € it cost to repair the device.

Spanish government working on harsher smoking ban. The Health Minister believes Spanish society is 'mature enough' to accept a total ban on smoking in all public places. The smoking law introduced in January 2006 allows bars and restaurants smaller than 100 square



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metres to choose whether to allow smoking or not, but now the Minister wants them to be included in an extended ban. Most in fact do allow smoking on the premises. El Mundo gives the numbers as only 40,000 smoke-free establishments amongst the more than 350,000 in Spain. Speaking in an interview with Cadena Ser, Minister Trinidad Jiménez said the government is assessing the law, which she said although 'good' when it was drawn up, is now showing 'gaps and a certain lack of definition'. 55,000



people die from smoking-related diseases in Spain every year and, according to the Minister, 70% of the Spanish population are in favour of a total ban.



Hail storm decimates crops in Murcia. Farmers are assessing the damage from storms which hit parts of Murcia on the weekend of the 8th Aug, when

hailstones the size of golf balls fell on Caravaca de la Cruz on Saturday, seriously affecting crops in La Almodema and Singla. Singla also saw the lighting put up for the local fair destroyed by the hail. Another storm which hit Cieza on Sunday 9th Aug damaged crops and caused flooding in Cieza itself and on the A-30 motorway. La Verdad newspaper reports the neighbouring towns of Blanca and Abarán were also affected. Cars were damaged by falling trees in another sudden downpour in Valencia and Las Pedroñeras, Cuenca, suffered its worst storm for 60 years on the same Saturday afternoon. Water levels there were up to one and a half metres high in some parts of the town centre.



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Iberian lynx to be released in the wild this autumn. The Junta de Andalucía has announced that Iberian lynx born in captivity are to be released into the wild this autumn. Sites have already been selected in Córdoba and Jaén, where agreement has been reached with the owners of the land where the lynx will be released. It comes under the latest phase of the LIFE programme, with planned investment of 26 million € to protect this endangered species between 2007 and 2011. The programme was first introduced in 2002 and, since then, EFE reports, has managed to increase the lynx population by 38.6%. Nineteen lynx kittens have been born under the LIFE programme so far this year, of which 17 have survived.

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the receipt for exchange must be accompanied by three people seen by the Nationalists to be financially solvent upstanding citizens. He told Diario Información that anyone who refused to hand over their money also ran the risk of being imprisoned for possession of contraband currency. The Bank of Spain has valued the money seized during those times at 3 € for every peseta handed over, which for Evaristo Uriach, who lives on a state pension of a little more than 500 € a month, would mean a much-needed 26,400 €. The newspaper said some 2,000 families in Spain are in the same position and the association which represents them, APIGF, has been fighting for Congress to approve a resolution authorising repayment of the money. It's understood a new proposal is due to be presented to parliament by CiU following two unsuccessful debates.

**F**ree online hearing check for British expats in Spain  
British expats in Spain can now take the first steps to find out

**RNID** • • •

how good their hearing is thanks to leading UK deaf and hearing loss charity RNID's online hearing check. For British expats in Spain, the feelings of isolation experienced by many people who suffer hearing loss will be exacerbated by the necessity to communicate in a foreign language. The simple online check, found at [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk), can help people to identify whether they may have a hearing loss in just a few minutes. RNID's director of external affairs, Emma Harrison said: "The beauty of our hearing check is that it's online and means English speaking people living in Spain or anywhere in the world can discover if their hearing may not be as good as they think it is." Ms Harrison added: "The hearing check does not give a medical diagnosis, but we hope it will prompt people to take action and visit their GP if they discover

they might be suffering with hearing loss. It is a sad fact that it can take people living in the UK up to 15 years to deal with a hearing loss, and we've no reason to believe British expats are any different. The sooner a problem is diagnosed, the sooner people can take action and resume a full and active life." RNID is the largest charity representing the 9 million people in the UK who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**C**ataluña announces voluntary chemical castration for rapists Cataluña has confirmed a move announced a year ago, and says chemical castration is to be introduced next month, as a voluntary measure for rapists at risk of reoffending. It's the first Spanish region to bring in the measure, which will be accompanied by psychological therapy for those who choose to volunteer. It's understood the treatment will be applied in the form of a hormonal injection which reduces the production of testosterone and so also reduces sex drive. The effect wears off once the treatment stops. A convicted rapist has meanwhile been forced out of the town where he had been staying with relatives, after pressure from local people in Lloret de Mar, Gerona province, in Cataluña. Known as the 'second rapist of Eixample', Alejandro Martínez Singul was jailed at the age of 25 for five counts of rape, five of sexual assault and another four of attempted sexual assault. He was released in May 2007 after serving 16 years and was arrested for another attempt a year later and spent 9 months in prison in France. He's currently awaiting a decision on his appeal against a sentence this June which found him guilty of another two counts of attempted sexual assault. EFE said he has previously been forced to leave Barcelona City, also over pressure from local residents.

**D**og rescued from appalling conditions in Spain A dog has been rescued from its owner in Dos Hermanas, Sevilla, after spending eight years shut up in a room with no light or ventilation. The animal

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was so badly neglected that its entire body was covered with an enormous matted mass of rotting hair and dirt, making it impossible for the dog to walk. Rescuers were even unable to make out its legs and tail amongst the mass. Named Raitán by Uprodea, the animal protection centre which has now taken on its care, the dog was in such a bad condition that it was initially thought it would have to be put down, but once vets began to remove the matted hair they that saw the dog was able to walk. After a neighbour reported the situation to Uprodea, Raitán was finally rescued on 21st July, with the help of local police and the animal protection society, Asanda. He is now starting to recover and is slowly beginning to try out his new freedom. Europa Press said some 50 people from both Spain and abroad have already applied to adopt him. His owner, according to Asanda, is an alcoholic who they believe was not even aware of the situation.

**E**vidence of prehistoric giant sea worm found in Spain.

Fossilised evidence of a prehistoric species of giant sea worm has been found by scientists on a rock face



in the Cabañeros National Park in Ciudad Real. The burrow holes (discovered by a team from the CSIC Higher Council for Scientific Investigation) are up to 20 cms across and 5 metres long. They would have been made 475 million years ago, making it the oldest fossilised evidence of this type of creature ever found to date. Investigators say the worm itself would have measured 15cm by 1 metre. Investigators told EFE the tracks have been preserved thanks to a mucous secreted by the worm which hardened the burrow hole to prevent its collapse.



**Raitán just after he was rescued**



**Raitán now**

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## CAN IT BE TRUE???

CHILDREN DON'T LIKE SCHOOL, SAYS REPORT! + SCHOOL SUBJECTS TO BE DICKED ABOUT WITH!

to school and would prefer not to have to do any work at all, according to a major new study of education in Britain.



Around 60% said they would prefer to play computer games with their friends instead of listening to a man with poor personal hygiene reciting the names of the Kings of England.

The other 40% said they would be happy if they never saw another sum and instead got to sit on the sofa all day watching repeats of Balamory with a a bottle of Tizer and a tube of Pringles "as tall as a house".

Professor Robin McKay, the report's author, said: "Children do not like travelling to school, they do not like the work they do at school, they do not like being given homework and they do not like sitting tests. They think all these things should stop right now.

"They are also deeply concerned about global warming, terrorism, the gulf between rich and poor and whether that big fat ginger bastard is going to steal all their crisps at lunchtime again. They think we should stop all those things right now too."

Eight year-old Paul Bates, said: "I want to live in a castle and have a big sword with magical powers and a dragon I could fly around on and I'd like my friends Rob and Alan to come and live with me although obviously I would be the king and everything and they would just be my slaves. And we would not allow no girls."

But educationalist Professor Henry Brubaker disputed the report's findings and cited his research which proved that children should just sit down and shut up for 18 years.

He said: "Tell them to sit down and shut up."

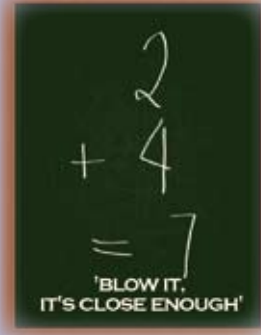
BRITAIN'S primary school curriculum is to be radically reformed after ministers realised they hadn't dicked about with it for at least a year. From next year the school day will be split into broad themes including noises, shapes, colours, feelings and relentless political indoctrination.

Educational experts say it is too early to tell whether the system will improve standards of literacy and numeracy, but insist it has given them something to do for a few weeks.

The six new subject areas are:

- **Noises:** Moo. Baa. Grrr. Vroom. Plop. These are all noises. Make three of them before lunch.
- **Shapes:** What shape is a lesbian? Are circles French? What rights does a triangle have? Will also cover the shapes of numbers, although the sound of numbers will be covered in Noises.
- **Colours:** The children will be encouraged to mix blue with yellow and green with orange as a way of understanding contraception and exotic sexual positions.
- **Feelings and Flavours:** Does seven taste of cheese? How do you feel about two plus two? Does spelling make you sad and angry? Let's not do it then.
- **The Labour Party:** Will cover the ideology, evolution and structure of Britain's Natural Party of Government and why the Conservatives want to touch you in the bad place.
- **Nintendo:** Everything else is probably covered by some sort of Nintendo game, so from 10.30am until 3pm each day the children will be given a Wii and left to get on with it while the teachers stand at the back door smoking cigarettes and booking holidays.

The Conservatives last night attacked the proposals and set out their own curriculum, including money, standing up straight, poof-spotting, advanced money and remembering the names of staff.



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**CAPRICORN** Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

Impatience is something to watch for this month, dear Capricorn, in your drive for new experiences that take you far beyond the ordinary. With that in check, you could enjoy a rich, playful, and spirited month. Intensity in a partnership or other close relationships is likely in September.

**AQUARIUS** Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

Work, research, and partnerships are big themes for you in September, dear Aquarius. Committed relationships are especially rewarding. Significant others and their agendas are assuming more importance in your life than your personal goals now.

**PISCES** Feb. 20 - Mar. 20

You attract strong, supportive, and powerful people to you this month, dear Pisces. Relationships with others are spirited, dynamic, and in strong focus. You are especially willing to please a partner, but not afraid to take the lead either.

**ARIES** Mar. 21 - Apr. 20

Work responsibilities and challenges are highlighted this month, particularly in the days surrounding the 18th. Review of projects you thought were complete becomes necessary. You possess much energy for work on and in your home, as well as activities with family...

**TAURUS** Apr. 21 - May 21

Hobbies, enjoyable pastimes, activities with children, and romance are all top priority for you in September. Getting serious about a romantic relationship or creative project is likely in the days surrounding the 18th, leading to a fresh start or sense of renewal.

**GEMINI** May 22 - Jun. 22

September is a strong month for harmonizing, collecting yourself, and peacemaking for you, dear Gemini. Your larger focus is on your home, family, and domestic activities. The need to assume more responsibility with family arises mid-month, leading to a sense of renewal on the domestic front.

**CANCER** Jun. 23 - Jul. 22

A sociable and energetic month is in store, dear Cancer. You have big plans and plenty of spunk in September, sometimes surprising those around you. You are feeling especially independent and determined, and you receive an energetic boost from the cosmos that helps you to accomplish much.

**LEO** Jul. 23 - Aug. 23

September is a month in which your desire for pleasure and comfort tends to rule, dear Leo. The goddess of Love, Venus, is occupying your sign until the 20th, and you'll find that others are especially appreciative of your sense of style.

**VIRGO** Aug. 24 - Sep. 23

September is a strong month for making your intentions known and making an impression, dear Virgo. While you may be feeling misunderstood at times, you are nevertheless getting noticed and appreciated, even if it's simply admiration from afar.

**LIBRA** Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

Focus is on career, friendships, long-term goals, and weeding out that which is unnecessary or holding you back from accomplishment. A serious assessment of your attitude towards life mid-month brings you to a whole new life plan and motivates you to start completely fresh.

**SCORPIO** Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Your social circle, community, and more expansive goals come into strong focus this month, dear Scorpio. Connections made this month may be surprising and especially rewarding at the same time, both on personal and professional fronts.

**SAGITTARIUS** Nov. 23-Dec. 21

September is a time to shine on a professional or public level. The more responsible and competent side of your nature is activated, and others more easily place their faith in you. You cook up a new, more responsible plan for your career mid-month.



This month will cover some recent curiosities found in print from around Spain and the world.

### Cats cry as a call to action

Anyone who has ever had a cat knows how difficult they are to ignore when they want to get our attention. According to a recent issue of "Current Biology" the sound a hungry cat makes when it wants to be fed, a purring sound mixed with a type of a high frequency cry, provokes an unpleasant sense of need in humans!

The researchers recorded the sounds emitted by 10 cats and reproduced these sounds for 50 volunteers who participated in the study. The found that the sounds the cats made when the cats were hungry were less pleasing and transmitted a greater sense of urgency to the listeners. Those volunteers who had a cat as a pet were more sensitive to the different sounds emitted by the cats, which demonstrates a type of training to the sound emitted by the person who is the object of the cats vocalization. The researchers also concluded that cats that were not fed regularly by the same person did not make this sound!

### Fish Hotel

This summer has not posed a dilemma for Dutch vacationers as to what to do with their pet fish, when it was not possible to have someone else to feed or look after them while away on vacation.

On the main floor of the Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam has opened a specially commissioned fish hotel. Each fish has its own independent tank to avoid any cross contamination or conflict between guests. The guests tanks are



house either fresh or salt water guests. The only requirement to take advantage of this service is to book your vacation through the travel agent responsible for the running of this special hotel. According to a spokesperson for the agency running the special Inn, many people thought this was a joke but the demand for the service reflects differently. The first guest was Joe, a goldfish.

There is a Dutch political party with parliamentary representation which defends animal rights and one of their representatives in the Parliament attempted to have the hotel closed. Their claim is that the movement of these fish from their usual environment to this Inn at a busy airport may be too stressful for the animals and may prove to be fatal. The agent running the hotel has the owner sign a contract which frees the agency of financial responsibility in case of the pets death.

### Planes For Pets

A Florida couple have created an airlines exclusively for pets because they suffer when travelling by air and are treated as just another suitcase. No bipeds(humans) allowed aboard,



except of course for the pilot and the other members of the flight crew. The new airline known as Pet Airways, with their own website. The passengers are transported aboard in their own individual cage, the small aircraft that once had a capacity for 19 people has been modified to comfortably contain up to 50 cages accommodated for dogs or cats. Flights are once a week with one way tickets available for a modest fare of \$149.00 and have stops in New York, Washington, Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles.



According to the American Veterinary Medical Association 70 million dogs and cats travel every year with their families, most of them by automobile. The San Francisco Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals estimates that of the 2 million pets that travel annually in cargo holds of aeroplanes about 5,000 are injured in one way or another. This would not happen on Pet Airways as the pets are monitored by a member of staff during flight. The passengers have to check in 2 hours before take off but they may check in as much as 72 hours ahead of flight time. They proceed to the passenger lounge where they are made comfortable and are checked by the airline staff every 15 minutes. Upon arrival at their destination they are taken to the lounge to relax and recover from their journey, it is also made clear that they are provided with ample opportunities for rest (pee) stops. [www.petairways.com](http://www.petairways.com)

### Ice Cream for Doggies and Moggies

The first ice cream in the world 99% lactose free, sugar free and without dangerous additives is being marketed and sold in clinics and special stores in Malaga, Sevilla Granada and Córdoba. The Malaga based company has treated the milk with lactase, an enzyme which makes the milk easier to digest, the sugar is maltitol, a natural sweetener. The pet population as adults is 200 times more lactose intolerant than people.



The ice cream is available in three flavours: Vanilla, Cream, and Ham, in half litre containers for about 5€ each.



The company responsible, Vital Ice Cream, is planning to start marketing their product in blocks and frozen cakes as it is becoming more common to have pet birthday parties. At the moment there are only three flavours but the family run business located in Malaga has been making Ice Cream for over 50 years and has a web page where you can suggest new flavours. They also are devising a new line of ice creams for other groups of people with special dietetic considerations. [www.vital-icecream.com](http://www.vital-icecream.com). **Ronald Rosenfeld D.V.M.**

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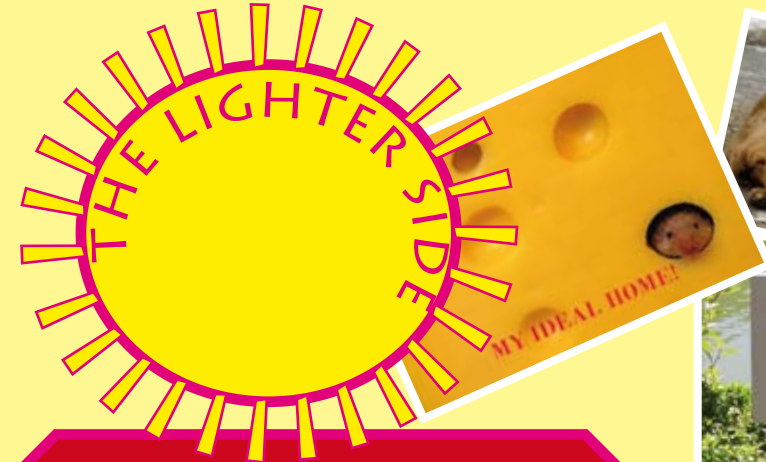
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<http://www.protectoraarca.org/>

DOGS NEEDING A LOVING HOME or IF YOU CAN VOLUNTEER ANY ASSISTANCE WITH THE DOGS







## OLD PEOPLE AND THEIR PROBLEMS

You thought you had problems!

Old people have problems that you haven't even considered yet!

> >

As part of his physical exam the doctor requested the 85-year-old man give a sperm count.

The doctor gave the man a jar and said, "Take this jar home and bring back a semen sample tomorrow."

> >

The next day the 85-year-old man reappeared at the doctor's office and gave him the jar, which was as clean and empty as on the previous day.

> >

The doctor asked what happened and the man explained, "Well, doc, it's like this, first I tried with my right hand, but nothing. Then I tried with my left hand, but still nothing. Then I asked my wife for help. She tried with her right hand, then with her left, still nothing.

...She tried with her mouth, first with the teeth in, then with her teeth out, still nothing. We even called up Arleen, the lady next door and she tried too, first with both hands, then an arm pit, and she even tried squeezing it between her knees, but still nothing.

> >

The doctor was shocked! "You asked your neighbor?"

> > >

The old man replied, "Yep, and none of us could get that jar open."



## "FIFTY BUCKS IS FIFTY BUCKS"

Ken and his wife Edna went to the state fair every year. And every year Ken would say, 'Edna, I'd like to ride in that helicopter' Edna always replied, 'I know Ken, but that helicopter ride is fifty bucks. And fifty bucks is fifty bucks' One year Ken and Edna went to the fair, and Ken said, 'Edna, I'm 75 years old. If I don't ride that helicopter, I might never get another chance'

To this, Edna replied, "Ken that helicopter ride is fifty bucks, and fifty bucks is fifty bucks"

The pilot overheard the couple and said, 'Folks I'll make you a deal. I'll take the both of you for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and don't say a word I won't charge you a penny! But if you say one word it's fifty dollars.'

Ken and Edna agreed and up they went.

The pilot did all kinds of fancy maneuvers, but not a word was heard. He did his daredevil tricks over and over again, But still not a word...

When they landed, the pilot turned to Ken and said, 'By golly, I did everything I could to get you to yell out, but you didn't. I'm impressed!' Ken replied, 'Well, to tell you the truth, I almost said something when Edna fell out, But you know, "Fifty bucks is fifty bucks"

## LIVE PRESS

### POLICE PATROL...

A policeman was patrolling a local parking spot overlooking a golf course. He drove by a car and saw a couple inside with the dome light on. There was a young man in the driver's seat reading a computer magazine and a young lady in the back seat knitting. He stopped to investigate. He walked up to the driver's window and knocked.

The young man looked up, cranked the window down, and said, "Yes Officer?"

"What are you doing?" the policeman asked. "What does it look like?" answered the young man. "I'm reading this magazine." Pointing towards the young lady in the back seat, the officer then asked, "And what is she doing?" The young man looked over his shoulder and replied, "What does it look like? She's knitting."

"And how old are you?" the officer then asked the young man. "I'm nineteen," he replied. "And how old is she?" asked the officer. The young man looked at his watch and said, "Well, in about twelve minutes she'll be sixteen."



### Before



### After



### The Economy - explanation and should we follow?

It's the month of August, on the shores of the Black Sea. It is raining, and the little town looks totally deserted.

These are tough times, everybody is in debt, and everybody lives on credit.

Suddenly, a rich tourist comes to town.

He enters the only hotel, lays a 100 Euro note on the reception counter, and goes to inspect the rooms upstairs in order to pick one.

The hotel proprietor takes the 100 Euro note and runs to pay his debt to the butcher.

The Butcher takes the 100 Euro note, and runs to pay his debt to the pig breeder.

The pig breeder takes the 100 Euro note, and runs to pay his debt to the supplier of his feed and fuel.

The supplier of feed and fuel takes the 100 Euro note and runs to pay his debt to the town's prostitute who in these hard times, gave her "services" on credit.

The hooker runs to the hotel, and pays off her debt with the 100 Euro note to the hotel proprietor to pay for the rooms that she rented when she brought her clients there.

The hotel proprietor then lays the 100 Euro note back on the counter so that the rich tourist will not suspect anything.

At that moment, the rich tourist comes down after inspecting the rooms, and takes his 100 Euro note, after saying that he did not like any of the rooms, and leaves town.

No one earned anything. However, the whole town is now without debt, and looks to the future with a lot of optimism..

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how the United Kingdom Government hope's to do business today.







**History.** The Quinquennial Fiesta is the most important Ulldecona Fiesta. It has taken place every five years since 1939 and the origin is related to the destruction of the ancient image of the Virgin of Pity during the Spanish Civil War, then to the construction of a new image by the local artist Vicent Barrera in 1939 and, finally, to a promise related to the worship of the Virgin and the hermitage. The Quinquennial Fiesta is "the explosion of a city, a mix of religion, magic, harmony, desire of divinity, popularity, collective effort... since the people from Ulldecona (who are known as falduts) and they transform the town every five years in order to continue this worship".

### The main components of the Quinquennial:

#### The hermitage and the Virgin of Pity

The Quinquennial Local Fiesta begins when the falduts go by foot on a pilgrimage to the hermitage (which is located 3 Km from Ulldecona), and collect the image of the Virgin. One of the most touching moments of the fiesta is the arrival of the Virgin in Ulldecona. It is taken every day by the citizens to one of the different areas in which Ulldecona is divided during the Fiesta.

#### Ulldecona and its streets

One of the fundamental aspects of the Quinquennial Local Fiesta is to experience the transformation of the streets of Ulldecona. The Fiesta becomes a phenomenon which cannot only be regarded as a religious one, but also as an artistic and social one. And this component has a growing importance, bearing in mind the pluralism that characterises the town, where a significant



### IMATGES D'UNA PROMESA



Les festes quinquennals d'Ulldecona fins al 1974

percentage of the population is not religious or catholic.

The majority of the residents clean the façades of their houses and the streets plus the cars disappear from sight. Moreover, the neighbours adorn the streets with flowers. In the beginning, the flowers which were used were natural ones. However, nowadays people tend to use artificial flowers, made during the previous months secretly in order to avoid imitations. Among the materials used to make these works of art are different kinds of cloth, paper and cardboard, buttons, plastic... especially using recycled products. As a consequence, the flowers become an example of sustainable development and respect of the environmental. The result is extraordinary, you can walk for hours without knowing what you are going to find a bit later...

#### A social phenomenon

The Quinquennial Local Fiesta is also a social event as the whole town takes part. The falduts who do not live in Ulldecona try to be there during the Fiesta and the number of cultural, leisure and social activities is considerable. Among these activities are:

- **Local Festival Opening Speech-** This is one of the most important official activities of the Local Fiesta, where the Queen of the Fiesta and her Ladies-in-waiting are present, with the public authorities to hear the Speech.

- **The jota from Ulldecona** -This typical dance from Ulldecona takes place every year during the night of the first Monday of the Fiesta. However, it is extra spectacular during the Quinquennial Local Fiesta.



- **Bullfighting-** is also one of the fundamental local traditions. However, bullfighting in Ulldecona is unlike anything to do with traditional bullfighting in other Spanish regions. The falduts every year build the bullring where bullfighting will take place but they are never killed and everybody is allowed to be in the bullring and to face the bulls. Moreover, there is also "running of the bulls" similar to those that take place in Pamplona in July every year.
- **Concerts and Dances-** and other musical activities take place in Ulldecona almost every day during the Local Fiesta.
- **Parade of floats-** One of the last activities of the Local Fiesta is the traditional parade of floats. Almost all the local associations make their own float, as well as the Queen and her Ladies-in-waiting. The parade finishes with a battle with confetti and sweets. <http://www.ulldecona.altanet.org>

#### ACROSS

- fruit
- intestine
- cuttlefish
- age
- boa
- friend
- cloth
- shade
- fatty, podgy
- sedan
- empinado (E)
- cero (E)
- frotar (E)
- mother
- flood
- poach

#### ACROSS:

- perejil
- disc
- irise
- ally
- esto
- forma
- romero
- paired
- acoso
- agil
- ever
- stun
- into
- trenzar

#### ANSWERS TO THE AUG ISSUE OF SPANGLISH

##### DOWN:

- iris
- pedo
- whole
- land
- plus
- entrada
- cuadrar
- forja
- abajo
- lint
- follon
- gato
- emir
- este

### EQUESTRIAN CORNER 'BARNEY'S HANDY MONTHLY TIPS'

When boxing your horse a good idea is to feed your horse first, by the ramp of the box, every day for approx. 1 week. Then your horse gets used to the box & ramp. Don't pull the horse in. You want your horse to go in because he wants too. Put his (or her) hoof on the ramp & gently encourage him to go in. It will take a while, just have patience.

They will go in. Encourage your horse in with some food in a bucket. Don't lift the ramp straight away. Let your horse get used to the box for approx 1 week. Put a gate across the back first, as your horse won't "feel Boxed In" If your horse feels no fear of the box, they will always box easily, no matter where you are. DO NOT FORCE. Patience works every time.

Good luck. Barney.

**Barney can be contacted on 605 467 394 or through the Olive Press, with any questions or comments.**



#### DOWN

- strawberry
- roast
- to give opinion
- contaminar (E)
- cunning
- like this
- sujetador (E)
- alce americano (E)
- kids
- crazy
- to ring
- of the
- rule
- sueño (E)
- oreja (E)
- poor

**BY SARAH (E=translate to english otherwise to spanish)**



**NO BRITS!**

A booking company recently undertook its annual survey to determine who the world's worst hotel guests were. On a worldwide scale the French unsurprisingly

topped the poll, but within the European Zone the Brits won the accolade. It set me thinking if, after all these years, your average British tourist has really come to terms with foreign travel.

Our ventures abroad really came into their own with the invention of Package Tours in the 1960's. I'm talking about the days when the family packed just about everything they owned and headed off to Luton airport for their annual foreign jaunt. These were the heady times of Clarkson's holidays when planes, some still with propellers, would propel them to Spanish shores and other sundry destinations. If you were lucky they might still be in business to get you home. At the airport there would be travellers seemingly equipped for every eventuality. Stories abound of customers attempting to smuggle portable TVs on board because they didn't want to miss their favourite programmes. For some reason the Duty Free shops would be invaded by the trippers seemingly unaware that drink and cigarettes would be available at the point of destination, in all probability cheaper than at the airport. Men would, for some bizarre reason stock up on cigars and would puff their way around the airport presumably in some sort of Churchillian gesture to show Johnny Foreigner what being British was all about. No matter that they usually smoked Woodbines.

My mother resisted going abroad for many years largely on the basis that she 'liked to know what she was eating' and her suspicions about the arrangements in foreign toilets. I suspect these were fairly common beliefs. The change of diet to something that bore no resemblance to anything on the limited British menu of the time was a real threat. To this end café owners cashed in by offering a 'Proper English Breakfast' much sought after by those wanting

to avoid the nasty foreign stuff. 'Tea like mother makes' is still to be seen on the menu boards outside cafes in many parts of the Europe. Anxious to cut a few financial corners team-making equipment would be packed into suitcases where the resultant brew would be met with disappointment because the 'water tastes funny'. In the process of conducting these experiments fuses would be blown in hotel rooms all round Europe.

The motivation behind this annual exodus was not the guaranteed sunshine, the opportunity to see historic sites or to absorb aspects of foreign cultures. The prime motivator was the fact that you could drink all day, and relative to the UK, cheaply. Not surprisingly overseas bar owners could be led to believe that we were a nation of alcoholics. Yet again your 'foreign' product was regarded with suspicion. The beer had to be served from bottles and barrels with a recognisable label. Watneys Red Barrel was soon available throughout Europe. Nobody drank it except the Brits because it was so bloody awful. Your average donkey after nibbling on a few grapes and a small field could probably produce something similar at no cost to the consumer. I suspect that there are still barrels of it stored away in Spain somewhere to this day; Watneys Red Barrel not donkey pee. Once a base amount of 10 or so pints of beer had been consumed your connoisseur was ready to move on to the local hard stuff which, normally partaken in small measures, would be consumed in similar quantities to the beer. This would inevitably lead to calls being made on 'the big white telephone', assuming it was reached in time. The 'Proper English Breakfast' would then make a sudden reappearance. Communication with foreigners was made, largely, by shouting

**TRAVEL BY NUMBERS  
BRITS ABROAD**

**2** hospitalised in Netherlands  
**36** arrested in Czech Republic  
**330** arrested in Cyprus  
**376** died in France  
**955** hospitalised in Greece  
**1,368** arrested in the U.S.  
**2,023** lost their passports in Australia  
**6,078** lost their passports in Spain  
**813,000** visited Czech Republic  
**13,795,000** visited Spain

\*figures April 05-March 06. Source: Foreign Office.



loudly and s l o w l y at them as if this achieved some miraculous translation. Another way of communicating was to perform some form of ritualistic gestures. I recall a trip with some mates to Yugoslavia when we were presented with bowls of watery soup for breakfast. My intrepid friend performed a passable imitation of a chicken. The waitress nodded knowingly and, smiling, broke a raw egg into his soup.

Another novelty for your holidaying Brit tourist was the attraction of naturist beaches. Your average English person likes to keep their personal plumbing arrangements discretely covered at all times. Having being briefed, or is that debriefed, by the holiday rep that a certain beach in the area catered for the unclothed this would prompt the Brits to take a leisurely stroll 'just to check the scenery'. Easily identified by their grey socks worn with sandals these curious tourists, usually male, would be investigating to see if their expectations matched up to what they had learned from the 1960's soft porn movies. Often they were hugely disappointed by the lack of well proportioned young ladies playing enthusiastically with beach balls.

Now has anything really changed? The British tourist can now travel to more destinations and much further from home than ever before. Perhaps they are a bit more cosmopolitan when it comes to food and drink, after all where can you go that hasn't got a

McDonalds? Now your Brit has different weapons at their disposal. The ability to complain that the facilities provided are not up to 5 Star standards even though the cost of being jetted to the other end of Europe and housed, fed and watered three times a day would barely buy you a return train ticket to London at home. The objective is to find fault and claim substantial compensation for their 'suffering' through some cowboy no-win-no-fee legal firm. No matter that they neglected to wear sun cream, drank excessively and laid themselves open to being a snack bar for every flying insect. If their holiday had not come up to the standard of some God forsaken British seaside resort they find cause to sue. Better if they had stayed in the UK in first place.

With the advent of stag party tourists, 'all inclusives', 18-30 groups and, more worrying, the Saga Louts, who are the 1960's tourists stuck in an alcoholic time warp, it is apparent that some things haven't changed very much. Some resorts still cater for the worst kind of visitor and as a result they still get them. Thankfully there are places which have either

abandoned their former tackiness or never succumbed to it in the first place. This is why you would have found me on the island of Ischia near Naples earlier this year where there was not a McDonald's or an English breakfast establishment to be found. Sorry Spain, but I will be back, I promise.

© Mike Stevens 2009





## YOGA FOR ALL

Sometimes it's hard to see that yoga is far more than a physical activity confined by time, space, and a mat. Perhaps we rush to a class

contract the back of the throat as you inhale and exhale to create the audible sound of what is called ujjayi breath, almost like ocean

waves rushing over pebbles (some students describe it as Darth Vader breathing!) Listen for the gentle rhythms of nature and allow your breath to fall in sync with it. With each breath, reach your sensory awareness toward your inner self and out into the world around you.

### Go Slow

When you practice yoga outside, it's not about how many asanas you do, but the quality of movement that enriches your practice. Think of moving from the inside out, following your body's natural inclination and rhythms. Feel the currents of the air across your body and let that direct you. Enjoy the flow of one pose into another, and remember to take your time....

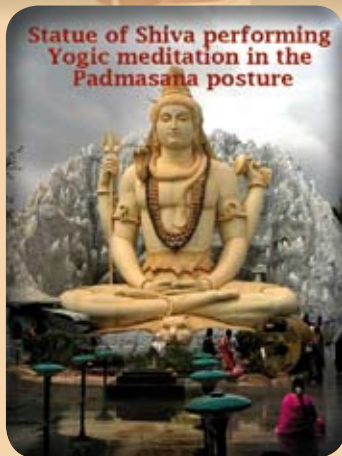
There's another element at work outside - negative ions. These negatively charged particles in the air are found in great numbers in forests and around trees, oceans, rivers, or streams. Negative ions make you feel alert and invigorated and reduce anxiety and depression. According to researchers, this is because they increase our capacity to absorb and utilize oxygen so that it reaches our cells and tissues more quickly.

That's a remarkably similar effect to that of hatha yoga, so why not combine the two for a double dose of feel-good energy!

**Sarah Good is a Sivananda trained Yoga teacher offering weekly drop-in classes in Rasquera and L'Ampolla. Private tuition within the comfort of your own home (or finca) is also available.**

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Statue of Shiva performing Yogic meditation in the Padmasana posture



or put in a DVD without taking note of our surroundings. We may compare our poses with those of others; we can get distracted by people wandering in and out of class or manoeuvring for elbow room.

By getting out of the house or studio and into nature, you can experience yoga as it was originally intended. Yogic teachers believe that being outdoors gives you access to a whole other world of sensations, "helping you feel part of a boundless existence, at one with an intelligent and sympathetic universe". The pure unpredictability of being outside and exposed to the elements can strengthen an existing practice or inspire a new one. Perhaps it's best not to practice in a thunder storm though!

### Tips for Outdoor Practice

To refresh your experience when you go outside, keep these four points in mind.

#### Find Your Place of Peace

Everybody has access to some spot of natural power or beauty. It doesn't have to be a Pyrenean mountain top - a favourite tree or hillside perhaps - somewhere you enjoy returning to regularly.

#### Be Present

To some people, the outdoors is a transitional place - something to rush through on the way from one indoor environment to another; not being fully conscious of the world itself. The rewards of being present in nature are fulfilling and easy to cultivate.

#### Start with Your Breath

Do a few deep breaths to relax and slow down. Breathe slowly through your nose, allowing your belly to expand; slightly



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### M1062 - L'Ampolla

138m<sup>2</sup> Country House  
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Sea Views!  
5.600m<sup>2</sup> parcela  
**Price: 160.000 euros**



### M1036 - Aldover

100m<sup>2</sup> Country House  
3 beds, 2 baths, pool  
2.000m<sup>2</sup> parcela  
**Price: Reduced to OFFERS in excess of 160.000 euros**



### M1120 - L'Ametlla de Mar

Panoramic Sea Views  
70m<sup>2</sup> Country House &  
Separate Summer  
House  
2 beds, 2 baths,  
Swimming Pool  
10.000m<sup>2</sup> parcela  
**Price: 252.000 euros**



### M1113 - Roquetes

Opportunity - Lovely 3 bed Chalet - swimming pool - 2 plots! - set in 1200m<sup>2</sup> plot with the additional bonus of an adjacent 1200m<sup>2</sup> plot - both fully fenced with electric gate with water and electricity. The 2nd plot would be ideal for a log cabin, mobile home, stables, tennis courts etc.  
**Price: 270.000 euros**



### M1119 - El Perello- 10 mins from Beach

100m<sup>2</sup> Villa with Sea Views  
3 beds, 1 bath  
Swimming Pool  
15.000m<sup>2</sup> parcela  
**Price: 238.000 euros**



### M1081 - Jesus

Riverside 3 bedroom bed and Breakfast plus 2 bed self Catering cottage for sale! Direct River Mooring- Furnished. 3000m<sup>2</sup> parcela  
**Price 275.000 euros**



### M1118 - Magnificent Masia-El Perello

95 m<sup>2</sup> built  
2 Beds 2 Baths  
17000 m<sup>2</sup> plot size  
Sea Views!  
**Price: 245.000 euros**



### M1095 - El Perello

Lovely Country House of 120 m.<sup>2</sup> Bedrooms 2, Bathrooms 2  
Auto system installed, Water  
Courtyard & workshops  
14,200m<sup>2</sup> of land  
**Price: 198.000 euros**



### M1114 - Ametlla de Mar

5 mins from beach - Beautiful Villa with guest apartment  
Villa - 2 beds, 2 bath  
Swimming Pool  
10.000m<sup>2</sup> plot  
**Price: 267.000 euros**



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## Blacktower Financial Management Group 'Don't chance with Finance-QROPS'

This is a new column where readers can send in their financial questions and receive a professional answer.

Please send them directly to

Ian Whitby or to the editor of The

Olive Press magazine and we will aim to answer as many as we can.

### Confused about pensions

Many individuals find pensions confusing, whilst they understand some of the tax benefits. The Financial services industry has not always helped with use of a variety of terms that seem to add more confusion. Personal pensions, Sipps, money purchase, final salary, Serps, section 226, drawdown and phased retirement are just a few that understandably cause confusion. At Blacktower Financial Management we believe in making the confusing and complicated simple, ensuring you fully understand what you currently have and importantly whether it meets your needs both now and in the future. This philosophy is important for any individual who holds a pension, the importance often intensifies for expatriates, as they feel removed from the day to day news and as a result feel even more lost in the pension minefield.

### How secure is your pension?

The global recession and credit crunch have created a lot of concern around investments. An individual's pension represents their second largest investment decision, usually their main residence is the largest.

So how secure is your pension? For many clients they are already in receipt of their pension income and there is no cause for concern. However there are risks for those who were in a final salary scheme or who have deferred pensions,

generally these pensions are thought of as guaranteed. But the guarantee is only as good as the ability of the scheme to meet it, falling stock markets and increased life expectancy have put a great strain on these schemes with most being closed to new members.

All expatriates with a UK pension should review their fund carefully particularly as non residents have the opportunity to move their UK fund to an International pension.



### What is an International pension?

New UK legislation has created international pension products known as Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Schemes (QROPS), in essence the scheme must mirror the UK requirements for tax free cash and income benefits. The HMRC (HM Revenue & Customs) will only allow overseas transfers to schemes which have an official QROPS status. The benefits of

transferring to QROPS are detailed below. Great care must be taken when considering a transfer as the HMRC are aware that some jurisdictions are promoting the scheme as a blatant way of tax evasion, Singapore was delisted by the HMRC in 2008. At Blacktower Financial Management we work closely with the authorities concerned to maximise tax advantages wherever possible.

### What are the benefits?

- Free from UK Inheritance Tax following death even after the age of 75 (Finance Act 2008).
- No requirement to purchase an Annuity – under a UK scheme a possible tax charge of 82 % is payable if an annuity is not taken by the age of 75.
- Transfer of the fund to future generations upon death.
- Freedom to Control Investments – the possibilities become more or less unlimited and can include antiques, jewellery, and works of art and in certain circumstances, residential property.
- Flexibility to access funds at any time between the ages of 50 and 75 with the potential to access the



funds outside these ages.

- Access to income and capital without deduction of tax.
- No deduction of tax at source although taxation will apply in accordance with the legislation governing the QROPS scheme member's country of residence.

All of the above advantages become possible after your UK pension fund has been transferred to a QROPS and you have been a non UK resident for five complete tax years. Why wait?

### Blacktower Financial Management Group

Formed in 1986, the Group consists of our UK Company, Blacktower Financial Management Ltd and our International Company Blacktower International Financial Management International Ltd, who leads the

field in offering independent financial advice to expatriates. We have also been awarded the prestigious title of Chartered Financial Planners, with just over 100 other Financial advice firms globally. Our UK Company is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority and our International Company is licensed by the Financial Services Commission in Gibraltar. Blacktower have been providing advice to expatriates on the transfer of their pension rights from one scheme to another i.e. Qrops, since they became available in April 2006.

Contact Ian Whitby, Regional Manager Costa Blanca/ Calida. Office 0034 968 959 331. Mobile 0034 634 706 748. Email: [ian.whitby@blacktowerfm.com](mailto:ian.whitby@blacktowerfm.com)  
web site: [www.blacktowerfm.com](http://www.blacktowerfm.com)

**Remember to send in your questions!**



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## OFF THE BEATEN TRACK: DISCOVERING THE CARDÓ VALLEY

Back in 1987 when I first visited Benifallet, my future wife took me to one of the most spectacularly beautiful places I had ever seen then or since: the valley of Cardó. From the centre of Rasquera a narrow road wound its way past the Ermita de Sant Domingo, up through a lush landscape of green pastures, almond groves and pines.

After a few miles steep limestone cliffs loomed on the left. On our right a sheer drop with astounding views of the Costumà valley and distant mountains. With a few worn concrete bollards between us and a very long drop; we edged along the mountain-ledge road, hoping we wouldn't meet another car coming down! Then we passed through a small tunnel and into the valley of Cardó, to a breathtaking view of the old spa, perched on a huge cliff with a backdrop of dense forests and mountains.

At that time you could just walk into the derelict hotel,

and it was eerie to wander through abandoned halls to the old dining room, with its once-splendid terrace and incomparable views.

My father in law worked at the spa until it closed in the 1960's. He spoke fondly of a lost era, when its now overgrown grounds and paths were impeccably kept, and innumerable springs and streams trickled through the woods...

### The monastery, hermits and the barefoot monks

The spa has a long history though, and was originally the monastery of Sant Hilari de Cardó, founded by the barefoot Carmelite order in 1605. Around it the monks built eleven hermitages in cliff top locations with difficult access but sublime views. Some still stand today. The monastery grew rich; historic livestock routes passed through Cardó and the monastery levied a heavy tolls on herders and local farmers alike.

But Spain's economy gradually declined, and in the first

Carlist war the monastery was seized by the state. In 1836 the monks fled Cardó. Objects of value were sold, the library's books were burned, and the monastery buildings gradually crumbled into ruin.

### The golden age of the spa resort

In 1866 a group of Tortosa entrepreneurs, attracted by the medicinal qualities of the water, decided to set up a spa. Between 1870 and 1874 they converted the monastery buildings into a hotel.

It became a great success with Barcelona's new bourgeoisie, helped in 1904 by the new road from Rasquera: visitors could now come from the railway station at Mora. At its peak Cardó was a fashionable resort with an army of locally-recruited staff.

The 1930's saw turbulent times once more, and in the Spanish Civil War Cardó served as a local headquarters of the International Brigades and a Republican field hospital during the battle for the Ebro.

In 1940 the spa opened again, but hampered by outdated facilities and the rise of beach resorts, closed in 1965.

In the 1970's the property was sold and a water-bottling plant set up, later acquired by Nestlé, then by the Pascual group. Their modern plant lies just below the old spa buildings, employed a handful of local people, and closed in 2007.

### Cardó today

For those that loved and remembered Cardó, the arrival of the water plant must have been a heavy blow. Its springs were tapped at source; the sound of running water to be heard no more... Today Cardó is a wild, beautiful but somehow slightly sad place.

However, better times may soon be at hand. The Pascual Group's long-mooted plans to turn the old hotel into a five-star spa resort finally appear to be progressing, with a new promoter to be announced soon.

Initial plans project a luxury hotel with 91 rooms —with 40 'thermal suites'— plus apartments and a spa. The bottling plant is set to become a thematic village, with space for local artists, craftsmen and potters. A new access road to the spa from Benifallet is rumoured. Perhaps Cardó will relive its golden years?

For now it really is worth a visit if only for the fantastic drive—the reconditioned road is now perfectly safe! Good walks include the gentle stroll to the Ermita de la Columna, the track to the Creu de Santos and the steep hike up to the centuries-old yew grove of the Font de

Teix. The mountains above Cardó are densely forested with both pines and deciduous trees, delightful in autumn.

Fauna includes wild boar, foxes, badgers, wild cats, martens, various species of eagles and owls, while flora includes orchids and many types of wild herbs. Cardó is part of a PEIN protected wildlife area, so camping and lighting fires are prohibited

How to get there: by the Bar Martí and drinking fountain at the beginning of the Carrer Pla de la Bassa in Rasquera, look for the signpost to Cardó on your left. The TV-3021 local road takes you to the old spa, distance is about 10km.

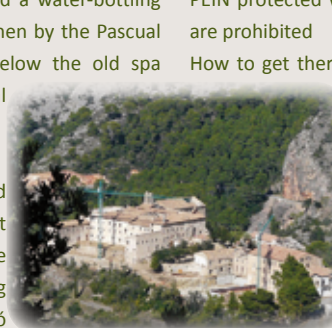
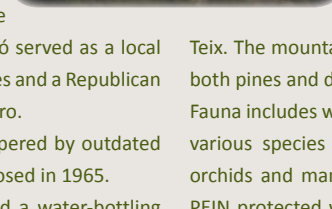
Jeff Greensmith runs [www.fincasdirect.com](http://www.fincasdirect.com) and is a registered estate agent and experienced Spanish/Catalan translator

and interpreter. He has lived in Catalonia since 1986.

THE OLD SPA AND THE  
'SALT DEL FRARE' CLIFF



ERMITA DE LA COLUMNA,  
USED AS A REFUGE  
IN THE CIVIL WAR



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## "VIRGEN DE LA ERMITANA, PEÑÍSCOLA"



**September 8-9, Peñíscola starting on the evening of the 7th**

The town of Peñíscola, situated in the north of the Community of Valencia, is set in a privileged part of the Spanish Mediterranean. The municipality of Peñíscola covers 79Km2, 17 of which run parallel to the coastline, an area which is fairly distributed between woodland areas and warm Mediterranean groves of oranges, olives and almonds. The old city, which is crowned by a XIV century castle-stronghold and was the residence of Pope Benedicto XIII, stands on top of an impressive rocky crag which rises 64 metres above the blue sea. A sandy isthmus joins it to the mainland, which in the past was swept by waves in the midst of storms, turning the city into an ephemeral island. Providing a contrast with the old quarters are the modern streets and wide avenues of the tourist area. Warm waters in summer and autumn are shared between the extensive beaches of fine sand which lie to the north of the fortress, and the beautiful coves flanked by steep cliffs which can be found to the south.



### *Virgen de la Ermitana Description*

### **PATRON SAINT'S FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF THE MARE DE DÉU DE L'ERMITANA**

Near the castle is the church of the Virgen de la Ermitana, where the Moros y Cristianos dance is performed annually in September - a commemoration of the fighting between Moors and Christians. The church contains an image of the Virgin said to have belonged to the Apostle St. James.



Declared as having National Tourist Interest, the big festival dedicated to the Mare de Déu de l'Ermitana starts on 7th September and its duration varies. The local patron saint is celebrated in time honoured Spanish fiesta fashion.. Bulls, concerts, traditional songs and dances. Plus the Queen and her ladies are crowned.



The characteristic events are the traditional farmers' dances (dances de llauradores), dancers (dansants), gypsies (gitanetes), pilgrims and little horses (peregrines i cavallets) and the dance-battle of the Moors and Christians (dansa-batalla de moros i cristians), that take place on 8th and 9th September at the Plaça d'Armes, the heifers on the beach and during the early morning, the Moors and Christians parades and the fireworks.



web site [www.peniscola.es](http://www.peniscola.es)



## Olives & popcorn

Welcome to Olives & Popcorn, your monthly guide to great Spanish based films that in my opinion should not be ignored.

Any comments are welcome. Also if you want to know more about a particular film and how to get a copy again get in touch via my email below. This month I present for your viewing pleasure an unusual Spanish/French film that should come with a warning that viewing could send you into a very long sleep.....

That said it is not a bad film at all but do not expect any wild car chases or exploding caravans....enjoy.....

In the City of Sylvia / En la ciudad de Sylvia (2007)

*Nearly without any dialogue, this film follows a young man credited at the end only as 'El' ('Him') as he spends his days meandering a suburban Strasbourg in search of his Sylvia, a woman he asked for directions in a bar many years ago. Despite its lack of connection with the central characters it is in fact a warm film, not at all aloof, but a celebratory and generous hearted piece which meditates on themes like desire, beauty and the silent interaction of society. Most notable with the one great pastime of 'people watching', and it achieves this through a truly wonderful use of natural light and day-to-day sounds of the streets whilst the film is framed in a beautifully subtle style. And the choice of cast while vital to the film do not eclipse the director's vision of the city streets which themselves become characters to the film.*

*It will not be to everyone's taste but you could well find yourself hypnotized by this film, and deeply impressed by the purity of the film-makers' achievements here. Though unusual compared to previous films I reviewed, it also seems a natural next step in European cinema's long history of loosely-plotted films that are about atmosphere and everyday emotions rather than life-changing events.*

### **Award Notes;**

*En la Ciudad de Sylvia was nominated for the 2007 Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival, although the award was eventually presented to Ang Lee for 'Lust, Caution'. En la Ciudad de Sylvia won the Australian Film Critics Association award for the 'best unreleased film' in Australia at the time of the awards.*

**Jason.M.Berry 17/08/2009**

**Contact e-mail: [gatchajay@hotmail.com](mailto:gatchajay@hotmail.com)**





## CHALLENGES OF GARDENING IN CATALUNYA

**H**EALTHY PLANTS FOR HEALTHY GARDENS by Clodagh and Dick Handscombe, Gardening in Spain for twenty five years.

When planning garden layouts and buying plants too many gardeners only focus on whether a plant was in flower when purchased. The colour of the flowers and the size of the plant with insufficient attention to the eventual size of the plant and whether it is draught and frost resistant and whether the plant has interesting culinary and health benefits. Plants that can be used in infusions, salads or cooked dishes.

Plants of the latter sort in our garden include the following.

1. Rosemary for flavouring meat dishes and for stimulating infusions for tired brains and bodies.

2. Hibiscus flowers for brightening up the appearance of salads and for refreshing infusions made with either fresh or dried flowers.

3. Lavender for sleep inducing bunches to place on your pillow and for relaxing lavender water or oil.

4. Garlic for its anti oxidant and vitamin and mineral contents and when young for salads and omelettes and for harvesting bulbs for cooking in June or July.

5. Nasturtium plants for their spicy leaves, flowers and flower/seed buds. The later an excellent alternative to capers.

6. Begonias leaves for chewing should you have a sore throat.

7. Mint for a refreshing and distant infusion.

And three more healthy plants that we obtained during a recent weekend visit to Balaguer just north of Lleida in Catalunya

8. Stevia the sugar alternative plant that has as [www.dolcarevolucio.cat](http://www.dolcarevolucio.cat) (sweet revolution) indicates also significant health benefits for diabetes sufferers and also those with anxiety and a number of other frequent problems.

9. Perilla used in shiso fish dishes in Japan and useful for food poisoning situations and respiratory problems.

10. Three varieties of large leafed kalanchoes of benefit to cancer sufferers and also anxiety and hypertension conditions among others.

*More details of the benefits of the latter three plants, where your most convenient distributor is ( click on 'Donde encontrar plantas') and how to grow the plants can be found on the previously mentioned website which is already in Catalan and Castellano and will be in English shortly. In the meantime you can telephone Carles Esquerda - who speaks good English – on 618474390.*

*Plants are made available in return for a 3 euro per plant donation to Dolce Revolution. Mail order deliveries are charged at only 6 euros for 6 plants and 7 euros for twelve plus a payment on delivery charge of 2.5 euros per delivery.*

Just off to finish planting our plants out in raised beds in the garden.

Clodagh and Dicks popular trilogy of books 'Your Garden in Spain', 'Growing Healthy Vegetables in Spain' and 'Growing Healthy Fruit in Spain' are published by Santana Books and can be obtained via high street or internet bookshops. [www.santanabooks.com](http://www.santanabooks.com) currently have a special offer for the trilogy which can be obtained also by telephoning 952-485838.

© Clodagh and Dick Handscombe July 2009.



## TREAT YOUR TASTE BUDS.



The Mediterranean Diet.

Olive oil, aromatic herbs, dried fruit, wild mushrooms and game from the Pyrenees, the trinity of olives, grapes and wheat from the hilly heartland, all manner of fruits, vegetables, and nuts from the irrigated lowlands, rice and eels from the river deltas, and a great variety of fish and shellfish are the basis of a cuisine which is one of the happiest expressions of the Mediterranean diet.

One of the simplest and yet most delicious dishes is "pa amb tomaquet": a large slice of fresh country bread (toasted or not) rubbed with tomato and drizzled with virgin olive oil. It may be topped with Iberian ham, cheese and anchovies or served along with meat, chicken or fish "a la brasa" (cooked over a charcoal fire).

### Andalusian Gazpacho

Serving Size: 6

1 cup onions, chopped

1 medium cucumber, peeled and chopped

1 medium bell pepper, seeds removed

5 ounces pimiento

3 lb tomatoes

2 garlic cloves

5 tablespoons olive oil

3 slices of bread, cubed

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar

1 teaspoon tabasco sauce

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

3 tablespoons chives, chopped

## ANDALUSIAN GAZPACHO

In an electric blender or food processor, combine half each of the tomatoes, onions, cucumber, bell pepper, and pimiento with enough of the tomato juice to facilitate blending.

Blend at high speed for at least 30 seconds to thoroughly mix the raw vegetables. In a large mixing bowl, combine the mixed vegetables with the remaining tomato juice and chill for at least 2 hours. You may also elect to chill the serving bowls at this time.

Meanwhile make the croutons. Rub the interior of a skillet with the garlic clove, and add the olive oil. In the skillet, sauté the bread cubes over a medium heat until golden brown. Set aside until serving time.

Chop the remaining tomatoes, onions, cucumber, bell pepper, and pimiento, and combine in a small mixing bowl while adding the red wine vinegar, Tabasco sauce, salt, and pepper.

Thoroughly combine all ingredients and marinate at room temperature until serving time; or refrigerate if you won't be serving the Gazpacho within an hour.

To serve, place equal portions of the gazpacho in the chilled soup bowls. Add about 2 tablespoons of the marinated vegetable mixture to the centre of each serving. Sprinkle with the chopped chives, and garnish with a few of the croutons



Garlic

Rosemary

Hibiscus

Lavender

Nasturtium

Begonia

Mint

Stevia

Perilla

Kalanchoes



SWINE flu is on the verge of a hideous and unstoppable mutation after contracting a virulent case of Cherie Blair, scientists have warned.



Experts who had predicted the virus was unlikely to mutate, now say that it definitely will and it is going to be disgusting.

Professor Henry Brubaker, of the Institute for Studies, said: "The Cherie virus will attach itself to the swine flu and suck at it like a big, patronising leech that thinks it's better than you.

"Viewed through a microscope the early form of the mutant CherSwine virus looks like a spiky ball of pus with the mouth of Ronald McDonald.

"And after just ten minutes on the Petri dish it leapt into my wallet and started pocketing all the fivers."

Research scientists are now working frantically to develop a vaccine using a handful of questionable property deals, a dash of extreme Catholicism and an awful lot of Dettol.

According to Prof Brubaker a virus with the contagiousness of swine flu and the eye-gouging awfulness of Cherie Blair will be 'a bit like the Black Death, if it was obsessed with money and status'.

He added: "Have you seen 28 Days Later? I thought it was rather disappointing actually."

The public have been urged to reduce the risk of infection by avoiding new-age bullshit gurus, £1000 charity lunches and Bargain Books.

CLIMATE change will transform the south east of England into a steaming jungle filled with giant snakes and marauding tribes of blood-thirsty cannibals, scientists have predicted.

Researchers at the Institute for Studies have warned that unless carbon emissions are reduced Essex and Kent will resemble the darkest reaches of Amazonia, probably in about 18 months time.

Professor Henry Brubaker said: "First will come the mosquitos. They will be huge, about the size of a crow. Then the giant snakes will arrive to feast on the mosquitos.

"Within months towns including Colchester, Ashford, Gravesend, and possibly even Braintree, will be little more than mangrove swamps. However, local rail services should be unaffected."

He added: "Before long the populations will be reduced to primal savagery. Unable to grow crops on the dark jungle floor they will raid each others settlements with the victors feasting upon the flesh of the vanquished.

"The strongest tribes, driven on by their insatiable lust for human flash, will soon descend upon the slow, fat people of Hampshire."

Meanwhile doctors are warning that fewer old people will die as a result of rising temperatures.

Dr Wayne Hayes, of the British Medical Association, said: "Warmer winters will mean more OAPs I'm afraid."

He added: "If you feel that your local community is being overrun, then it might be an idea to nudge one of them under a bus."



rather than baggy pyjamas.

Girl fights had previously been banned from the event amid claims that while two slim, toned, sweaty women going at each other was obviously worth watching, it was not necessarily a sport.

Advice is now being sought from rhythmic gymnastics experts on how to judge the all-women bouts while hiding a straining erection. A London 2012 spokesman said: "I think the main thing will be to make sure we can see the judges' hands at all times."

The IOC also said girl fights would help make the Olympics more relevant to the East End of London.

Training is already under way in the boroughs of Greenwich and Stratford, with the best medal prospects being told their opponents gave their boyfriends a hand-shandy behind the Odeon.

Meanwhile community activists stressed that if East End women were beating each other up, it would give local men more time to embellish their West Ham tattoos and hand out BNP leaflets.



MEN have won the right to watch two women have a sweaty fight as long as one of them gets to listen to her national anthem at the end.

The International Olympic Committee agreed that women punching each other was 'more Olympic' than karate because the competitors would be wearing tight-fitting vests

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Girl fight campaigner, Holly Turnbull, said "It's been a long and difficult battle, not least to stop the IOC using the words 'foxy' and 'Angel Delight' at every meeting.

"It's taken two years for them to agree that we wouldn't have to wear six-inch stilettos and skimpy, leather hotpants."

She added: "Part of our strategy was to show them Million Dollar Baby, although obviously we switched it off before she gets crippled and Clint Eastwood kills her.

"What? You haven't? Oh, sorry about that."

  
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Since the end of July Sky has been issuing NEW WHITE

viewing cards to paid up subscription customers. This new card carries even greater encryption than the old "Blue House" cards and are updated to ensure that sky themselves always stay ahead of the game in offering the best premium service. At present sky are rolling out cards by region and new cards can take up to 6 months to arrive. The early signs that this is happening is a message will be seen on screen asking you to insert the new sky card into the viewing slot. It normally then takes around 2 to 3 weeks for the card to arrive at it's registered UK address. *This message will keep appearing until the card is replaced with the new card. If it is not replaced then after around 2 to 3 months the old card will switch off and the customer will lose all of their premium channels. Sky will still be charging for this service if it is being received or not.*

Some expats may have moved to Spain not cancelling their SKY subscription in the UK, but bringing their card with them a word of caution here.

1. If you do not have access to your old address to collect the new viewing card from, you will be wise to cancel your subscription as soon as possible with sky. If you do not cancel, sky will send your new card out to this old address and still continue to charge you the full monthly amount as you will be in breach of your contract if you do not pay. Here at Britsat we can supply from stock managed new white 2009 sky cards for a yearly fee that takes all of the headache out of being able to watch sky subscription channels. Our service which has been running for over 10 years allows you to remain completely

anonymous, as we fully manage your sky card and payment allowing you to add on channels, watch pay per view special events, add on ESPN the new football channel provider, take away channels have sky plus with recording or even HD with the correct sky receiver. If required we can also arrange to cancel your old sky card, at the same time as switching you on to a new white card.

2. If you still have access to your old UK address, when the sky card arrives with you to Spain via the UK and before you attempt to change it over, make sure your sky box has been switched on for at least 24hrs and ensure that you are receiving your premium subscription channels first. If all is OK then with your sky box SWITCHED ON, remove the old card from the viewing card slot and replace with the new card. Leave it for up to 4 hours to activate itself automatically from the satellite. If for any reason it does not work DO NOT RING SKY DIRECT FROM SPAIN as you will get the card and possibly sky box blacked by sky rendering it useless. If you need help give us a ring and we can go through some software downloads/upgrades to your system to resolve the issue for you.

#### NEW SKY VIEWING CARDS :- Q & A

a. All existing paid up customers will receive a NEW sky viewing card. (providing they either have a UK address or MANAGED CARD FROM US)

b. At present we have been advised that SKY Free to Air (freeview) cards which have been purchased during the past year will continue to work. Cards that are older than 1 year will eventually get switched off by Sky. However if your only interest is BBC, ITV 1, C4 etc. these channels will remain active but you will lose Channel 5 and ITV2, ITV3 etc. (for free to Air customers we have a fix to reinstall Channel 5 etc. onto your sky

box providing you have a good satellite signal)

c. We do get some strange phone calls from customers with OLD WIVES TALES, here are a few with answers to try and address this issue:-

1. *With a new white sky card it is NOT possible to record sky with a standard sky box. You still need either a sky plus box or sky HD box on a premium subscription package for it to be activated.*

2. *Your mate will probably not be able to align your satellite dish correctly by just looking at the sky. Although the system is called sky it is received off the Astra satellite at 28.2 and requires very fine tuning to optimise 100% stable viewing with the correct equipment.*

3. *This is one of the most frequently banded about OLD WIVES TALES, "I can only watch BBC during the daytime as at night time it goes off, but that's normal as my mate says it is the same for him"*

In answer to these- NO IT IS NOT CORRECT, providing the correct dish and low noise LNB is used in our area of Spain there is no reason why clients can not view all the channels available from sky. In the past 10years we have not failed yet in providing the client with a full stable service.

4. *"These sky cards my mate says can be viewed by anyone who chips them"*

Yet again another old Chinese whisper as the encryption used by sky has not yet been broken and their system remains the most secure on the market.

Any clients or customers with any concerns or questions concerning this change over or with any system problems we can be contacted either by e-mail or phone. **Web site for further**

**information: [www.britsat.tv](http://www.britsat.tv)**

**e-mail: [customerservices@britsat.tv](mailto:customerservices@britsat.tv)**

**or call TONY on:**

**977 486 387 (9am to 6pm)**

Stay a while in Spain, and beyond the sunshine, fiestas, Rioja and laidbackness you may find yourself drifting in an uncharted ocean of unwritten laws and mysterious quirks.

Who are those guys with bulging document cases who always jump the queues at government offices: could I get one of them to jump the queue for me? Why does everything keep closing down for days at a time?

Is that really my dentist in bloomers and a beribboned cape busking at the next table, or have I lost it?

You need to be **In The Garlic - en el ajo** - in the know.



**Gestor** You've been sitting for hours on a plastic chair at the tax office, glued to the screen for your number to come up, and you see all these guys with bulging document cases being

let through even though they've only just arrived. An indignant murmur ripples through the crowd, glances are exchanged... You kick yourself and swear that next time, however high the fee, you will hire a *gestor* yourself: a professional knower of the often tangled ropes, a hands-on doer of tedious paperwork, tax returns and accounts, expert sorter-out of bureaucratic hassles of every kind. Believe us, a good one is worth his/her fees in gold. By the way, for online procedures, you will still need your *gestor* on the phone to talk you through the most user-unfriendly websites on the Net.

**Puente** A bridge. But also a great anti-work-ethic institution, whereby if a public holiday falls on a Tuesday (or a Thursday), Monday (or Friday) is thrown in for good measure. The year is littered with *puentes*. They are the life-blood of travel agencies, which offer special deals for, among others, the puente del Pilar (Oct 12), the puente de Mayo (May 1), and best of all, the puente de la Inmaculada/de la Constitución (December 6 and December 8). When December 6 falls on a Tuesday and



December 8 on a Thursday, it makes a mega triple *punte*. What with Christmas and New Year, December is about as productive a month as August (when Spain shuts down completely).

**Tuna** Not a large fish, but a wandering band of student minstrels that keeps alive, almost unchanged, a university tradition dating back to the 13th century. Amazing, in these digital

days, how many of Spain's future lawyers and doctors, architects, engineers and other pillars of society still prance around in velvet bloomers and beribboned capes, singing "typical spanish" songs, serenading women under balconies and getting buckets of water sloshed over them by sleepless neighbours. Women and tourists love them, men hate them. Their legendary ladykiller skills trigger barely concealed envy. It all started in Palencia, where the first *studium generale*, the forerunner of the university, was founded in 1212. Young men flocked there, and those too poor to pay their way busked in inns, taverns and medieval greasy spoons for a few coins and a bowl of soup.

© **Valerie Collins & Theresa O'Shea**

These answers are from our book *In The Garlic*, a fun A-Z guide to life in Spain which we'll be sharing with you over the coming months in an exclusive themed series focussing on areas like Housing, Banking, Shopping and Key People. Between us we have lived in Spain for over 50 years, Valerie since the tail end of the Franco era, in Barcelona, and Theresa since the early nineties, in Galicia, Catalunya and now in Andalucía. Valerie's late husband was a Catalan lawyer, and she has two grown-up sons. Theresa's Spanish husband is from a large Cordobese family.

To read more about our work, please visit us at:- [www.inthegarlic.com](http://www.inthegarlic.com)

*In The Garlic: Your Informative, Fun Guide to Spain* is published by Santana Books and is available from all good bookshops and online from Amazon and Bookworld España.







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**WANTED VOLUNTEERS** | help needed to look after the abandon dogs at ARCA near Tortosa. Please call Maeve on 678 975 816 if you can offer any assistance. Plus anyone interested in organising some fund raising for the dogs would be most appreciated. PLEASE HELP

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**CAR BOOT** | 1st Sunday of every month 10am. stalls 5€. Refreshments, Camping St Jordi, Platje Ayellanes, L'Ampolla Tel 679 115 247 •**CAR BOOT SALE** | 2nd Sunday of every month. Situated Hipaca Escornalbou, Vilanova D'Escornalbou. Arrive 9am starts 10am. Bar & restaurant- no fresh produce allowed! Contacts: Cosme on 620215772 or Silvia 665159781 •**CLASSIC CAR MEETING** 1st FRIDAY of every month 6PM Call for more details and new location: 678 718 446 •**EL PERELLO FREESIA GROUP** (working for cancer charities) Wanted volunteers to help with the book stalls call Tel: 977 059 780 or 650 318 157- 12th September Book Stall at the Homogenik. 27th September Boot Sale Proxims Car Park. El Perello. The AGM Meeting and lunch will be held on 10th September. phone Jackie 630587094 for info. •**FRIENDSHIP CLUB** | for all nationalities meeting 2nd, Sunday of each month near Tortosa free stalls for those that have wares to sell, food & drinks available. Call Brian Parkin at 660990422 or 977059911 •**CAR BOOT SALE** | first sunday every month C/Garcia Restaurant Braseria Can Palomo MORA LA NOVA. •**SQUARE AND COMPASS CLUB OF SPAIN** | a social club for all Masons and partners without the rigours or costs of a Masonic lodge. If you are interested please contact WB. Alan Clarke Tel 964 765 453 or [bcoakleaf@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bcoakleaf@yahoo.co.uk)

•**MASONIC GROUP MEETING MONTHLY** | Are you or have you been a free mason, if so you and your partner are invited are to join us for our monthly social gatherings. with a view to forming an english speaking lodge. for more information please phone Les Beech on 678 357 713 or email: [lesbeech@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lesbeech@hotmail.co.uk) •**C of E CHURCH SERVICE** | 4th Wednesday of every month at 12.30p.m. in Ampolla village church, all welcome. Followed by Menu del dia lunch (optional) Enquiries: 977 593 219. The Anglican Congregation of St Christopher's, in 5, Plaza Primero De Mayo, Vinaros - Services will be at 10 a.m. every Sunday. During the week, also other activities i.e. Thursdays, a "Drop In" morning from 11.a.m. to 1.00 p.m. when friends can meet for a coffee & a chat. . Paul Needle can be contacted on 964761641 or mobile 662482944 or e-mail [paulneedle@aol.com](mailto:paulneedle@aol.com) for any pastoral needs.

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email: [cancershock@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cancershock@yahoo.co.uk)

**OUR ARTICLES ON WHAT'S ON FROM PREVIOUS YEARS ISSUES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEB SITE**

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Catalan National Day-On 11 September Catalonia commemorates the defeat it suffered at the hands of the Spanish troops of Felipe V of Bourbon in 1714. Catalonia, which had been a sovereign nation up to that point, lost its national rights and liberties, with its own laws abolished and Catalan language and culture banned.

[www.11setembre.cat/](http://www.11setembre.cat/)

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