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May 2008 monthly



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# EDITORIAL

## MEET BOB THE EDITOR

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WE LOOK FORWARD  
TO EXPANDING THE  
MAGAZINE AS TIME  
GOES ON.

### Contributors:

Jeff Greensmith, Fincas Direct.  
Petra Naumann, Alternative Practitioner  
Printing:  
Apex Design, Tarragona

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH:**  
**SPANISH SHAWL (FLABEL-  
LINA IODINEA). TAKEN IN  
SCRIPPS CANYON, LA JOLLA,  
CALIFORNIA BY MAGNUS  
KJÆRGAARD**



Please contact us by:

E-mail: [info@theolivepress.eu](mailto:info@theolivepress.eu)

Web : [www.theolivepress.eu](http://www.theolivepress.eu)

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By post: Aptdo de Correos,147  
43895 L'Ampolla  
Tarragona

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**R**ecent rains do little to help Spanish water wars  
- Apr 16, 2008 - 3:35 PM

The Valencia regional government spokesman, Vicente Rambla -

The granting of a water transfer from the Ebro to Barcelona has upset other dry regions of the country. The Regional Councillor for the Environment in Valencia, José Ramón García Antón, has called on the Government to organise a water summit to include all those who are implicated in taking water from the Ebro river. The so-called mini-transfer from the mouth of the river to Barcelona has been criticised by Valencia and Murcia, as you might expect, while even Socialist Aragón has also voiced concerns.

Antón has sent a letter to the Minister for Agriculture, Elena Espinosa, in which he asks for a meeting leading to a state pact on water. The Valencia Government is also studying the possibilities of taking legal action against the transfer to Barcelona. The news was given to the press by the Government vice-president and

spokesman Vicente Rambla.

**V**alencia considers legal action against Ebro-Barcelona water transfer - Apr 17, 2008 - 8:12 AM

Reservoir levels have increased by 2.5 percent over the past week in Spain, but are still down 12.5 percent on the year. The rains seen in Spain over the past week or so have resulted in a 2.5% increase in the amount of water stored, but have done nothing to ease the situation in the crisis areas of the country, Barcelona, Murcia and the Levante Coast. Nationally the reservoirs currently hold 12.1% less water than a year ago.

A new report from the European Union does nothing to calm the dramatic situation, predicting a reduction in rainfall in Spain of between 20% and 40% by the end of the century. Brussels has said that new 'more integrated' water policy is needed in Spain for what is called a more rational use of resources.

According to the Spanish Ministry for the Environment, agriculture takes 60% of water supply, and here a great effort has been made over

recent years to modernise the irrigation systems. The Government has claimed that it is precisely the water now saved in such irrigation which is planned to be captured from the mouth of the Ebro river to be piped to Barcelona. The fact that water for Tarragona has been extracted from the river for some time has given the Government the excuse to call the new 60km pipe which will link Tarragona to Barcelona as a 'new connection', instead of a 'transfer'.

Minister for the Environment, Elena Espinosa, has repeated time and time again the plan is not a transfer. The reason for that is that the regions of both Valencia and Murcia are demanding what they describe as their own water transfers, transfers which the Socialists cancelled in favour of a policy for the construction of more desalination plants.

In Murcia, the President of the regional government, Ramón Luis Valcárcel has spoken of the possibility of uniting with the President of the Valencia region, Francisco Camps to, as he put it, 'mobilise the society' of the two regions, and that of Almería to demand the water which 'belongs to Spain and nobody needs.'

**F**inancial director of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao makes off with nearly half a million Euro  
By h.b. - Apr 16, 2008 - 3:06 PM

The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao - The theft was discovered when a replacement was called in when the Director was off sick. The man responsible for the finance at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao has been sacked after it was discovered that Roberto Cearsolo Barrenetxea had made off with 450,000 € from the establishment.

The theft, which was discovered by chance when the man was off sick, was carried out by bank transfers and cheques, and has been going on since 1998. As an internal investigation was started on April 11th, the man sent a letter to the Director of the Guggenheim in which he confessed to his crime and apologised for his behaviour and the damage caused



**D**irector and Head of Production at the Ascó nuclear plant are sacked

By h.b. - Apr 16, 2008 - 5:06 PM  
The Ascó nuclear plant cooling tower, near Tarragona -

It comes following the playing down of the importance of a nuclear leak at the plant near Tarragona last November. The director of the Ascó nuclear plant in the



village of the same name near Barcelona has been sacked after downplaying the extent of a radioactive leak last November 28.

Rafael Gasca and the Head of Production at the plant, González Tardiu are both leaving after the discovery that they had said the leak was 'of scant significance' and classified as level one

in the international scale of nuclear incidents.

Greenpeace has been among the many groups who have since called for the incident to be reclassified, fearing that in fact the incident was 'the most serious' in the history of nuclear power in Spain. They claimed to have detected far higher levels of radioactivity. Other ecologist groups and the CCOO union have also complained of cost cutting at the plant.

The CSN the Nuclear Safety Council in Spain has been testing all the people who have passed through the plant since November 28 last year, and say that all those tested, including schoolchildren who visited the plant on April 4, are normal. There is no evidence that despite the admitted higher levels of radio-activity released, that anyone was subjected to a dose above that of established legal limits.



**D**river rescued after hanging from Barcelona bridge for an hour  
By h.b. - Apr 13, 2008 - 9:30 AM  
His car had been involved in an accident on the AP7 motorway. A driver who was left hanging for an hour in his car from a road bridge and above train lines in Barcelona has been rescued.

The man was trapped inside the vehicle after the accident on the AP-7 road which left his car caught by the security beams on the side of the bridge designed to stop things falling onto the railway tracks

below in Cerdanyola del Vallés on Saturday night.

Train services were halted given the danger that the car might fall, but finally a large crane was brought into lift the vehicle to safety.



**L**esbian love scene between Penelope Cruz and Scarlett Johansson - greatly exaggerated  
By h.b. - Apr 7, 2008 - 7:16 PM

Scarlett Johansson and Woody Allen during shooting in Barcelona - Photo EFE

The new Woody Allen film, shot in Barcelona, premieres in the city in September. The new Woody Allen film, 'Vicky Cristina Barcelona' which was shot in Barcelona and Asturias last year will open in September and could also open the Cannes film festival.

Jaume Roures, from the Media Pro company which was one of the film's producers, says that Barcelona looks splendid in the movie, and that those who did not know the city would be eager to do so. The movie will be shown in the city only in Catalan or in the original English version subtitled. Speaking to the RAC1 radio station he also revealed that a lesbian love scene between Penelope Cruz and Scarlett Johansson had been 'greatly exaggerated'.

Woody Allen had said in July last year that he wanted the film to be a 'love letter to Barcelona' presenting

the city to the rest of the world 'as seen through my eyes, as I have done with Manhattan'.

## Wind Power Records Broken in Spain

**W**ind Power Records Broken in Spain  
As heavy winds blew across Spain last month, the generators produced a new record of 9,862 megawatts, 40% of total consumption that weekend which was low due to the Easter holiday weekend. Spain, which along with Germany and Denmark, is among the three biggest producers of wind power in the European Union, is aiming to triple the amount of energy it derives from renewable sources by 2020.

## New Rules for Health Insurance Abroad

**N**ew Rules for Health Insurance Abroad  
The Department of Health in the UK has announced that from 1st April 2008, British nationals who permanently reside in Spain will have to present the Spanish equivalent of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) if they need medical treatment whilst visiting the UK or any other EU member state. The new rule applies to UK nationals who live in Spain and make Spanish Social Security contributions or live in Spain while receiving a state pension or long term incapacity benefit from the UK through the registration of an E121. The lack of a Spanish EHIC could result in people being considered as a private patient. The Spanish equivalent of the EHIC can be applied for at a Spanish social security office (INSS).

## Zapatero Promises Better Protection for British Buyers in Spain

The recently re-elected Spanish Socialist Party leader Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero has promised to bring in some positive changes for Britons looking to buy into the Spanish property market. The changes promised will mean that people looking to buy in Spain will have better protection through more regulation of

the sector. The party also wants to encourage buyers to purchase their property through mortgage providers, and by doing this they can have a tax-free allowance of up to 60,000 euros.

## Government Proposes Big Spending on Roads

**G**overnment Proposes Big Spending on Roads  
The Spanish government has proposed spending 12 billion euros in partnership with private companies on road building and improvements. Total spending is expected to be around 20 billion euros for work to be completed between 2009 and 2012. The intention is to give a boost to the construction industry in the present difficult circumstances, but will have to comply with EU spending rules on public projects.



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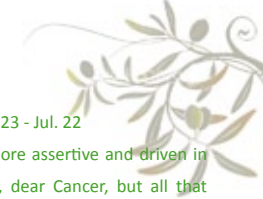


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## E-NUMBERS MAKE MY CHILDREN HILARIOUS'

**P**ARENTS across Britain have reacted angrily to the European ban on food colourings, claiming artificial ingredients make their children funnier and more interesting.

The EU wants to ban a range of E-numbers amid claims they are made from diesel by-products and turn you into a raging psychopath.

But British parents insist the right level of artificial colourings can transform a dull, predictable child into an hilarious, pint-sized version of Norman Wisdom.

Tom Logan, a father of two from Bexhill, said: "On Sundays I like to load up my four year-old with a litre of orange squash and then set him loose in the garden with some old vases, a tortoise and a hammer."



Isn't Norman Wisdom funnier  
than your dull child?

Meanwhile thousands of parents are objecting to the changes after spending years controlling their children through a delicate chemical balance of E-numbers and horse tranquilisers.

Emma Stevens, 39, from Chester, said: "I can't remember why we started pumping them full of these things, but we're in way too deep to stop now."

"Take away the horse tranqu and it's like the Texas Chainsaw Massacre in here. Take away the bright orange dyes and you have to drag them upstairs by the hair."

Mrs Stevens added: "My children are a healthy, well-adjusted cocktail of artificial chemical compounds."

"To an outside observer they look completely normal, and I'd like to keep pretending that they are until they go off to university and start mixing their own drugs." Isn't Norman Wisdom funnier than your dull child?

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### CAPRICORN Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

The first three weeks of May are mostly dedicated to enjoyment, play, and romance, dear Capricorn. Your charm is easy and natural. Pressures are easing in your life and you are coming out of your shell. Sexuality is strong, and tensions in a close partnership lessen.



### AQUARIUS Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

Activities in and around the home figure strongly in the first half of May, dear Aquarius. Less attention to career responsibilities brings you closer to your roots. Romance is hopping in the second half of the month, when play time is more important to you than usual.



### PISCES Feb. 20 - Mar. 20

Plenty of visits, errands to run, social activities to attend, correspondence to write and respond to, and other busy activity is featured for the first three weeks of May. This month is a great time to tell someone how you feel, even if they already know it.



### ARIES Mar. 21 - Apr. 20

Your main focus this month, dear Aries, is on matters surrounding security, spending, and ownership. However, a sub-theme of May involves having fun, enjoying hobbies and other amusements, romance, speculation, activities with children, and general playfulness.



### TAURUS Apr. 21 - May 21

May is a power month for you, dear Taurus. It's time to turn on the charm, ask for what you want, and pursue your personal goals and desires. A romance or creative project moves forward after a lull. Job offers are likely to knock on your door.



### GEMINI May 22 - Jun. 22

May is mentally stimulating for you, dear Gemini, but mostly quiet for the first three weeks. Feelings of being blocked by circumstances or others arise on the 3rd, and the urge to rest is strong. It's all systems go on the 22-24.



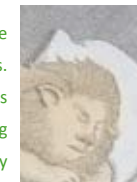
### CANCER Jun. 23 - Jul. 22

You have been more assertive and driven in the past months, dear Cancer, but all that calms down this month as fiery Mars leaves your sign. You are more detached than you have been recently, and many pressures in your life lift.



### LEO Jul. 23 - Aug. 23

A more self-assured and assertive spirit grabs hold of you in May, dear Leo, after the first week of the month. You can't be ignored! The desire to move about, explore, and mark your territory is strong. Any efforts to restrict you will surely fail.



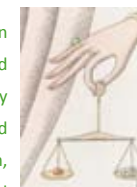
### VIRGO Aug. 24 - Sep. 23

An adventurous, "don't tie me down" spirit gives way to a desire (or need) to take care of business in May, dear Virgo. You are in demand professionally. What you have (and haven't) done comes up for inspection this month, so keep everything above reproach.



### LIBRA Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

You are attempting to re-invent yourself this month, dear Libra, and the urge for self-transformation is strong. Wanting more from life is a theme now and through next month. May is a good month in which to borrow or to settle debts, if necessary.



### SCORPIO Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Focus this month, dear Scorpio, is mostly on partnering, sharing, and intimacy. Nevertheless, the demands of your work, and perhaps even the public, are large in May. This is a strong month for settling differences on a personal level, and for going after what you want professionally.



### SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21

Nice opportunities with finances, work, and employment arise this month, dear Sagittarius. Practical matters are strong for you in May. Money matters move forward. Although gains are not necessarily explicit just yet, finances look more hopeful. Intellectual work and studies are favored this month.





**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DATA SHEET**

ELEMENT:	Women
SYMBOL:	♂
DISCOVERER:	Adam
ATOMIC MASS:	Accepted as 55kg, but known to vary from 45kg to 225kg

**PHYSICAL PROPERTIES**

1. Body surface normally covered with film of powder and paint
2. Boils at absolutely nothing – freezes for no apparent reason
3. Found in various grades ranging from virgin material to common ore

**CHEMICAL PROPERTIES**

1. Reacts well to gold, platinum and all precious stones
2. Explodes spontaneously without reason or warning
3. The most powerful money reducing agent known to man

**COMMON USE**

1. Highly ornamental, especially in sports cars
2. Can greatly aid relaxation
3. Can be a very effective cleaning agent

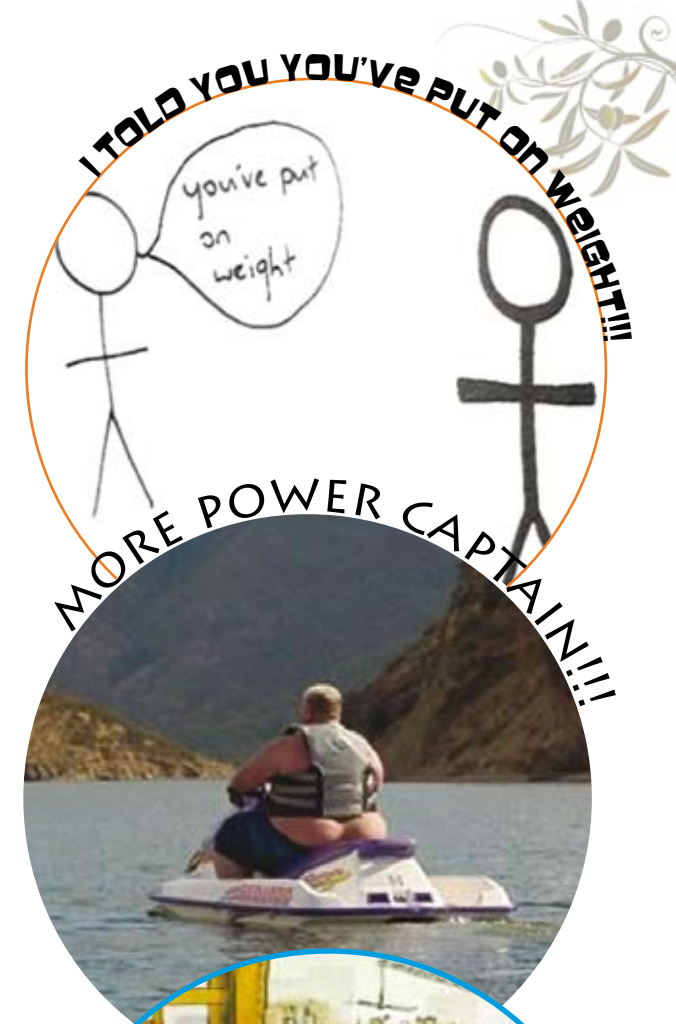
**HAZARDS**

1. Turns green when placed alongside a superior specimen
2. Possession of more than one is possible but specimens must never make eye contact

If Homer was a real person?



HOW TO TELL IF YOU HAVE SMELLY FEET





**P**riorato is situated to the north west of Tarragona and produces some of the best and most sought after wines in Spain. Naturally, this means they have their price but it is possible to sample the wines of Priorato without taking out a second mortgage.

The region is also only one of two, along with Rioja, that has been awarded the highest quality category DOCa. Unlike Rioja, however, all of its wines are excellent.

The region of Priorato takes its name from the 12th century Carthusian priory (priorat) founded in 1163 which started local viticulture. Legend has it that a shepherd had a vision on the site of the priory, in which he saw angels descending a heavenly ladder, which gave its name to the priory 'Scala Dei'. The name lives on today in one of the region's bodegas still making wine in the cellars of the old priory.



What makes this area produce such unique wines? The answer as always lies with grapes, climate and soil. Lets start with the soil. It is perfect for vines and consists of red and black slate and quartz which conserves and reflects heat. In addition, the roots of the vines have to go deep in search of water, nutrients and minerals.

The region as a whole is very steep and mountainous which means that working the vineyards is very labour intensive and hence, costly. In addition, the area is small and production is limited.

There are a number of micro climates in the area but essentially the summers are long dry and hot and the

winters cold. This tends to produce wines of a high alcohol level. The minimum allowed by the DO is 13.5%!

The main grape varieties are the Spanish varieties Garnacha and Cariñena together with the French Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah. The vines are old and produce low yields which again increase the cost. However, this means that the wines have a delicious intensity of flavour. All Priorato wines are blends of different grapes sometimes as many as four varieties.

When taken together the three elements of grapes, soil and climate produce Priorato wines that are sought after throughout the world. The most famous bodega in the region is that of Alvaro Palacios who makes three wines the most famous and expensive of which is L'Ermite.

A reasonably priced newcomer from the region is 'Nita' made by a young, enthusiastic female winemaker called Meritxell Palleja who has worked with Alvaro Palacios. The wine is a classic Priorato blend of 45% Garnacha, 35% Cariñena, 15% Cabernet Sauvignon and 5% Syrah. The wine has a delicious red fruit character with underlying mineral hints typical of the region. The wine has a pleasing freshness as well as structure with a persistently pleasant after-taste. It is a well-priced introduction to the wines of Priorato – the first rung on God's ladder.

Cheers! Salud! Prost! Skål! Proost! Santé! Slainte! Kippis!



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# FIVE TIPS TO HELP SELL YOUR PROPERTY

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It's no secret that the Spanish property market has become a buyers market, with prices falling and likely to drop further still.

British buyers are hit hard by the adverse exchange rate — as anyone receiving a UK pension in the euro zone will know. Not surprisingly, some would-be purchasers will wait until the rate improves.

Potential Spanish buyers, while encouraged by falling prices, are finding that Spain's banks are now drastically limiting mortgages, particularly for second homes.



"When I said it might sell faster if you put in a new driveway, I meant if you repaved the old one."

Some owners will wait for the situation to improve before putting their houses on the market — perhaps renting them out in the meantime— but many need to sell now.

Don't forget that the same exchange rate now favours sellers moving back to the UK.

So to sum up, if you need to sell, the situation is difficult, but not impossible.

Houses are still being bought and sold... but the rules of the game now favour the buyer.

It's important to prepare for a sale though, so even if you're only thinking of selling at this stage, the sooner you get started the better.

## 1. Choose the right agent

Make sure your agent speaks Spanish and English and can sell to both markets.

Check that he or she can issue valid IVA (VAT) invoices, which can help reduce any capital gains tax.

An agent should also be able to outline the main legal or planning issues that might complicate the sale.

Ask about how your property will be marketed.

## 2. Get documentation in order

Buyers are now better informed than ever. While most non-Spanish buyers instruct a lawyer, Spanish buyers will have their bank check documentation — it is vital that your property's documentation is in order.

Owners of rural properties should know how the house on their land is classified:

'vivienda' (dwelling), 'almacén' (storage building), etc, as this will determine the asking price, and should also know the exact boundaries of their land.

Check that your 'escritura' (title deed) accurately describes your property and that any anomalies can be resolved. Get this done as early as possible — few things are as frustrating as losing or delaying a sale because documentation is not in order.

Your agent should have a good basic understanding of these issues and how any problems can be solved.

## 3. Pricing: keep it real!

Prices have dropped substantially, so ask your agent for a 'no-punches-pulled' opinion of how much your property is really likely to sell for.

If you are prepared to pay for it, an up-to-date bank valuation is useful for setting a realistic selling price and for countering low offers.

## 4. Prepare your property for sale

Not something that has caught on with Spanish sellers yet, the idea of preparing or 'staging' a home has inspired numerous TV programs, books and websites.

Important ideas include 'decluttering' and using a light, neutral decor to heighten the feeling of space

and appeal to as many buyers as possible. Your estate agent can tell you which changes will help a sale.

For potential buyers of rural properties, access is a key issue, so if you are selling a finca consider improving difficult stretches of track.

## 5. Know your tax liability

Before 2007, residents and non-residents of Spain paid capital gains tax at different rates. Both now pay the same rate, but in some circumstances it may be worth becoming a resident of Spain — a fairly simple procedure for EU citizens.

While your estate agent cannot offer legal or tax advice, he or she should be able to tell you if this applies to you or not.

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.



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Find out more about the Roman influence in Spain at Tarraco Viva, the annual 'Romans brought to life' event in the Catalan city of Tarragona. More than a just a 10-day toga party, Tarraco Viva aims to raise awareness to the city's Roman history and culture through discussions and workshops at the International Roman Historical Conference. Throughout the event there are processions and re-enactments of daily Roman life, gladiatorial contests and authentic presentations of Roman theatre and music. Even the local restaurants join in, by resurrecting Roman recipes. In and around the centre of Tarragona are the remains of monuments that have survived from the time when Tarraco was the most important Roman city of the Iberian Peninsula. Some of the events are held in the Roman amphitheatre but much of the action takes place in a purpose-built auditorium:

Camp de Mart auditorium and various venues (Venue). North side of Old Town, outside castle wall. Also Anfiteatro Romano, Circ Roma and Foro Romano

The principal attraction this year is a macro-sized gladiatorial games, with the depiction of a ceremony in Apollo's honour. And, of course, LEGIO PRIMA GERMANICA re-enactment in the statium, plus the horses of cursus publicus (a kind of pony express postal service).

The Festival Tarraco Viva 2008, which this year reaches its X edition, will take place from 15 to 25 May in Tarragona.

The first weekend (from 15 to 18) will be devoted to productions tarraconenses own groups and the second weekend (23.24 and 25) the Festival takes its international character with the participation of groups from the rest of Spain and the European groups, the Fair Rome in the World of Museums, writing workshops, arqueogastronomia, music of ancient Rome.



A preliminary program of the event is on their web site:

[www.tarracoviva.com](http://www.tarracoviva.com)



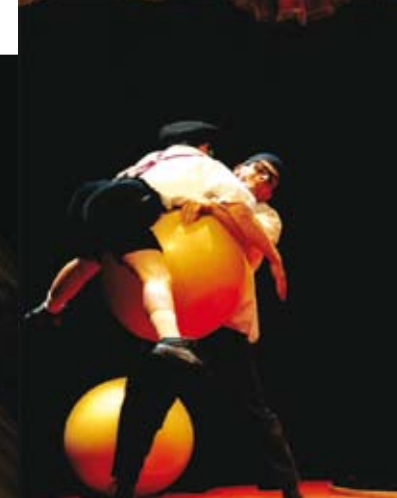
In the year 1997, TRAPEZI was born in Reus as the first and only circus Festival in Spain. The celebration was not based on dangerous or breath taking acts but on an aesthetical global concept and the artistic quality of the performance itself. Only few years later, the proposal has already produced an important result: the warm presence of the audience, who looks forward to this date year after year.

In May 1997, TRAPEZI was born with a show created by the French company Les Arts Sauts. An aerial ballet based on aesthetics, technique and humour hanging 21 metres above the heads of the audience. The central square of Reus, plaça del Mercadal, was packed with an audience who will never forget that moment.

The journalist and circus critic Jordi Jané wrote an article in the Catalan newspaper Avui headed by: "Trapezi 97: a star is born". The follow-up and further consequences are a proof of it. New artists, professional shows being scheduled in theatre venues in Barcelona, the presence of big circus companies with an amazing media response, etc. All of it, with the support of a very accurate programme, has guaranteed and launched this Festival all over the world. Only a few years later after that first starting shot, Reus is ready once more to welcome one of the essential cultural events in town.

More information can be found on the official web site:

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





**D**ear reader, it makes me happy to invite you to the world of naturopathic therapies.

## What is a stroke?

A stroke is an acute impairment of the blood circulation within the brain. Arteries or veins could be affected; vessels could be blocked or there may be bleeding to the brain. These disorders may recede and if they are treated in time, the chance of long term consequences can be drastically minimised. For this reason it is very important that one is able to recognise the main indications for a stroke.

## How can I recognise a stroke?

The symptoms of a stroke depend on where the damage is being caused within the brain. It is quite often that one half of the body (left/right) suffers from paralysis with disturbances of equilibrium meaning that the person may fall to the side of the paralysis. In

most cases, hearing, sight and speech is also affected. There is a good test if you're in doubt: let the person smile and try to put his eyebrows up. If he or she isn't able to do this, call 061, so that an ambulance and the emergency doctor can be sent to help.

## What can I do?

The most important thing: remain calm!

If you are alone with the person, phone first before taking any further action.

Apart from that, as the first person providing aid it is your job to stand by and help the person suffering. If possible, the persons head should be propped up a little higher than the rest of the body to take a little of the pressure off the brain. Also, tight clothing should be loosened enabling a better supply of oxygen. If unconscious, patients should always be put into the lateral recumbent position; breathing and pulse should be controlled just as one learns during first aid courses.

## What happens when the person affected leaves hospital?

After leaving the clinic, the main point of the therapy will be the swift mobilisation of the patient and the commencement of self-help training. Depending on the intensity of the stroke, rehabilitation should take place whilst still in hospital.



The correct type of activating-care is of importance whilst planning the future approach. The emphasis is on the building of individual coping strategies for ones personal situation following a stroke, with rehabilitation always being the task of a team. The person affected is also an important part of the team; others are the family and friends. Not only doctors and nursing staff play an important role, but also the well trained therapist. A well trained alternative practitioner is in the position to provide entire individual and intensive care. He helps patient and relations with the organisation of nursing and rehabilitation, if possible in ones home. His tasks include speech and exercise training, physiotherapy, social care, the choice of accessories and the training of the patients integration into everyday life.

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\* ABOVE COMPARISON CHART FOR THE CONTAMINANT REMOVAL FOR VARIOUS SYSTEMS

? Comparisons are from general information Performance varies widely within categories.  
+ Usually not effective against organic contaminants ordinarily found in drinking water.  
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## FORMULA ONE TO FEATURE AN ELEPHANT ON A SKATEBOARD

**M**OTORSPORT bosses have unveiled plans to overhaul Formula One with exciting new features, including hand to hand combat and an elephant on a skateboard.

FIA president Max Mosely said the changes were necessary after everyone suddenly realised that watching a grand prix was 'unbearably tedious'.

He added: "We thought about just chucking some oil on the track or tampering with the brakes, but that's frowned upon. Apparently."

Under the new rules drivers can only

take part in the race after fighting their way through a gruelling series of televised combats, including bare-fisted punching and an 18th century duel, featuring antique pistols and powdered wigs.

Renault driver Fernando Alonso has already outlined his plans to kill former team mate Lewis Hamilton, 'like a dirty, no-good peeg'.

The top three drivers in each race will then be able to pick up extra points if they can beat an elephant on a skateboard over half a mile.

Mr Mosely said: "We reckon that if we get enough people to push the elephant it should pick up a fair head of steam.

"All we have to do now is train an elephant to keep its balance on a very big skateboard for about 20 seconds.

"If it's still not fast enough we'll use a gigantic catapult.



## BRITAIN STRIKES GOLD IN SPORT NO-ONE WATCHES

**B**RITAIN was riding the crest of a wave of victory last night after repeatedly striking gold in one of those sports that nobody ever watches.

TeamGB sets a new world record on their eight-wheeled cyclotron

Britain's finest two-legged men and women took home gold medals in the singles, the hot singles, the fancy doubles, the crotchless triples and the doubled pears.

An ecstatic Wayne Hayes, TeamGB manager, said: "Take one pair of perfectly round wheels, add the relentless pounding of some truly magnificent British thighs, and stand well back."

He added: "I said to every single one of them: whatever you do, for God's sake keep pedalling."

Last night's avalanche of triumph comes hot on the heels of British success at the Los Angeles Kerplunk Open and a 14-12 victory in the World Bread Making Championships in Adelaide.

British competitors now sit astride the world stage in rat-shooting, speed pottery, synchronised chewing, professional bowler hat wearing, darts and snooker.



Sport minister, Gerry Sutcliffe, said: "The next time someone tells you Britain is slow at riding a bike, you can look back on this day with pride, hold your head high and tell them to cock off."

He added: "This is the most exciting thing to have happened in British sport since Formula One boss Max Mosley paid some Nazi hookers to pummel him with a cricket bat."

While the last two decades have seen no shortage of bickering about which path the automotive world should take towards weaning the driving masses off the world's finite supply of oil, little has seemingly been done – at least not on a global scale.

The ongoing discussion saw its last high point when the owners of some of the biggest automotive companies in America stood beside then-President Bill Clinton in 1993 and announced a joint initiative to develop a car that was not only fuel efficient and accessible, but one that would eventually help wean the industry off oil all together.

Unfortunately, like so many government initiatives, the project was unbelievably expensive and ultimately a disaster as Detroit's big boys fought oil-independence every step of the way until the process finally ground to a dead halt when ex-oil CEO George W. Bush took office. Lucky for the consumers, however, Japan took Washington's promises of efficiency and independence seriously and launched an unofficial imitative of their own, with Toyota leading the way. Since then, the venerable Japanese company has set the standard for environmentally-friendly technology and design – an effort that seems to be taking over their entire corporate philosophy, as witnessed at last month's Tokyo Motor Show.

Bolstered by the unparalleled success of the release of their Prius Hybrid, Toyota arrived in

Tokyo with no fewer than eight environmentally-conscious concept cars – which means, while they may not ever see the light of day, these models will most certainly offer a preview of what the company has planned for the next few years.

Titling their new collection, "Harmonious Drive – A New Tomorrow for People and the Planet", Toyota made it perfectly clear where their priorities laid, offering up contributions to almost every market imaginable, from the i-Real individual personnel carrier to the 400-hp hybrid racer FT-HS.

Taking their approach even further, the new class extended the company's environmentally-conscious approach to incorporate not only a driver's physical health, but their mental as well.

Already working toward providing hybrid-alternatives to virtually their entire line, as well as their luxury collection, Lexus, Toyota provided a glimpse of a decidedly cleaner, healthier and more efficient driving experience years ahead of any production car available today, making one wonder how much further along the non-oil market would have been had the likes of Ford and GM kept on track.

Unsurprisingly, Toyota started small with the iQ – a direct challenge to Mercedes' Smart Car, originally introduced last year in Frankfurt, offering up a short and wide car with room enough for three adults and a baby. As compact as they come, the iQ has skipped the outright hybrid or electric approach and gone for efficiency through packaging, measuring in at less than three meters – ideal for parallel or even horizontal parking in the wilds of New York or Paris.

For the high-end set, the company's hybrid version of their up-to-now Asia-only saloon (the Crown is as close as you can come to the Lexus line without crossing over), while families are sure to get a kick out of the new FT-MV, a sleek new take on the mini-van with spacious ottoman-like seating and soothing ambient light.

However, the company's forward thinking philosophy really shone through when they turned their attention to those models distinctly focused on a driver's mental and physical well-being. As far-fetched as that may sound when describing the actions of a global behemoth like Toyota, it is difficult to argue that these cars have been created with anything else in mind.

Advertised as the possible successor to the popular Prius, the 1/X takes the basic hybrid technology of its predecessor and lightens things up – a lot. Weighing in at just over 400kg, the 1/X situated the plug-in electric and 500cc petrol engines beneath the rear seat instead of in the front end, allowing a smoother and lighter ride, making it about one third of the weight of the Prius and twice as efficient. As futuristic as they come, the 1/X is all glass and sheen, with a Volkswagen Bug-like smoothness to its design, making it that much more efficient. While the plug needed for recharging will not likely find its way into a final release, as it strays from the Prius' self-charging battery, the advances in creating a durable four-seater that weighs this little yet manages to offer more interior space than its predecessor will almost certainly be seen again soon.

Hoping to target a younger crowd, the company went for a youth appeal with an urban vehicle that resembles a Tonka truck more than a SUV. Equipped with a hybrid combination of plug-in electric motor and 1.5 litre petrol engine, the HiCT is a compact van with a removable trunk area and plenty of optional room for bikes, surf boards or whatever gear you decide to take out with you. Unlike anything you're likely to see on the road, the HiCT takes the boxy design of the Scion line (also a Toyota off-shoot) a decidedly youthful step further. Finally, Toyota unveiled what is surely a rarity on the global market – a car whose design philosophy was inspired by a tree – a Japanese Cypress to be exact. Showcasing the company's new appeal to mental health, the revolutionary, if somewhat odd, RiN is designed top to bottom to soothe the senses and keep drivers and even passing pedestrians at



ease with the driving experience. If that description alone sounds a little at odds with the aggressive state of car design, you haven't heard anything yet.

Equipped with a litany of amenities to keep the stress and strain of daily life at bay, the RiN is more like a spa on wheels than a traditional automobile. Starting with protected, green-tinted windows, which keep harsh UV rays away, the RiN keeps things light with soothing, heated seats, pin-point humidifiers, oxygen concentration conditioners, sliding doors, low-impact controls and even a steering wheel-set heart monitor, which notifies drivers should stress get the better of them. Not content to make this a soothing affair just for the driver and passengers, outside, Toyota has included soft headlights, a malleable bio-plastic frame and even specially curved wheels that make water splash inward instead of out.

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Here are some common internet explorer shortcut keys.

- \* Press F5 to refreshes the webpage.
- \* Press Backspace button back to the previous page.
- \* Press Alt+Home button same time to go home page of the website.
- \* Press any time Ctrl+N to open the new browser windows.
- \* Press F11 key to view any webpage in full-screen view and then again press for normal view.
- \* Press Ctrl+P keys to send the print command for current whole page.
- \* Press Ctrl+H keys to view your browsing history.



\* Press Ctrl+w keys to close the current browser window.

\* Press Esc button to stop any page browsing.

\* Press Ctrl+Enter Windows will automatically add both "www" and ".com". For example, if we type

computerfreetips

in an address bar and then press Ctrl-Enter, Windows will take us to the [www.computerfreetips.com](http://www.computerfreetips.com)

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## HOLIDAYS

Public holidays in Catalonia: 1 January: New Year's Day; 6 January / Epiphany (Feast of the Three Kings);

March-april: Good Friday; March-april: Easter Monday; 1 May: Labour Day; 24 June: Saint John (mid-summer);

15 August: Assumption of Mary; 11 September: Catalan National Day; 12 Octubre: Feast of the Hispanic Peoples; 1 November: All Saints' Day, 6 December: Constitution Day; 8 December: Immaculate Conception of Mary; 25 December: Christmas; 26 December: Saint Stephen (Boxing Day).

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