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FEBRUARY 2026

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Good living is rarely about grand gestures. It is found in the materials we choose to surround ourselves with, the small habits we nurture, the conversations we return to, and the everyday decisions that quietly shape our sense of home. This month's issue of Home & Living celebrates those meaningful details – the choices that improve life not dramatically, but beautifully and sustainably.

On pages 8–9, *The Beauty of Things That Age Well* invites a rethink of how we design our spaces, exploring natural materials that mature with character rather than decline with fashion. It is a thoughtful guide for anyone seeking homes that feel grounded, enduring and deeply personal. A change of pace follows on page 10, where we explore inspiring destinations for escaping the Spanish winter and reconnecting with warmth, colour and relaxed rhythms of life. We also welcome WH Travel Services on page 10, who offer multiple holiday packages.

Curiosity takes a playful turn on page 12 with an intriguing exploration into dogs that appear to communicate in remarkable ways. Blending science, behaviour and genuine wonder, it is one of those stories that delights, surprises and stays with you long after reading. On page 25, we are pleased to welcome Construcción Global, a new advertising partner whose expertise in construction and renovation supports quality home improvement.

For readers who enjoy creating as much as consuming, page 18 delves into *The Art of the Homemade Pantry*, sharing inspiring ways to prepare fresh staples at home and reclaim confidence in everyday cooking, while reducing reliance on packaged foods. On page 16, we also extend a warm welcome to La Bodega, adding valued local presence to this month's edition.

On page 22, wellbeing meets simplicity as we uncover one of the most effective forms of exercise many people already practise daily without realising it – a refreshing reminder that health does not always require complexity.

Our What's On section returns on pages 30–32, highlighting the best local events to help you make the most of February. Towards the back of the magazine on page 51, we are pleased to welcome Thy Will Be Done, joining our growing community of advertisers.

We close on a more reflective note on page 40 with an exploration into what trust truly means – how it shapes relationships, influences decisions and quietly underpins the lives we build.

As ever, this issue blends intelligent design, practical living and thoughtful storytelling. We hope these pages inspire you to refine your surroundings, enrich your routines and enjoy the art of living well, every day.

With warm wishes,
The Home & Living Magazine Team



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The Beauty of Things That Age Well

The hand knows the difference before the eye does. Cool stone in the early morning. Timber still warm from yesterday's sun. Leather yielding into a familiar curve. Some materials feel alive not because they are perfect, but because they remember you. They carry temperature, pressure, light and time in ways synthetic surfaces never quite manage. Long before a room looks beautiful, it feels settled.

Modern interiors often chase instant perfection. Surfaces arrive immaculate, uniform and eager to impress, engineered to photograph cleanly and age quickly. Laminates chip, veneers lift, coatings dull, colours flatten. The real cost is not simply replacement, but behaviour. When a home depends on flawless surfaces, every mark becomes a small anxiety. People tread carefully. Cups hover above tables. Chairs are sat on gingerly. Beauty becomes something to protect rather than something to live inside.

Materials that age well offer a different relationship with time. Marble and limestone accept hairline scratches as part of their veining. Oak and walnut deepen where sunlight returns each afternoon. Leather relaxes into the shape of the body that claims the chair most evenings, settling with a quiet sound as weight returns. Brass and bronze darken beneath repeated touch, warming slowly like skin. Lime plaster softens in tone as shadows travel across it. Terrazzo reveals new fragments as it polishes under years of movement. These changes are not deterioration. They are continuity.

There is a sensory honesty in this kind of living. The faint mineral scent of fired clay tiles after a warm shower. Linen growing softer with every wash, creasing more willingly rather than resisting. Timber holding warmth long after daylight has faded. The grounded weight of a cast-iron door closing without echo. Even glass, when mouth-blown or lightly imperfect, bends light gently rather than throwing it back harshly. These small physical cues steady the body and slow the nervous system. They signal, quietly, that this is a place made to endure.

Even wall finishes — so often treated as temporary — can mature beautifully when chosen and applied with care. High-quality wallpapers made from natural fibres, mineral coatings, woven grasscloths or traditional block prints soften rather than fade. Pigments mellow under natural light. Fibres relax. Seams disappear into the surface. The distinction lies as much in craftsmanship as material. Walls must be prepared properly, humidity controlled, patterns aligned with architectural logic. Skilled professionals understand tension, expansion and longevity. When installed well, wallpaper becomes an architectural skin rather than decoration — absorbing light, softening acoustics and ageing quietly alongside timber and stone. Cheap papers and rushed fitting reveal themselves quickly. Good wallpaper, applied properly, simply settles in.

Perfect surfaces, by contrast, remain emotionally brittle. They tolerate no interruption. A single spill or knock punctures the illusion

of newness. Maintenance becomes a constant background task. By contrast, forgiving materials absorb life rather than resist it. Scratches blend into stone. Patina deepens on metal. Handmade ceramics soften gently at their edges. The home stops performing and starts supporting.

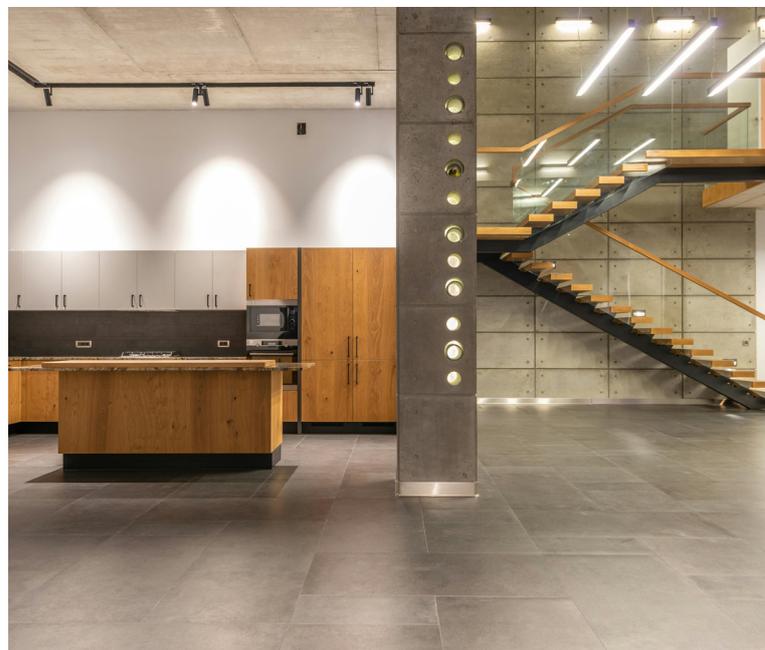
Living among enduring materials subtly reshapes behaviour. Timber is oiled rather than replaced. Leather is conditioned. Brass is polished lightly and allowed to darken again. Plaster is repaired rather than stripped. Rattan is re-tied instead of discarded. Care becomes habitual, not exceptional. Objects develop histories rather than expiry dates. In a culture skilled at buying beauty but less skilled at living with it, this slower relationship feels quietly radical.

Over time, these materials begin to store memory. The softened edge of a kitchen counter remembers countless mornings leaned into coffee and thought. The polished arm of a chair carries the weight of conversations and silence alike. A door handle dulls where hands return daily. A stair tread holds the rhythm of years. Even wallpaper, gently faded by sunlight, records passing seasons. A home becomes less a showroom and more a biography.

There is environmental intelligence in this approach without the need for slogans. Materials that endure reduce waste, reward maintenance and resist trend cycles. They favour long horizons rather than seasonal updates. Sustainability becomes a by-product of discernment rather than performance – fewer things chosen well, allowed to mature slowly.

As taste matures, many people find themselves drawn away from surfaces that demand attention and towards those that offer depth, texture and calm. The appetite for gloss softens into an appreciation of grain, mineral variation and honest imperfection. Luxury reveals itself not in spectacle, but in ease: how a chair receives the body, how light settles across plaster at dusk, how materials behave differently in winter and summer. The home becomes less a statement and more a companion.

To live with materials that age well is, ultimately, to make peace with time itself. It is to allow a space to breathe, soften and gather memory alongside its inhabitants. Not frozen in permanent newness, but enriched by use, care and quiet presence. The most beautiful rooms are rarely the newest. They are the ones that have been allowed to grow gently into who they are.



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WINTER ESCAPE



When Spain cools into winter mornings, the urge to borrow warmth from elsewhere becomes irresistible. Dubai glows at a comfortable 21–26°C, ideal for terrace lunches and beach walks. The Maldives settles into a steady 25–30°C, where clear lagoons deliver calm. Barbados and much of the Caribbean hover around 28–30°C, offering warm seas and island rhythm. Marrakech enjoys sunshine near 15–20°C, perfect for wandering souks, while the Canary Islands deliver dependable 20–22°C without long flights. For Spanish expats, these escapes feel within reach, offering a way to reset and return restored. Airports soften, harbours breathe, and destinations reveal their rhythm. For those who value comfort yet crave discovery, the sea becomes an elegant way to travel between climates and cultures, letting you unpack once and wake somewhere new each morning.

What increasingly matters is not only where you go, but how you travel. Today's travellers favour slower journeys, thoughtful routes and genuine personal service over crowded itineraries. They want meaningful experiences without friction, value without compromise, and the reassurance of dealing with people who understand both Mediterranean living and the wider world beyond it.

Worldwide Horizons: Redefining the Art of Cruising from Spain

In a world eager to rediscover connection, Worldwide Horizons is charting a course that goes beyond traditional cruising. Based in Spain yet global in vision, the company represents a new philosophy of travel—one that values depth over distance, experience over excess, and people over process.

Spain has long served as a gateway between continents, cultures, and histories, making it a natural home for a cruise company with an outward-looking spirit. Worldwide Horizons draws on this legacy to design holidays that are not simply routes on a map, but carefully shaped stories at sea. From iconic ports to lesser-known coastal gems, each itinerary invites travellers to truly engage with the places they visit.

What truly distinguishes Worldwide Horizons is its rare combination of value and care. The company is known for offering some of the best cruise deals on the market, without ever compromising on quality. Just as important is its highly personal service. Every client is treated as an individual, with expert guidance, tailored recommendations, and support that extends well beyond the booking process.

In an era of automated travel, this human approach matters. Travellers are more conscious, more curious, and more selective—and Worldwide Horizons responds with transparency, trust, and attention to detail.

For Worldwide Horizons, the sea is more than a journey; it is a promise. A promise of exceptional value, meaningful experiences, and a personal touch that turns every holiday into something unforgettable.

Join us on 12th February at our Cocktail Presentation of Explora Journeys & MSC Yacht Club.

For more information contact Yvonne on travel@whtravel.es or **966 761 492 / 966 844 484** or by whats app on **689 140 360 / 623 609 399**

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TALKING DOGS

The Moment That Stopped the Scroll

The button clicks. A recorded voice says outside. The dog pauses, looks directly at its owner, then presses it again. In that brief silence, something feels almost impossible: intention.

Across Instagram and TikTok, millions of viewers have now watched similar moments unfold. Dogs appear to request walks, toys, affection and companionship through simple sound buttons placed on the floor. For many people encountering this trend for the first time, the experience is both moving and unsettling, challenging long-held assumptions about what animals can truly understand.

How the Buttons Actually Work

These devices belong to a category known as Augmentative and Alternative Communication systems, originally designed to support humans with speech impairments. Adapted for animals, each button is programmed with a recorded word. Through consistent repetition and positive reinforcement,



dogs learn that pressing a particular button reliably produces a specific outcome – a door opens, food appears, a game begins.

This is not language acquisition in the human sense. It is associative learning, a process well established in behavioural science, where animals form strong links between actions and predictable consequences.

What Science Confirms

Research in canine cognition has repeatedly shown that dogs can discriminate between dozens of spoken words and visual cues. Studies conducted by institutions such as the University of California San Diego's Comparative Cognition Lab demonstrate that dogs respond meaningfully to learned signals rather than merely reacting to tone or gesture alone. Brain imaging research also indicates that familiar words activate dedicated processing areas in the canine brain, suggesting genuine recognition of learned sounds.

Veterinary behaviourists emphasise that dogs understand symbols functionally, not linguistically. They learn that a sound represents an outcome, much like a road sign conveys meaning without words.

A simple example illustrates this clearly: a dog that consistently presses a button labelled outside before walking to the door is demonstrating intentional association, not imitation or guesswork.

Where Social Media Gets Carried Away

On Instagram and TikTok, short-form videos naturally reward emotional impact and novelty. Some clips blur the boundary between learning and interpretation. While certain dogs appear to combine multiple buttons, scientists caution against assuming grammar, abstract thought or emotional storytelling. Most sequences are best understood as behavioural chaining – linking several learned actions to achieve a familiar result.

Human enthusiasm can unintentionally project meaning that exceeds what the animal is cognitively expressing.

Why This Can Benefit Dogs

Used responsibly, button communication can improve wellbeing.



Behaviour professionals report reductions in frustration, improved confidence and clearer communication of needs. For anxious dogs, predictable communication can reduce stress and uncertainty. It can also encourage owners to observe behaviour more carefully and respond more consistently.

The Ethical Line We Should Not Cross

Experts agree that button training must never replace natural canine needs: movement, exploration, social interaction and rest. Over-humanising animals risks misunderstanding their biology. Most professionals recommend keeping vocabulary simple and practical rather than emotionally loaded or theatrical.

So, Are Dogs Really Talking?

Dogs are not speaking in sentences or forming abstract ideas – but they are communicating intentionally in ways that science increasingly understands. The button phenomenon is neither magic nor myth. It reflects how modern platforms such as Instagram and TikTok can surface remarkable behaviours quickly, while reminding us to remain grounded, curious and responsible in how we interpret them. True understanding comes not from viral clips, but from patient observation, respect and evidence-based care.

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TED WAS FOUND ABANDONED ON THE MOTORWAY AND BROUGHT TO OUR KENNELS. A NICE BOY BUT CAN BE A BIT REACTIVE TO OTHER DOGS WHEN HE IS ON THE LEAD, SO WILL NEED MORE SOCIALISING TO SORT THAT OUT. TED IS CASTRATED AND FULLY VACCINATED. D.O.B 1/1/2024



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Why Buying a Business Could Be a Smart Move for Expats Moving to Spain

A Different Kind of Fresh Start

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

Income Beyond the Pension or Paycheque

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

Faster Integration Into Local Life

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

A Platform for Residency and Stability

For non-EU citizens, business ownership can also support residency pathways, provided the structure meets legal and financial requirements. While regulations must always be navigated carefully with professional advice, operating a viable enterprise demonstrates economic contribution and local commitment. Even for EU nationals, owning a business anchors long-term stability, reducing reliance on volatile employment markets or



remote employers whose priorities may shift without warning.

Lifestyle Design With Purpose

Contrary to outdated assumptions, many Spanish businesses can be structured for lifestyle balance rather than burnout. Seasonal trading, part-time operations, delegated management and hybrid ownership models allow flexibility when designed intelligently. Rather than endless leisure, many expats discover that purposeful work enhances enjoyment of Spain rather than detracting from it. Structure gives rhythm to days, social engagement keeps the mind active, and contribution fosters pride in place.

Risk With Eyes Open

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

Building More Than Income

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



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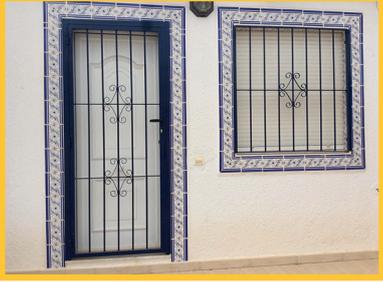
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The 3-5-7 Rule: The Code Behind Effortless Interiors

Stop Guessing. Start Styling.

You don't need more cushions, another vase or a new sofa. You need a rule. The 3-5-7 decorating rule is the fastest way to make a shelf, console or sideboard look intentionally styled. Once you understand it, you'll see why some rooms feel balanced and others feel restless.

Why Your Brain Loves Odd Numbers

Human vision looks for pattern, rhythm and manageable groupings. Cognitive psychology shows that the brain processes odd-numbered clusters more easily because they avoid symmetrical mirroring, which can feel static and artificial. Three creates a clear focal point, five adds richness without clutter, and seven introduces layered complexity while still remaining readable. Your eye keeps moving, which creates visual interest.

How To Use 3, 5 and 7 Properly

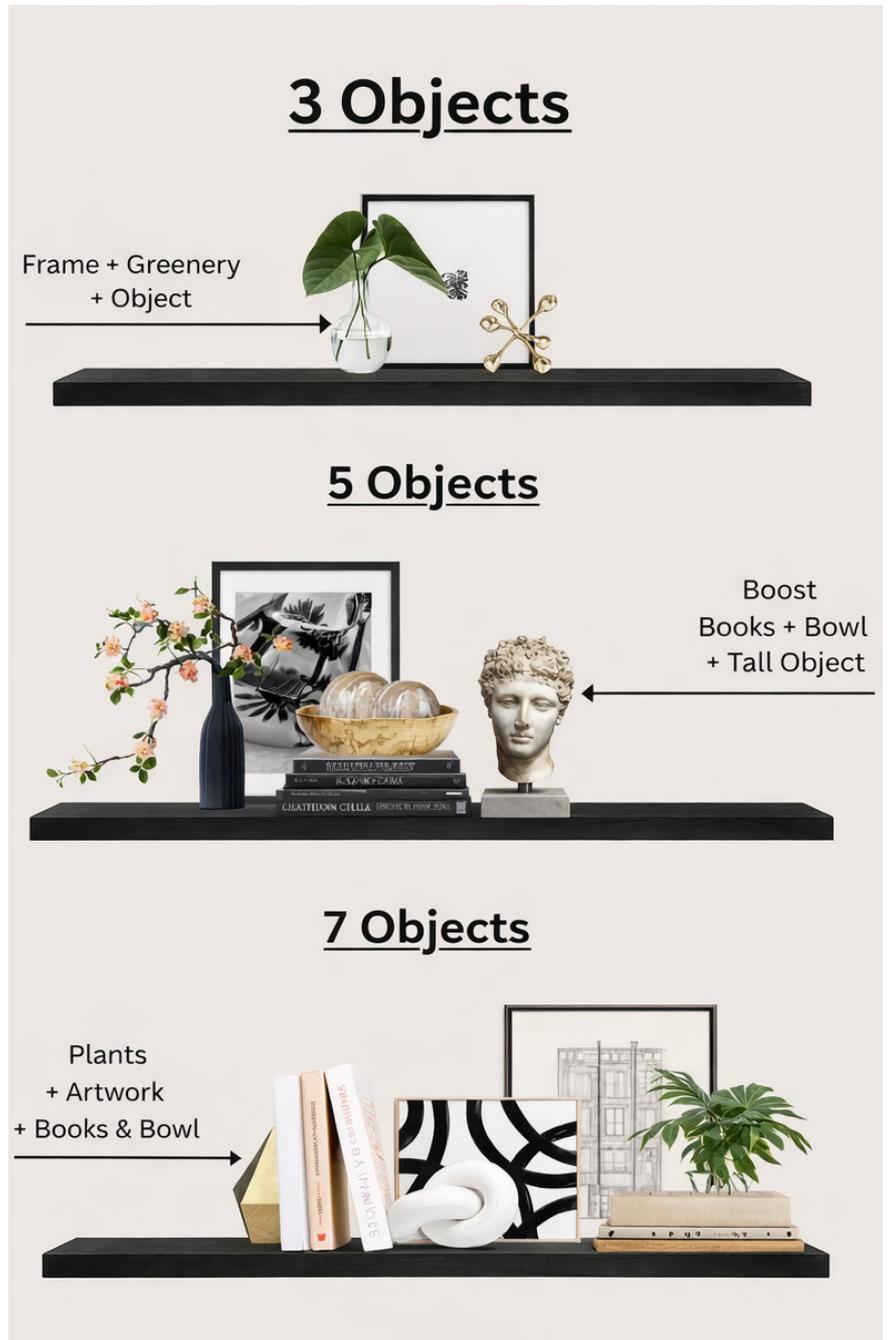
With three objects, think anchor, texture and life: a frame, a plant and a sculptural object. It feels clean, confident and modern. With five objects, introduce height variation and contrast: books, a bowl, a tall vessel, artwork and one statement piece. This creates depth and hierarchy, guiding the eye across the surface. With seven objects, you can layer storytelling: stacked books, greenery, art, ceramics and one unexpected form, but always grouped in small sub-clusters so the composition never collapses into chaos.

The Science Of Visual Calm

Neuroscience supports this. The Gestalt principles of visual perception show that our brains organise elements into meaningful wholes, favouring asymmetry, proximity and balance. Odd groupings reduce cognitive load while maintaining stimulation, which explains why well-styled spaces feel calming rather than busy.

The Real Luxury Is Editing

The rule isn't about filling space; it's about restraint. Choose pieces with contrast, keep negative space visible, and stop at the number that feels composed. Your home looks curated, expensive and visually coherent because your brain recognises order, not noise.



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The Art of the Homemade Pantry

The Quiet Power of a Well-Stocked Pantry

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

Bread as the Foundation of Everyday Nourishment

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

Butter and the Beauty of Simple Transformation

Butter is another revelation when made at home. Cold cream shaken in a jar or whisked steadily separates into solid butter and

liquid buttermilk within minutes. Rinsing the butter in cold water removes excess whey and improves keeping quality, while a light seasoning of salt preserves freshness and flavour. You can fold in herbs, citrus zest or honey for flavoured butters that melt beautifully over vegetables, fish or warm bread.

Preserving the Seasons Through Pickling

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

Creating Your Own Everyday Pantry Staples

Pantry confidence grows when you realise how many staples can be made at home with little more than a jar and a whisk. A balanced salad dressing forms by shaking good olive oil with vinegar or lemon juice, a spoon of mustard to help emulsify, and seasoning adjusted to taste. Fresh lemonade comes together by dissolving sugar or honey into warm water, adding freshly squeezed citrus juice, then topping up with cold water or sparkling mineral water. Olive oil gently warmed with dried herbs, citrus peel or chilli becomes a fragrant infusion once cooled and strained. Natural yoghurt forms by heating milk, cooling it slightly, stirring in live yoghurt cultures and keeping it warm overnight until thickened. Granola bakes slowly in the oven when oats, nuts and seeds are lightly coated in honey or maple syrup and stirred halfway through for even toasting.

Sweet Treats Without the Hidden Additives



Healthy treats deserve a place on the shelf as well. Simple chocolate snacks set by melting cocoa powder with coconut oil and a natural sweetener before chilling in moulds or trays. Energy bites are made by blending dates with nuts, seeds and cocoa, then rolling into small portions and storing chilled. Slow-simmered fruit gently breaks down into glossy compotes that replace syrups and spreads without unnecessary sugar.

Building a Pantry That Feeds Body and Budget

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

The Living Pantry and the Art of Fermentation

Fermentation expands the pantry into living food, preserving ingredients naturally while enhancing flavour and digestibility. Sauerkraut develops when finely shredded cabbage is massaged with salt until it releases enough liquid to remain submerged in its own brine, allowing beneficial bacteria to ferment the vegetables slowly in an oxygen-limited environment. Kefir forms when live kefir grains are added to fresh milk and left at room temperature to culture gently over time, producing a lightly tangy, probiotic-rich drink. A sourdough starter grows from flour and water refreshed regularly, allowing natural wild yeast and beneficial bacteria to establish a stable culture that provides natural leavening and com-

plex flavour in bread.

A Return to Everyday Self-Reliance

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

Creating Abundance From What You Already Have

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


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The Spare Room That Only Gets Loved When Guests Arrive

Most spare bedrooms exist in a strange state of neglect. They begin with good intentions – a neatly made bed, fresh cushions, perhaps a lamp bought especially for “the guest room”. But over time, reality creeps in. The spare room becomes the home’s silent storage unit. Boxes migrate there. Seasonal clothes get stacked in corners. Gym equipment appears. The ironing board never quite leaves. The bed becomes a surface rather than a sanctuary, buried under life’s overflow until the next visitor is announced and a frantic clearing operation begins.

It’s not laziness. It’s poor spatial logic. A permanent bed dominates a room that rarely hosts anyone overnight, leaving the remaining floor area too compromised to function properly day to day. The result is a space that serves nobody particularly well – not the household, and not the guest.

And yet, quietly and almost overnight, this problem is being reimagined. Across contemporary interior design studios and modern home innovations, wall beds and Murphy bed transformations are gaining serious momentum. Design demonstrations showing spare rooms converting from calm home offices into elegant guest bedrooms in seconds have captured widespread attention, not because they are flashy, but because they solve a real, everyday frustration beautifully.

Modern wall-bed technology bears little resemblance to the clunky fold-up beds of the past. Today’s systems are engineered furniture installations that integrate seamlessly into the architecture of a room. When folded away, the bed disappears behind refined cabinetry, shelving or panelling, instantly restoring floor space and visual calm. The room stops feeling like a dormant bedroom and begins behaving like a purposeful living space.

Suddenly, that underused spare room can become a light-filled office with a generous desk and proper storage. Or a serene reading room lined with books and artwork. Or a luxurious dressing room with full-height wardrobes and concealed compartments. When guests arrive, the bed lowers smoothly in moments, transforming the room back into a comfortable bedroom without dismantling the rest of the space.

The engineering behind this shift is genuinely impressive. Counterbalanced mechanisms allow beds to glide down with minimal effort. Many designs are now built so desks remain level during transformation, meaning laptops and paperwork do not need to be cleared away. Safety locking systems and robust wall fixings ensure stability and longevity, making these solutions practical for everyday living rather than novelty use.

From an interiors perspective, the aesthetic potential is just as compelling. Wall beds can be finished to match bespoke joinery, painted cabinetry or architectural wall treatments, allowing them to disappear visually when not in use. Integrated lighting, textured finishes and open shelving elevate the room so it feels considered and luxurious rather than purely functional. The space no longer announces itself as a spare room at all.

Perhaps most importantly, the emotional relationship with the room changes. Instead of being a place of clutter and compromise, it becomes a flexible asset that supports daily life while remaining effortlessly guest-ready. No more rushed clearing sessions. No more apologetic explanations about where everything has been moved. Just a space that works beautifully every day – and welcomes visitors gracefully when needed.

In homes where every square metre matters, the spare room no longer needs to sit waiting for rare company. With intelligent wall-bed design, it can finally earn its place as one of the most valuable and beautifully used rooms in the house.





breathe

Walking Is the Most Underrated Performance Tool in Sport



The Training Tool Everyone Overlooks

In an era of brutal HIIT sessions, ice baths and wearable metrics, walking feels almost embarrassingly simple. Yet elite athletes across endurance sports, combat disciplines and team performance programmes increasingly rely on walking as a cornerstone of recovery and consistency. It does not replace hard training — it enables it. When applied intelligently, walking becomes a biological reset button rather than mere leisure.

Low-Intensity Movement Speeds Recovery

After intense training, muscles accumulate metabolic by-products such as lactate, hydrogen ions and inflammatory compounds. Low-intensity movement increases blood flow without adding further mechanical stress, accelerating the transport of oxygen and nutrients into damaged tissue while removing waste products. Unlike complete rest, which can slow circulation, gentle movement maintains joint lubrication, keeps connective tissue hydrated and supports faster muscular recovery. This is why many professional recovery protocols now include structured walking rather than passive inactivity.

Resetting the Nervous System

High-intensity training stimulates the sympathetic nervous system — the “fight or flight” response. Prolonged sympathetic dominance elevates stress hormones and impairs sleep quality, reaction speed and emotional regulation. Walking activates the parasympathetic system, restoring calm neural balance and improving heart rate variability, a key marker of recovery readiness. This neurological downshift allows the brain and body to recalibrate between demanding sessions, improving long-term training sustainability.

Fascia, Fluid Movement and Injury Resistance

Fascia is the connective tissue network that links muscles, organs and joints. It thrives on gentle, rhythmic movement that encourages fluid exchange and elastic recoil. Walking provides precisely this stimulus, keeping fascial layers hydrated and supple while reducing stiffness accumulation. Athletes who maintain daily low-intensity movement often report fewer overuse injuries and better movement efficiency due to improved tissue glide and joint sequencing.

How Many Steps Actually Matter for Athletes

While general health targets often sit around 7,000–10,000 steps daily, serious athletes frequently benefit from 10,000–15,000 steps depending on training load and recovery capacity. These steps should remain genuinely easy — conversational pace, relaxed breathing and minimal fatigue. The goal is circulation and nervous-system regulation, not calorie burn or conditioning.

Mental Resilience Starts with Rhythm

Walking also trains the mind. Rhythmic movement improves cognitive processing, creativity and emotional stability through increased cerebral blood flow and dopamine regulation. Many athletes use walking to decompress after competition, refine tactical thinking or stabilise mood during heavy training blocks. The psychological consistency of daily movement reinforces discipline without burnout.

Simple Movement, Serious Advantage

Walking is not a shortcut or a substitute for ambition. It is a quiet performance multiplier that enhances recovery speed, neural balance, tissue health and mental clarity. In a world obsessed with extremes, the most reliable gains often come from the habits that look almost too simple to matter — until they do.

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Mould's Worst Enemy: Why Smart Walls Are Redefin- ing Luxury Bathrooms



The Bathroom's Most Persistent Enemy

Mould is the uninvited guest that never truly leaves. It creeps into grout lines, settles behind sealant and flourishes wherever moisture lingers just long enough to take hold. No matter how refined the tiles or how powerful the extractor fan, damp environments quietly invite microscopic growth. For many homeowners, the bathroom becomes a cycle of scrubbing rather than sanctuary. Designers are now questioning whether the real solution lies not in harsher cleaning, but in smarter materials.

What Mould Needs in Order to Survive

Mould thrives when moisture, organic material and stagnant air combine. Modern bathrooms unintentionally provide all three. Impermeable paints trap vapour on surfaces, tiles encourage condensation, and grout absorbs dampness that never fully dries. Even good ventilation struggles once moisture becomes embedded within materials, creating invisible pockets where spores quietly establish themselves.

What "Breathing Walls" Actually Mean

When architects describe lime plaster as breathable, they are referring to measurable building physics rather than metaphor. Lime is vapour-permeable and hygroscopic, allowing moisture vapour to pass through its porous structure while temporarily absorbing excess humidity and releasing it slowly as the room stabilises. This moisture buffering softens humidity spikes after showers and reduces surface condensation, creating a more balanced indoor environment rather than trapping damp against sealed surfaces.

A Surface Mould Simply Dislikes

Beyond moisture control, lime plaster offers a natural chemical advantage. Its alkaline composition discourages fungal growth and many bacteria without added treatments. Historically, lime was widely used in sanitation and food storage precisely because of these antimicrobial properties, long before modern disinfectants existed.

Seamless Design Removes the Hiding Places

Unlike tiled walls, lime plaster forms continuous, joint-free surfaces with no grout lines or silicone seams for spores to colonise. Fewer hiding places mean easier cleaning, calmer aesthetics and a bathroom that feels closer to a spa than a utility space.

Beauty That Lasts

From Moroccan hammams to Mediterranean villas, lime finishes have proven their durability for centuries in humid environments. When applied correctly and maintained gently, lime ages gracefully and allows small repairs rather than wholesale replacement. The result is a bathroom that manages moisture intelligently, resists mould naturally and feels quietly luxurious – not through excess, but through material intelligence.

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TV NEWS

Hello all you readers of the monthly TV news. We have been writing this for some 15, maybe 20, years and how Home & Living has moved along during those times. Started out 26 years ago as Costa Cálida Chronicle. Have any of you been reading since the inception? This year I will have been living in the area for some 27 years (and yes I am ashamed to say my Spanish is still awful!) – Rainbow Satellites will have its 23 year birthday this year.

Regular readers will have followed our progress – the houses lived in and the pets that have come along. The garden at Casa Rainbow is thriving even though we have let some areas go natural. Lots of new wildlife has appeared and watching a chameleon climb a tree and change colour still fascinates us.

TV NEWS Clients regularly phone us and give us the joyous news that they have some satellite channels back and watchable, but we have to tell them this always happens in the winter when signals are substantially higher in strength, but will revert back to almost non-existent as the spring progresses into summer when there will be no mainstream channels available on satellite – except CH5 who use a different frequency group.

Internet TV, as most clients are aware, is the way forward to watch UK TV in southern Spain. You will need two service sup-

pliers – internet and TV – and they both must have a really good service supply to watch UK TV satisfactorily. With Starlink internet service available to any location now it is a really good option for those who cannot get fibre installed. We at Rainbow have a really good TV service. There are some poor options

available and, for both internet and TV supply, price often does come into play. Cheap fibre options often have routing problems – the more expensive suppliers – Movistar, Vodafone, Orange and others have much better fibre infrastructures. TV suppliers can often just buy in products and send out to clients with no technical knowledge or back up – is there an engineer on standby to fix a problem on a Sunday or will it just wait until the working week?

We at Rainbow offer a free, no obligation in home TV demonstration and a loan box for a week so that a potential client can fully assess the system before committing to buy – just get in contact to book an appointment.

That is it for February – more TV information in March 2026.

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If You Want Better Hair, Start in the Kitchen!

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

Protein at Every Meal

Hair is made almost entirely of keratin, a protein structure. If dietary protein intake is low, the body conserves resources for vital organs and hair growth slows. Including a clear protein source at every meal helps maintain supply. Eggs, Greek yoghurt, fish, lentils, tofu and lean meats are excellent options. For most adults, aiming for protein at breakfast, lunch and dinner supports consistent follicle activity and better hair density over time.

Healthy Fats Feed the Scalp

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

Iron and Zinc Build Thickness

Iron delivers oxygen to the hair root, while zinc supports tissue repair and growth. Low iron is a common contributor to thinning, especially in women. Red meat once or twice weekly, lentils, leafy greens and fortified cereals help maintain healthy levels. Zinc appears in pumpkin seeds, eggs, seafood and whole grains. These nutrients work slowly but reliably when intake is consistent.

Vitamins That Strengthen the Fibre

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

What Growth Really Looks Like

Healthy hair grows roughly one centimetre per month. No food or supplement can dramatically accelerate this rate, but nutrition can reduce breakage, improve thickness and support stronger regrowth over months rather than weeks. Consistency matters far more than intensity.

Building a Hair-Friendly Routine

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

Thicker Hair Is a Long Game

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



IFEPA EVENT

EQUIMUR 2026

Purebred Horse Show of the Region of Murcia

EQUIMUR – the International Purebred Horse Show of the Region of Murcia – will celebrate its 30th Anniversary between March 12th and 15th, with an extensive programme of events that will delight horse lovers and enthusiasts, as befits such a special edition.

The facilities of the IFEPA Exhibition Centre in Torre Pacheco will be transformed to host more than 300 horses participating in both the Morphology Competition and the programme of competitions held concurrently.

EQUIMUR OFFERS DIFFERENT LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS

One of the cornerstones of Equimur is its entertainment programme, which welcomes back the world's best horse trainer, Santi Serra, who will perform on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets can be purchased at <https://ifepa.es/feria-equimur/>

These shows, which have limited capacity, will feature exhibitions of vaulting, classical dressage, working equitation, pas de deux, haute école, carriage driving, a horse dance with flamenco

dancers, a carousel and more.

In addition to the Purebred Spanish Horse (P.R.E.) Morphology Competition, the National Working Equitation Competition, Classical Dressage, Haute école, and Indoor Carriage Driving Competitions will also take place, along with a commercial gallery where companies related to the equine sector will showcase their latest products in nutrition, accessories and equestrian fashion, as well as an area for breeders' clubs.

Visitors can also enjoy a corral area where the mares participating in the competition will be displayed, with a separate area of stalls for the male participants. There will also be a pony area where children can ride and a programme of talks where they can learn more about the equine world.

Visitors can also enjoy various food options, flamenco performances, an afternoon social area, and much more.

The full programme and schedule can be found at <https://ifepa.es/feria-equimur/>

Advance tickets are available at a reduced price until the day before the event begins. Tickets to the show are purchased separately from general admission.



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WHAT'S ON?

Events

Every Day **Noah's ARC Dog Walking @ Mazarrón**

Every Mon **Market @ Alhama & Huercal Overa**
Camposol Walking Football Club @ Pto de Mazarrón 10am-11am

Forget Me Not Respite Care @ The Social Centre, Camposol B 10.15am
Friends of Mazarrón Animals Collection @ Camposol B Lower Car Park 10.30am-11am
Andrea's Animal Rescue Collection @ Camposol B Car Park 11am-1pm

Every Tues **Market @ Alhama & Los Gallardos**
Los Bandidos Cycle Ride from Mojácar Playa. See their FB page for times
Loose Woman on Tuesday Meeting @ Marsalada, Mojácar Playa 1.30pm

Helping the Perrera Dogs Volunteering @ Mazarrón Perrera 9am
Helping the Perrera Cats Volunteering @ Mazarrón Perrera 9am
Noah's ARC available for donations @ Spar, Mazarrón Country Club 10am-12pm
GoMad available for collections @ Camposol A Car Park 10.30am-12pm
Qi Gong & Tai Chi on the beach. Meet at Samsara, Mojácar Playa 11am Proceeds to Donkey Charity

Every Wed **Market @ Totana & Mojácar**
Los Bandidos Run/Walk/Jog from Mojácar. See their FB page for times
Los Bandidos Sea Swimming Club @ Mojácar. See their FB page for times
Victory Churches Spain Prayer Meeting @ Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón
Climbing Workshop-Mothers & Children @ Mojácar 5.15pm & 6.30pm

Every Thurs **Market @ Lorca**
Los Bandidos Cycle Ride from Mojácar. See their FB page for times
Camposol Walking Football Club @ Pto de Mazarrón 10am-11am
Los Amigos de Mazarrón FC Meeting @ Camposol A 4pm
Over 60's Memory Workshop @ Centro de Usos Múltiples, Mojácar Pueblo 5pm

Friends of Mazarrón Animals available for donations @ Pto de Mazarrón 10-10.30am
Forget Me Not Respite Care @ The Social Centre, Camposol B 10.15am
Mazarrón AA Meeting @ Cañadas de Gallego 5.30pm (Call 646 290 420)

Every Fri **Market @ El Pareton, Garrucha & Puerto Lumbreras**
Camposol D Bucket Collection @ The Hut, Camposol D 9.30am-12pm
Los Palacios Gardening Group Library @ Camposol A 10am-12.30pm
Climbing Workshop-Mothers & Children @ Mojácar 5.15pm & 6.30pm

Line Dancing @ Centro de Usos Múltiples, Mojácar 5€ 4-8pm (proceeds to Charity)

Helping the Perrera Dogs Volunteering @ Mazarrón Perrera 9am
Helping the Perrera Cats Volunteering @ Mazarrón Perrera 9am
Noah's ARC Stall @ Camposol B Commercial Centre 9.30am-1pm
Friends of Mazarrón Animals Collection @ Isla Plana Social Centre 1-1.30pm

Every Sat **Market @ Fuente Alamo, Mazarrón, Aguilas & Vera**
Free Guided Walk @ Mojácar until May (call 950 615 025 to reserve)
Los Bandidos Run/Walk/Jog from Mojácar. See their FB page for times
Guided Visit @ La Bastida, Totana 10am/12pm from 2.50€

Harlequin Rock Choir Rehearsals @ The Social Centre, Camposol B 1.30pm

Every Sun

Market @ Pto de Mazarrón

Antique and Second Hand Market @ Cañadas del Romero 8am-1pm

Car Boot Sale @ Camposol A

Beach Dog Club Meeting @ Bolnuevo Beach 9am

Beach Dog Club Meeting opposite Pueblo Best Indalo, Mojácar 9.30am

Free Yoga Class @ Playa del Descargador, Mojácar 10am (until May)

Los Bandidos Cycle Ride from Mojácar. See their FB page for times

Rastro Market @ Centro de Usos Múltiples, Mojácar Pueblo

Guided Visit @ La Bastida, Totana 10am/12pm from 2.50€

Victory Churches Spain Sunday Service @ Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón

Dog Walking/Socialisation @ Turre (from Plaza Constitución) 12.30pm

FEBRUARY

Sun 1

St Nicholas Church Songs of Praise @ Camposol D20 C/Sobrija 11am

Victory Churches Spain Sunday Service @ Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón

Aguilas Carnival (ends 6 Mar). Visit aguilastoday.com for schedule

Aguilas Carnival Paper Costume Contest. Info at aguilastoday.com

Tues 3

Monthly 'B' Clean Meeting @ Camposol B 4pm

Weds 4

World Cancer Day

Thurs 5

PAWS-PATAS Valentine's Bingo Lunch Club @ The Snug, Mojácar Playa 1.30pm 10€ inc lunch

FMA Jersey Boys Tribute @ Hotel Playa Grande, Pto de Mazarrón 10€ 7pm

Fri 6

Aguilas Carnival National Drag Queen Gala. Info at aguilastoday.com

Sat 7

FMA Pop Up Market @ Isla Plana Social Club 10am-2pm

Aguilas Carnival Body Painting Contest. Info at aguilastoday.com

Sun 8

Victory Churches Spain Sunday Service @ Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón

St Nicholas Church Holy Communion @ Camposol D20 C/Sobrija 11am

Tues 10

PAWS-PATAS Book Sale @ Scotty's, Mojácar Playa 10.30am-1pm

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Weds 11

St Nicholas Church Coffee Morning @ Camposol D20 C/Sobrija 9.30am-12pm

Thurs 12

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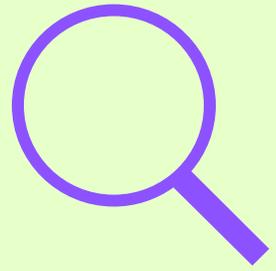
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- Sat 14** **Valentine's Day**
- FMA Alex Tipping @** Sully's Bar, El Alamillo, Pto de Mazarrón 5€ 7pm
- Sun 15** **St Nicholas Church Morning Prayer @** Camposol D20 C/Sobrija 11am
Victory Churches Spain Sunday Service @ Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón
- Aguilas Carnival Grand Parade**
- Mon 16** **Aguilas Night Carnival**
- Tues 17** **Start of Chinese New Year (until 3rd March)**
- Aguilas Carnival Grand Parade**
- Sat 21** **Artisan Market @** Paseo de las Comunidades, Pto de Mazarrón 10am
- Aguilas Carnival Final Grand Parade**
- Sun 22** **Victory Churches Spain Sunday Service @** Calle Villaricos de la Alumbres 17, Mazarrón
St Nicholas Church Holy Communion @ Camposol D20 C/Sobrija 11am
- Tues 24** **Aguilas Carnival `Suelta de la Mussona'.** Info at aguilastoday.com
- Weds 25** **Free Financial Seminar/Lunch by Thy Will be Done @** Av Federico García Lorca 92, Benijófar
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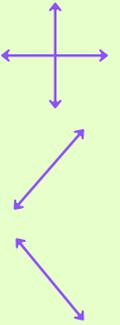


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WORD SEARCH

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



Can you find the words hidden in the puzzle?

NUTRITION
HYDRATION
MOVEMENT

SLEEP
MINDFUL
BALANCE

ENERGY
FRESH
WALKING

SUNLIGHT
CALM
STRENGTH

STREET STYLE TACOS

500g minced beef, 1 small onion finely diced, 2 garlic cloves crushed, 1 teaspoon smoked paprika, 1 teaspoon ground cumin, half a teaspoon chilli flakes, 1 tablespoon tomato purée, 1 tablespoon olive oil, sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, 8 small corn tortillas, 1 small red onion thinly sliced, 1 handful fresh coriander finely chopped, 1 lime cut into wedges, 1 ripe tomato finely diced, optional sliced fresh chillies for garnish.

Heat the olive oil in a wide frying pan over a medium heat and gently soften the diced onion for three to four minutes until translucent. Add the garlic and cook for a further thirty seconds until fragrant. Stir in the minced beef, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and allow it to brown evenly. Season generously with salt and pepper, then sprinkle in the smoked paprika, cumin and chilli flakes. Stir thoroughly so the spices coat the meat evenly, then add the tomato purée along with a small splash of water to create a rich, lightly sauce texture. Reduce the heat slightly and allow the mixture to simmer for five to seven minutes, giving the flavours time to deepen and develop.

While the beef cooks, warm the tortillas in a dry frying pan for around thirty seconds on each side until soft, lightly toasted and pliable. Arrange them on a wooden board or serving platter. Spoon the spiced beef generously into each tortilla, then scatter over the diced tomato, sliced red onion and fresh coriander. Finish with a generous squeeze of lime juice and a few fresh chilli slices if you enjoy extra heat. Serve immediately while warm, allowing everyone to fold and enjoy the tacos as a vibrant, flavour-packed street-style feast.



WARM TOMATO VELOUTÉ

600g ripe vine tomatoes, 1 small red pepper deseeded and chopped, 1 small shallot finely sliced, 1 garlic clove crushed, 3 tablespoons olive oil plus extra for finishing, sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, 1 teaspoon smoked paprika, half a teaspoon sugar, 400ml good vegetable stock, 300g fresh tuna loin, a small handful fresh oregano or basil leaves, a squeeze of lemon juice.

Begin by heating two tablespoons of the olive oil in a wide saucepan over a gentle heat. Add the shallot and cook for three minutes until softened and translucent, then stir in the garlic and chopped red pepper and cook for a further minute until fragrant. Add the tomatoes, smoked paprika, sugar and a generous pinch of salt and pepper, stirring well so the flavours combine. Pour in the vegetable stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for fifteen minutes until the vegetables are completely soft and the liquid has slightly reduced. Remove from the heat and blend until perfectly smooth and velvety. Taste and adjust seasoning, adding a touch more salt or a squeeze of lemon if needed. Keep warm over a very low heat.

Pat the tuna dry with kitchen paper and season lightly on all sides. Heat a heavy frying pan over a high heat and add the remaining tablespoon of olive oil. When the oil is shimmering, place the tuna into the pan and sear for around thirty seconds on each side, allowing a golden crust to form while keeping the centre beautifully pink. Remove from the pan and rest briefly before slicing into generous cubes.

To serve, spoon the warm tomato soup into wide shallow bowls, swirling gently to create a smooth surface. Arrange the tuna pieces evenly on top and drizzle with a little extra olive oil. Scatter over fresh oregano or basil leaves for fragrance and colour. The richness of the fish contrasts with the bright sweetness of the soup, creating a dish that feels refined yet comforting. Serve immediately while warm for the best texture and flavour.





MANGO CREAM PARFAIT

250g mascarpone cheese, 200ml double cream, 2 tablespoons icing sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 200g good-quality mango purée, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 8 to 10 sponge fingers or small savoiardi biscuits, 80ml freshly brewed coffee or light fruit syrup, 100g fresh raspberries, 30g dark chocolate finely shaved, 4 small profiteroles or mini choux buns for decoration.

Begin by placing the mascarpone into a large mixing bowl and loosening it gently with a spoon until smooth and creamy. In a separate bowl whisk the double cream with the icing sugar and vanilla until it holds soft peaks. Fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone in two additions, using a light hand so the mixture stays airy and luxurious.

In another bowl stir the mango purée with the lemon juice to sharpen the flavour slightly. Break the sponge fingers into small pieces and lightly soak them in the coffee or syrup, ensuring they are moist but not soggy. Divide the soaked sponge between four serving glasses, pressing gently to create an even base.

Spoon a generous layer of the mascarpone cream over the sponge, smoothing the surface with the back of a spoon. Add a ribbon of mango purée, allowing it to naturally ripple through the cream for a beautiful layered effect. Repeat with another layer of cream, finishing with a final swirl of mango across the top.

Chill the desserts for at least thirty minutes so the layers set and the flavours marry together. Just before serving, crown each glass with fresh raspberries, scatter over the dark chocolate shavings and place a small profiterole on top for a playful, elegant finish.

Serve well chilled, allowing the spoon to cut through the silky cream, bright fruit and soft sponge in one indulgent mouthful. The contrast between the sweet mango, rich mascarpone and fresh berries creates a dessert that feels light, refined and effortlessly celebratory.





The Psychology Behind Why Our Brains Crave Green

An Ancient Brain in a Modern World

Human beings did not evolve under strip lighting, concrete ceilings or glowing screens. For hundreds of thousands of years, the nervous system learned to regulate itself in landscapes filled with trees, moving light, flowing air and organic textures. Although modern life looks dramatically different, the brain still responds to these same environmental cues. This is why stepping into a green space often produces an immediate sense of relief, even when we cannot explain it.

The Science of Biophilia

Psychologists refer to this instinctive pull towards nature as biophilia – the innate human tendency to seek connection with living systems. Research in environmental psychology shows that exposure to natural elements reduces physiological stress markers such as heart rate and cortisol levels while improving emotional stability. Even indirect exposure, such as indoor plants, natural materials or views of greenery, activates the same calming neural pathways. The brain interprets these cues as signals of safety and abundance, allowing the nervous system to soften its constant state of alert.

Why Green Calms the Mind

Colour itself plays a powerful role in perception and cognition. Green sits at the centre of the visible spectrum, requiring less visual adjustment by the eye than more extreme colours. This reduces ocular strain and allows the brain to process visual information more efficiently. Studies in cognitive psychology suggest that natural green environments restore attention capacity and reduce mental fatigue, helping the mind recover from prolonged concentration and screen exposure. This is why even brief moments around plants often feel mentally refreshing rather than stimulating.

How Living Plants Shape Focus and Mood

Plants introduce subtle movement, texture and rhythm into interior spaces. These gentle sensory inputs regulate the nervous system, supporting steady focus without overstimulation. Research consistently links indoor greenery with improved mood, reduced anxiety and enhanced task performance in work and learning environments. Caring for plants also establishes routine, purpose and quiet mindfulness, reinforcing emotional regulation through small, daily interactions with living growth.

The Urban Pull Towards Indoor Nature

As cities become denser and lifestyles increasingly digital, access to natural environments diminishes. The psychological response is not withdrawal, but substitution. People instinctively recreate fragments of the outdoors inside their homes – through houseplants, natural light, timber finishes and botanical textures. These elements restore a sense of grounding and continuity that modern architecture often removes, allowing the home to function as a nervous-system refuge rather than another source of stimulation.

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CONFIRMED by the DGT: Using Warning Triangles Will NOT Be Prosecuted

There's been a lot of unnecessary alarm about warning triangles being "banned" in Spain from 2026. So let's be very clear, the DGT itself has now confirmed the position.

The DGT's clarification (this is the key point)

The Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT) has explicitly confirmed that:

Drivers will NOT be prosecuted or fined for using warning triangles, as long as the mandatory V16 beacon is also used.

This instruction has been passed to traffic officers to avoid confusion and unnecessary sanctions.

What did change from 1 January 2026?

The connected V16 beacon becomes the mandatory signalling device and is the only device the DGT officially recognises for breakdowns and accidents

What is NOT happening

Warning triangles are not illegal

There is no recall

There are no fines for having or using them

You do not need to throw them away

Why is the DGT prioritising the V16?

Because placing triangles means getting out of your vehicle and walking on the road, one of the most dangerous actions a driver can take.

The V16 beacon:

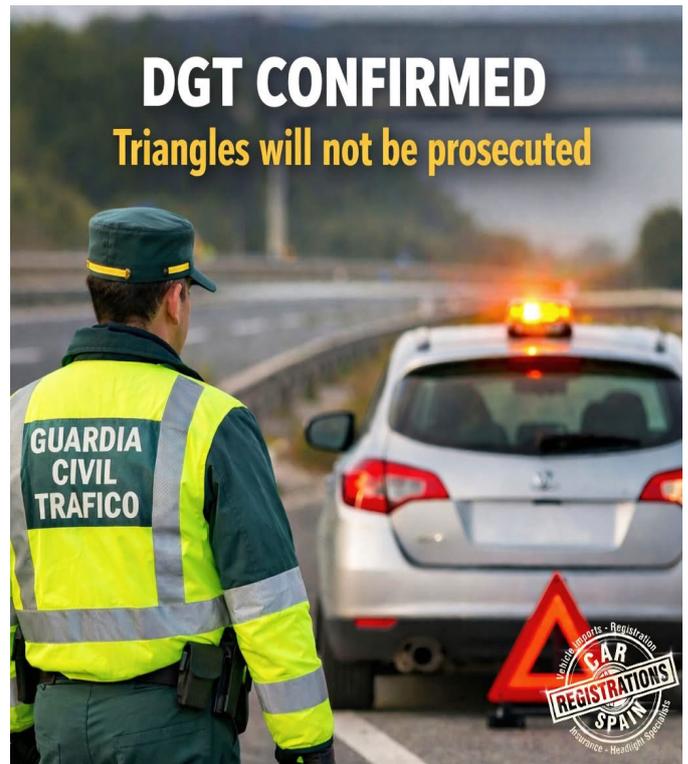
- Is activated from inside the vehicle
- Is visible from long distances
- Sends your location automatically to traffic systems

What drivers should do now:

Carry a DGT-approved, connected V16 beacon

Keep your warning triangles if you already have them

Ignore scare posts and rushed sales tactics



Bottom line

The DGT has spoken.

- Triangles will not be prosecuted.
- No sanctions.
- No panic.

We'll continue to share clear, verified information, not rumours.

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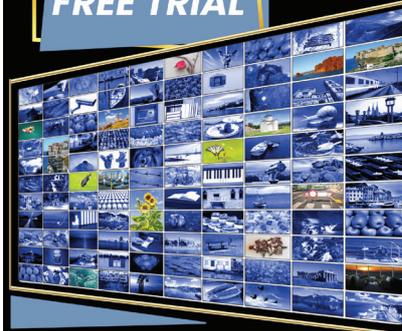
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DID YOU KNOW?

What is Trust? (Part 2)

Continuing with the theme of 'Trust' in Scriptures from last month, one can see how important it is for today. This month the Scriptures will highlight more on the subject. Reviewing more texts, it will reveal more intensely ones understanding of the relevance and necessity of trusting in Yehovah's word. Lets now investigate more from the Scriptures.

There are many verses in the book of Psalms which are both encouraging and warn of the dangers of trusting the flesh. Let's look at a few. Psalms chapter 40 and verses 3 and 4 says "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies". In psalms chapter 56 and verses 3, 4 and 11 it states "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. In God have I put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me".

Psalms chapter 62 and verse 10 warns "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery, if riches increase, set not your heart upon them". Note the contrast in Psalms chapter 64 and verse 10 which declares "The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory". Psalms chapter 71 and verses 1 and 5 states "In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion. For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD, thou art my trust from my youth". Another warning in Psalms chapter 118 and verses 8 and 9 declares "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes".

According to Scripture one must not lean on ones own understanding as noted in Proverbs chapter 3 and verse 5 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding". Proverbs chapter 29 and verse 25 says "The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe". To clarify, in Proverbs chapter 30 and verse 5 it explains "Every word of God is pure, he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him".

The book of Isaiah has much to say on trust. Here are a few quotations. Isaiah chapter 42 and verses 16 and 17 highlights "And I will bring the blind by the way that they knew not. I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them. They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, ye are our gods".

Isaiah chapter 51 and verses 4 and 5 describes the goodness

and mercy of Yehovah "Hearken to me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation. For a Law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgement to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people. The isles shall wait upon me and on my arm shall they trust".

Is there justice and truth in this world? Look what Isaiah chapter 59 and verses 4, 7 and 8 says on the matter "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth. They trust in vanity and speak lies. They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not, and there is no judgement in their goings. They have made them crooked paths, whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace".

Take a look at the following warnings. Jeremiah chapter 7 and verses 4, 8, 9 and 24 states "Trust ye not in lying words....Behold ye trust in lying words that can not profit. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations? But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward".

Also, in Jeremiah chapter 9 and verses 4 to 6 they explain "Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother. For every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth. They have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit, through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD".

Trusting in Yehovahs (Jehovah or God) word gives wisdom and peace. Proverbs chapter 10 and verse 31 states "The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom....". Also in Proverbs chapter 11 and verse 12 it says "He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour, but a man of understanding holdeth his peace". Yehovah has given all freedom to choose whom they will serve. Note these words in 1st Thessalonians chapter 5 and verses 8 and 9 which make known "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ".

I hope you have learned more about the Scriptures. Next month I will continue and conclude with Trust (Part 3).

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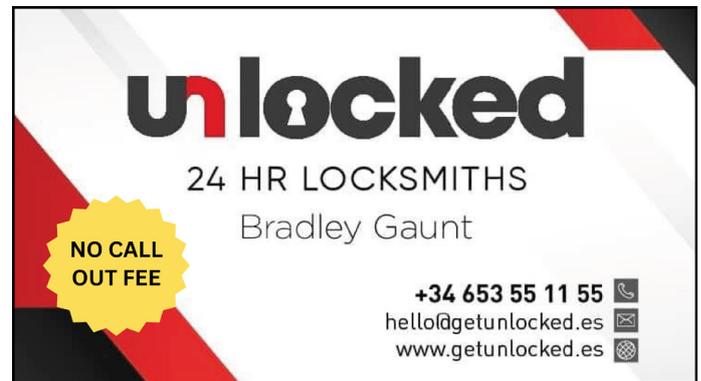


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OUTDOORS





Why Minimal Outdoor Living Is Rising

There's a growing whisper in garden design circles that has now become a confident, unmistakable voice: less really can be more. In outdoor exteriors, the minimalist aesthetic — long established indoors and in contemporary architecture — has fully crossed the threshold into landscapes, terraces and patios around the world. What you see in this image — open space, uncluttered surfaces, carefully chosen furniture and a seamless relationship between built form and natural surroundings — is emblematic of this shift taking hold.

Minimalism in outdoor spaces is not about stripping everything back to the bare bones. It is a deliberate design philosophy that prioritises clarity, function and harmony with the environment. Where traditional gardens once layered ornament, planting and features, today's minimal exteriors embrace restraint. Clean lines, pared-down plant palettes and generous sightlines allow the eye to rest and the mind to decompress, creating spaces that feel restorative rather than demanding — a powerful response to increasingly busy, overstimulated lives.

The movement also mirrors wider architectural thinking. Contemporary minimalism has evolved beyond pure structure to focus on continuity between inside and out, allowing gardens and terraces to feel like natural extensions of the home itself. Crisp geometry, restrained material palettes of stone and timber, and the sculptural placement of singular planting create environments that feel quietly intentional rather than decorative. The result is an outdoor space that invites pause, presence and breathing room — not as a luxury, but as a new baseline for modern living.

Working for Wellbeing

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

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

For retirees who arrive on a non-working visa, access to the public system can be less straightforward and requires careful planning. In these cases, private health insurance often becomes an important part of the overall relocation strategy, offering flexibility, choice of provider and additional peace of mind. As with any long-term commitment, it is sensible to research policy options carefully, understand what is included in the cover, and factor ongoing premiums into household budgeting. Taking independent advice helps ensure the chosen solution aligns with individual health needs, residency status and future lifestyle plans, as every situation is different.



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

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

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

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



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John 15:13 NIV Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

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The gates of Heaven are narrow and the way through them is through Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to heaven. There is no other way. What we do here on earth does not decide our eternal destiny, our relationship with Jesus does.

Our relationship with Jesus is no different from our relationship with others here on earth. It's a relationship built on Love, Respect, Trust and Truth. He loves us all without exception. We are called to love one another in the way Jesus loves us. The world is full of disruption, corruption and wars, when it should be full of love, peace and tranquillity.

Mark 12:30-31 NIV 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'[a] 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'[b] There is no commandment greater than these."

The world needs more love and we are the ones who can pour out and share love with those around us. A simple smile and a warm hello can make all the difference.

The month of February is a month based around love with Valentine's Day being right in the centre of it, so why not share that love with not just your loved ones but with someone in need.

Come and find the love of Jesus. He will not disappoint. We are waiting with a warm welcome just for you.



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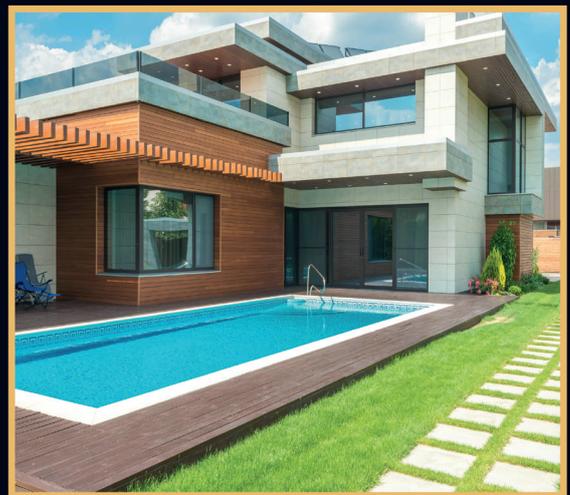
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