JANUARY 2024 | EDITION 146

Tomorrow

A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE FOR THE ALGARVE

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Editor's note

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ON THE COVER:
The decorative calçada on the promenade at Praia da Luz
© Paul Gerace

Dear *Tomorrow* readers,

Welcome to the first edition of 2024. A Happy New Year to you all or *Feliz Ano Novo*.

It is tempting to be glum this month. The Christmas celebrations are over, and we need to take the decorations down and store them (I always think this is the worst job of the year!). January is also the coldest month in Portugal and many of our favourite bars and restaurants are closed.

I am reminded, however, of something my yoga teacher told me, which is to manifest gratitude. Each day, write down five things you are grateful for. Doing this regularly will help you to cultivate an attitude of gratitude that gives you a high vibe. So, let's think of some things we have to be grateful for at *Tomorrow*.

In December, we had a get-together of our writers. I was very grateful that we have such an enthusiastic, creative and talented group who keep finding and writing great articles. I was extremely grateful to share stories and a glass of wine with them all.

The *Tomorrow* advertisers, who continue to allow us to produce this magazine by supporting us. We hope they also feel gratitude for the opportunity to promote their business in our magazine!

I am grateful that the magazine allows me a creative outlet. I love the process of interviewing someone or researching an idea, then imagining how it can make an interesting article. I love using words to create a story and then seeing it in print is the best feeling ever.

I am grateful for the community I live in, which we celebrate in this magazine. I have experienced nothing but kindness and friendliness from the interesting people both myself and the *Tomorrow* team have interviewed, who range from a goat farmer to Bonnie Tyler. It is truly a privilege to tell their stories.

Finally, I am grateful for the generosity of the *Tomorrow* readers and the wider community who care about the people and animals in the Algarve and continue to donate, volunteer or give to charities. Last year, TACT raised 35,000€ for local causes. It is a privilege to be able to help the less fortunate in the community.

My highlight was when Alice's mother told us at the winter ball that the money raised by TACT had helped her daughter walk again. That is definitely something to be grateful for.

I am grateful to you all for picking up the January magazine or reading it online and wish you all a very happy and grateful January.

Sophie, Tom, Phil and the *Tomorrow* team



The Tomorrow Team's Christmas Curry at Delhi Darbar



Julian Putley, Devid Lugg, Luka Alexander, Sophie Sadler, Tracy Burton, Michael Upton, Tom Henshaw, Luís Costa

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ALGARVE PRO RACING

WORDS David Lugg **PHOTOGRAPHY** Algarve Pro Racing/Sergey Savrasov



Stewart and Samantha after victory at Le Mans

It is not an overstatement to say that Algarve Pro Racing are a Portuguese sporting phenomenon. Arguably, the team's achievements are unparalleled within Portuguese motorsport history. Yet, their success goes relatively under the radar here in Portugal. David Lugg talked to team principal Stewart Cox to find out more about the highs and lows of running a Portuguese-based motor racing team.

It's the end of a long day and I've just completed the school run following a busy day in the office. But, as it transpires, my tribulations pale into insignificance compared to the life of a motor racing team principal. Stewart and his wife Samantha (co-team principal) have just completed yet another successful week having won Race 2 of the Asian Le Mans Series in Malaysia. Before returning home to the Algarve, they flew to Miami for two days of testing at the Daytona racetrack.

"It's a sport where if you put all your ducks in a line, you get results. But, like every sport where you look to succeed, the amount of effort you put in is immense." Succeeding is something that Stewart has become used to throughout his career. After a decade in Formula 1 (including time as a chief mechanic at Jordan and Virgin Racing), he co-formed Algarve Pro Racing in 2010. The team have gone from strength to strength. Their achievements include championship wins in the European Le Mans Series, Asian Le Mans Series, IMSA WetherTech SportsCar Championship and class victories at the Le Mans 24 Hours.

I ask him if being based in the Algarve offers any unexpected obstacles. "Yes and no," he says, taking a moment to choose his words carefully. "There are some benefits and there are some things that aren't so beneficial. What there aren't much of in the Algarve are industrial areas that are suited for racing teams. Finding suitable premises is a bit of an issue. But, overall, it seems to work for us."

Last year was a hugely successful year for Algarve Pro Racing, the highlight of which was taking overall victory in the European Le Mans Series following a dramatic season-ending finale on home soil at the Autódromo Internacional do Algarve. I put it to him that the season must have been a lot of fun. "Yeah, it was," he replies tentatively. "But it was a huge sacrifice. The amount of effort that goes in from everybody, you sort of write off your home life."

Speaking of which, I ask Stewart about how he came to call the Algarve his home. Interestingly, he tells me that he came to Portugal to retire in 2010, but it's now become a bit of an in-joke. "When your work is your hobby, it's a great place to be in life, but we've only spent about 25 days in Portugal this year, which is a shame."

Despite Stewart not spending as much time as he would like in the region, Algarve Pro Racing is a Portuguese team that races under a Portuguese flag. The motorsport industry may well be an international affair, but the team has its roots



close to Albufeira. Yet despite this, the region (and indeed the country) has perhaps not given the team the credit they deserve. Outside of Formula 1 (last held in Portugal in 2021) and MotoGP (largely thanks to local hero Miguel Oliveira), publicity for other motorsport events is limited.

"Is the race (European Le Mans Series) promoted as well as it could be? Probably not. The first year we did the race in Estoril – something like 30,000 people turned up. The councils throughout the Algarve could have promoted the fact that a Portuguese team was going to win a European championship. There's a lot more that could be done."

Despite his frustration, it is clear that Stewart is a big fan of Portugal. He recalls his first experience of visiting the country as a 23-year-old when he went to Estoril. "I remember going for a meal and we had *bitoque* (steak) and it cost me 250 escudos. It was fantastic. I just thought this is really nice – I like the food and the people seem really friendly. I'd love to buy a home here."

Stewart and Samantha now have a bit of downtime at the end of what has been a hectic year. I have visions of Stewart switching off from motorsport completely for a bit, but he advises me otherwise. "No, if there is a race on, I will watch a race. All I seem to do is eat, sleep and breathe this, but it's our pastime you know. It's what we enjoy doing." He does concede that he likes to partake in a spot of DIY, but there is no doubt where his true passion lies.

Twenty twenty-four promises to be another exciting year for Stewart and all those connected to Algarve Pro Racing. His relaxing retirement and any major DIY plans will have to wait at least one more season. But as long as he keeps enjoying the sport, you can see him continuing for a few years to come. "We don't really do it for any accolades," he concludes. "We came here to be a Portuguese team and I'm very proud of that. We're the first team to get the Portuguese national anthem played at Le Mans and now we've done it twice."

Team members describe themselves as a 'leading light of international prototype racing' but, in truth, they are far more than that – they are a beacon of sporting inspiration – a lesson to us all of the benefits of diligence and perseverance. Stewart Cox might seem ambivalent about receiving any praise, but he and Samantha are very much unsung heroes of Portuguese motorsport and indeed, Portuguese sport in general. We would all do well to take an interest.

www.algarveproracingteam.com







Querença's Sausage Festival

Photos © freepik: @user5356353

The hilltop village of Querença, situated just outside of Loulé, offers peace and tranquillity throughout the year, except for one weekend in January. Every third Saturday in January, this sleepy little village bursts into life for its annual Festa das Chouriças sausage festival, bringing locals and visitors together to celebrate a successful season of pig rearing.

WORDS Luka Alexander

The Festa das Chouriças pays homage to the village patron St. Luís, who is attributed as one of the patron saints of animals and the protector of Querença. At one time it was common in the rural areas of the Algarve and Alentejo for families to own pigs which would be used to feed the family throughout the year. Many would ask St. Luís to protect their drove and livestock so they would have enough food for the whole year. As a gesture of thanksgiving, families would gather in the village square to offer their best homemade sausages to St. Luís, giving the remainder to those in need.

The centuries-old Festa das Chouriças has grown from a small local gathering into a popular gastronomic fair that continues to pay homage to St. Luís and promote local farmers and regional produce. The festival kicks off at approximately 10 am with a special mass held in the village church of Nossa Senhora da Assunção, followed by a solemn procession of bearers carrying the statue of St. Luís, which is paraded around the cobbled streets of Querença before music and the smell of barbecued pork fills the air. Farmers from across the municipality offer their best produce, from *pão com chouriço* to *bifanas*, presunto (smoked ham) and, of course, *chouriço* sausages at this traditional fair that is rooted in rural life and one of the fine examples of Algarvian culture.



As for St. Luís, it is unknown how the XIII century crusader King of France became the patron of this rural Algarvian community nestled in the countryside, nor is it known why he is celebrated in January when his feast day is actually held on 25 August. But his legacy is remembered nonetheless as France's only king to be canonised and the patron saint of pig rearing.

Born in 1214 in Poissy, France, St. Luís or King Louis IX, reigned over the Kingdom of France from 1226 until his death in 1270. Taking the throne aged just 12, St. Luís would "take the cross" and lead his first crusade in his 30s. One of his most memorable crusades was between 1248 and 1250 when he had hopes of regaining Jerusalem and Damascus; however, his troops were badly defeated by the Egyptians. After living in Syria for four years, St. Luís returned to France and built Sainte-Chapelle to house a relic of the crown of thorns, which today is kept within the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris.





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Having made peace with the English through the Treaty of Paris in 1259, allowing King Henry III of England to keep the lands of Aquitaine, St. Luís pledged to create better living standards for the people of France. He opened hospitals, cared for the sick, notably those suffering from leprosy, just as his patron St. Francis did before him, and even fed over a hundred poor and homeless people within his own home. One of his most significant legacies was the creation of the French justice system, where petitioners could appeal against judgements directly to the king. In addition, he banned trials by ordeal and introduced the presumption of innocence, where the defendant is deemed innocent until proven guilty.

St. Luís' reign came to an end during a crusade in North Africa when an epidemic of dysentery swept through his army, killing many, including the king crusader himself. St. Luís died from the plague on 25 August 1270 in Tunis and his body was ceremonially returned to France in a lengthy procession across Sicily, Italy, and the Alps before being interred in the royal necropolis in the Basilica of Saint-Denis in Paris.

His successor and son, Philip III, later dispersed several relics to strengthen the veneration of St. Luís' legacy, including his preserved heart and intestines, which were saved by St. Luís' younger brother, Charles I of Naples who buried the organs within the Cathedral of Monreale near Palermo in Sicily.

A Prayer instructed by St. Luís IX to his son, Philip III

O God, we love You.
We want to do nothing to displease You.
If we have troubles, let us thank You.
If we don't, we also humbly thank You.
Let us look for ways to grow closer to You,
whether in Confession, prayer, or at Mass.
Let us open our hearts to afflicted people
and do what we can to comfort them.
Let us look for ways to improve our society.
Thank You for friends who help us bear
our burdens and help us grow in holiness.
Let us turn away from gossip or swearing.
Let us always do what is right for those
we serve and promote peace among our
neighbours.
Let us be quick to defend our Faith.
O Holy Trinity, all You holy saints,
please defend us from all evils.
Please give us grace to do Your will always,
so that You are honoured
and so we may be with You forever.
Amen



St. Luís is remembered by his admirers as the ideal Christian ruler. His skills as a knight and his engaging manner with the public made him one of France's most popular rulers. St. Luís was canonised by Pope Boniface VIII in 1297 at the Papal Palace in Orvieto as St. Luís IX, Confessor of the Church.

Today, the Festa das Chouriças is one of many popular country fairs in the Algarve, welcoming locals and tourists from far and wide. All are eager to immerse themselves in the community spirit, to give thanks to the crusader king, feast on local delicacies and to support the hard-working farmers of Querença.

Querença's Festa das Chouriças
Largo da Igreja Nossa Sra. da Anunciação, 8100-127 Querença (Loulé)
www.cm-loule.pt

1. *Detail of a miniature representing King Louis IX, known as Saint Louis, in the Moralized Bible of Toledo, known as the Saint Louis Bible, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*
2. *King Louis IX by Émile Signol, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*

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1. *A Adoração dos Magos 1828 Domingos Sequeira, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*
2. *Saint Martin sharing his cloak with a beggar, Anthony van Dyck, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*
3. *Adoration of the Magi by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, c. 1655 (Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio)*

DIA DE REIS:

Here Come The Kings 20 + C + M + B + 24

The sixth of January marks the start of Epiphany, known as the Twelfth Night, when the Three Kings arrived in Bethlehem to visit the baby Jesus. Bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, the kings are celebrated on this day all around the world, especially here in Portugal, where it is known as Dia de Reis or the Day of the Kings.

WORDS Luka Alexander

Although Dia de Reis is not a public holiday, this doesn't stop many from gathering with friends and loved ones for a great feast to kick-start the New Year and to round off the Christmastide festivities as we enter into Epiphanytide in the liturgical calendar. Roasted *bacalhau* (cod fish with potatoes), walnuts, apples, chorizo, and black pudding make up the staple of many dining tables on the Day of the Kings, but it wouldn't be complete without *bolo rei* or king cake. The colourful sticky bun decorated with crystallised fruit has become the Christmas cake of Portugal and is especially enjoyed as a dessert for this holy celebration just as its name suggests.

Another favourite has to be roasted chestnuts, a traditional wintertime snack that is enjoyed all around the world and plays a symbolic role during this time of year. Legend has it that the Roman soldier St. Martin stumbled across a beggar, dressed in rags, freezing in the icy cold weather. St. Martin took off his cloak and cut it in half to share with the beggar. This became known as "cutting the cloak" and the action of cutting the skin of a chestnut to warm on a fire and open up the goodness of the nut inside came to represent St. Martin's generosity and the gift of giving as reminded by the three kings.

While a special Epiphany mass will be held in churches across the country, school children partake in crown-making classes, using gold and silver paper to commemorate the arrival of the three kings. Often, these symbolic crowns would be blessed with holy water, which was consecrated during the Epiphany mass. Throughout Epiphany, many join in to sing carols (known as *janeiras*) around town to announce the birth of Christ, knocking from door to door and serenading locals with flutes, violas, and tambourines, often receiving a mix of fruits and nuts for sharing a little bit of Christmas cheer.

On the island of Madeira, it is traditional for troupes to walk the streets at night, playing music much like the *janeiras* on mainland Portugal but singing *Cantar os Reis* (Song of the Kings). In more modern times, Madeira has become known for its outdoor concerts called *Concerto de Reis* or Concert of the Kings, a tradition which has also spread to Serta and Porto.

One ancient Epiphanytide tradition, which I wrote about last year, is 'chalking the door', a practice common amongst Roman Catholics, whereby sticks of chalk are blessed during the Epiphany service and used to inscribe the year and initials of the three kings on a door to protect the home for the year ahead. The initials C M B can also represent the Latin blessing *'Christus mansionem benedicat'* (may Christ bless this house). This year's inscription should be written as 20 + C + M + B + 24.

Along with 'chalking the door' is the Epiphany swim, where some go out to brave the elements for a swim in the ocean or a nearby river or lake. Though common in Eastern Europe, where the weather at this time of year is much colder than temperatures in the Algarve, for some, it's still a tradition to take a swim and dunk one's self underwater three times, representing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in remembrance of Christ's baptism in Bethany beyond the river Jordan.

Little is known about the lives of the three kings, who were made saints in the VIII century; however, a sliver of information can be found in the Gospel of Matthew 2:1–12. Following the star in the east towards Bethlehem, where the baby Jesus lay, the three wise men or the three magi, representing the continents of Arabia, Africa and Asia, didn't all arrive on camels despite common belief. It is thought that only King Caspar rode on a camel, while King Melchior and King Balthazar rode on a horse and an elephant, respectively.



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The kings' country of origin has been disputed for centuries, and whether they were kings or astrologers/astronomers remains an open debate. The meaning behind the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, however, is known. King Caspar carried gold as a symbol of kingship on earth, King Balthazar gifted frankincense to resemble deity, whilst King Melchior, the oldest of the three kings, presented myrrh as a symbol of death. This belief can be traced back to Book 1 (Origen) in *Contra Celsum*, which states, "*gold, as to a king, myrrh, as to one who was mortal, and incense, as to a God.*"

Whilst we all know the story of Christ, his birth, baptism, crucifixion, and his death and resurrection, not much is known about the three kings after their visit to Bethlehem. However, it is believed that the tomb of the three kings is situated behind the high altar of Cologne Cathedral in Germany, some 4,290 kilometres from Bethlehem in Israel. Gilded in gold, the decorated triple sarcophagus is thought to be the largest reliquary in the western world.

The relics of the three kings were originally held in Constantinople before they were brought to the Basilica of Sant'Eustorgio in Milan by Bishop Eustorgius I on the orders of Emperor Constantine in 314 AD. By 1164, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa took the relics and gave them to the Archbishop of Cologne, Rainald of Dassel, who interred them in Cologne Cathedral. In 1199, King Otto IV gave the cathedral three golden crowns that were believed to have been made for the three kings. Given the historical and cultural importance of this shrine, the coat of arms of Cologne shows three crowns symbolising the three kings who rest within the city's cathedral.

As pilgrims will flock to the shrine in Cologne on 6 January, the three magi will be remembered across Portugal through the song and dance of the *janeiras*, through crown-making competitions in schools and, of course, by those of us who will be chalking the door and taking an Epiphany swim.

Whatever way you will be celebrating the Dia de Reis, I hope you have a happy Dia de Reis and I wish you all a prosperous and peaceful New Year!

"When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh."

- Matthew 2:10–11

Young Algarve Writers

WORDS Lena Strang

Manuela Istrate, English teacher at Júlio Dantas Secondary School in Lagos, is keen for her students to practise their English and engage in writing. She organises regular story-writing competitions as a motivation that seems to be paying off. Manuela also wants her students to meet 'real' authors to inspire them and give some ideas on how to put pen to paper.

I went along to the school and gave them her words of wisdom in a talk to the students. Representing *Tomorrow* magazine, I presented prizes to 16-year-old Alexandra Belova, whose winning Christmas story was published in the December edition of *Tomorrow*. Well done, Alexandra.

Manuela appreciates the support *Tomorrow* is giving in her attempt to enhance the students' learning and motivation. Undoubtedly, seeing your work in print is a real boost to the youngsters.



Manuela Istrate, teacher of English, Peter Cain, Alexandra Belova, Lena and José Augusto Lopez, Headteacher at Júlio Dantas School

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The Path of Legends

Did you know that the Ria Formosa was created by the Gods of Atlantis as protection for the Algarve's wonderful coastline? Vaughan Willmore finds out more.

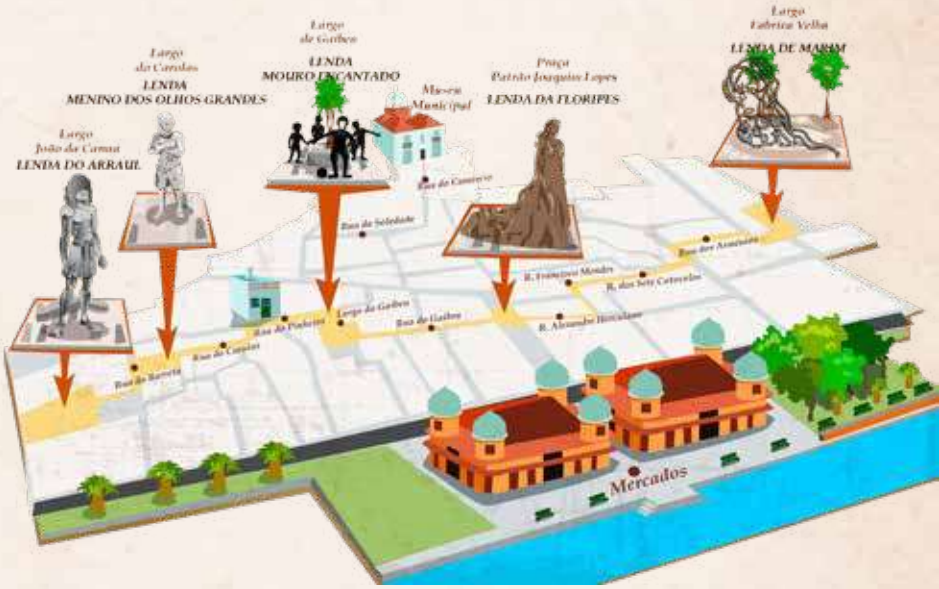
WORDS Vaughan Willmore

The Gods of Atlantis were so enamoured with the eastern Algarve that they created a lagoon and sand barrier to protect it from foreign forces and the forces of nature. Okay, that's probably not true, but it's a lovely thought and it's one of several stories, or to be more specific, legends, to be found in the bustling city of Olhão.

The Path of Legends (*Caminho das Lendas*) is a pedestrian walkway through the narrow streets of Olhão, connecting five neighbourhoods. In each of these five locations, there are eye-catching statues and other artistic creations, all of which are accompanied by signage telling captivating tales which reflect the history and the colourful nature of the region.

The five legends tell tales of amazing deeds, lost love, friendship, ghostly tales, and the benevolence of the Gods of Atlantis.

What do each of these legends mean? Do they even have meanings? That's part of the fun of visiting Olhão with family and friends to talk about the legends and see them in the context of the self-styled 'capital of the Ria Formosa' and the place the Gods of Atlantis were so keen to protect.



This helpful map for exploring The Path of Legends is available at: museumunicipal.cm-olhao.pt/menu/1195/caminho-das-lendas



The Story of Arraul

The explanation for the Gods of Atlantis creating the Ria Formosa is told in the story of Arraul, who was the chief guard of the Pillars of Hercules and the son of Atlantis' only survivor. When a terrible storm swept Arraul into the sea, he was swallowed by a gigantic whale.

Incredibly, he survived, and the whale brought him ashore at Prainhas, which is where Olhão stands today. Arraul loved the region so much that he wanted to protect it, and so he built the barrier islands which we know today as part of the Ria Formosa.



The Big-Eyed Boy

This legend was perhaps started by smugglers to scare the fishermen away from an area of the town known as Barreta. On dark winter nights, a crying boy with big black eyes would appear to the fishermen in this neighbourhood but say nothing. Taking pity on him, they carried him with them, but the further they walked, the heavier he became until, eventually, they could carry him no more. They left the boy on the ground, still crying. It is said that the boy no longer appears and that when Floripes (see the legend of Floripes) left for North Africa, she took the 'big-eyed boy' with her.

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The Enchanted Moorish Boy

Manuel Caleca, a young fisherman, was playing in the streets with his friends when a young boy appeared and asked if he could join them. They agreed and began to play, but the young boy wasn't very good at the game and Manuel told him so.

The young boy suggested that he and Manuel go and play elsewhere, eventually leading Manuel to a fantastic palace full of treasures. The sight of the treasures nearly drove Manuel insane. The young boy took Manuel back to his parents, vowing that only Manuel would ever be able to see him.

This proved true until Manuel's mother took him to communion, after which the young boy disappeared, with Manuel never seeing his friend again.



The Legend of Marim

In the Marim neighbourhood of Olhão, there was a beautiful palace where Princess Alina lived with her father. Every evening, a young man named Abdala serenaded Alina with songs of love. Alina's father disapproved so, to deter the young man, he told him he could only have his daughter's hand in marriage if he located the source of the nearby river and delivered it to the palace. The source of the river was 100 miles away, so Alina's father thought it an impossible task.

The next evening, Abdala failed to appear. Alina was devastated. Then, as dawn broke, she heard a distant lute. It was Abdala! He'd found the source of the river and transported it to the palace. Alina's father was enraged that Abdala had achieved such an impossible task and in a fit of rage, threw his daughter out of her bedroom window. Thankfully, Abdala caught her and the two of them sailed away down the river to live happily ever after.

Did you know...

The Britannica Dictionary defines a legend as 'a story from the past that is believed by many people, but cannot be proved to be true.'

It takes about 45 minutes to walk The Path of Legends or longer should you stop off at one of the many cafes, shops and restaurants along the way. It's all on level terrain and is a great way to discover this thriving city, which prides itself on being the 'Capital of the Ria Formosa'.

The Ria Formosa is a vast ecosystem stretching for 60 km along the coast of the eastern Algarve. Covering an area of approximately 18,000 hectares from the Ancão Peninsula in the municipality of Loulé to Manta Rota in Vila Real de Santo António, the wetland zone is of great ecological interest. It's the home of a variety of habitats, including dunes, saltpans, marshes and off-shore barrier islands, along with a tremendous variety of fauna and flora. The Ria Formosa is known throughout the world for its amazing birdlife.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2nqsID8EeI



The Legend of Floripes

An old man called Zé told his friends tall tales of how, when he went to bed at night, he was visited by a beautiful young Moorish lady named Floripes, who provided him with pleasures only a woman can provide.

None of his friends believed him, so Zé wagered the youngest member of the group to check out his story. When Floripes appeared, it had consequences that no one could have foreseen, with Floripes declaring her love to old man Zé and both of them vanishing, reputedly to North Africa.

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Ecovia do Litoral Sul Algarvio



WORDS Sophie Sadler

Many motorists in Praia da Luz were confused by the appearance of blue lines painted on the tarmac around the village. *Tomorrow* contacted the Lagos câmara to clear up the mystery.

In the final stages of construction, the lines mark part of the 15.198-kilometre stretch of the Southern Algarve Coastal Ecovia that crosses the municipality of Lagos and runs between Burgau and Ribeira de Odiáxere. It can now be identified by the green lines painted on the tarmac and by vertical signs. Information panels will also be installed to help make the Ecovia, its route and the points of interest in its vicinity more visible.

During the course of the work, motorists have identified some doubts about the road. The city council, therefore, wishes to inform and clarify the following:

- The Ecovia is not an urban cycle path, nor does it consist of a 100% dedicated corridor
- The Ecovia includes areas exclusively for non-motorised vehicles (bicycles) and others with mixed traffic, passing through roads and paths, with more or less traffic
- The route of the Ecovia do Litoral takes in cycle paths, dirt tracks, tarmac roads with little motorised traffic and sections of busier municipal and national roads
- The green line painted on the tarmac is intended to indicate the route along which the Ecovia passes, but it does not delimit a lane reserved for bicycles, so motor vehicles continue to circulate, as they always have, in their lane (including the tarmac area between the green line and the pavement or the side of the road), but sharing it with cyclists and at a reduced speed of 30km/h
- The green line is mainly used to indicate the Ecovia circuit in the municipality and to guide cyclists to the directions they can travel on the existing paved roads. Indicative arrows for cyclists will soon be painted, as well as pictograms symbolising the bicycle
- The Ecovia, in the sections where it runs along tarmac roads, is not intended for pedestrian traffic, so the place for pedestrians is always on the pavement.

Watch the video showing the construction of the Ecovia in the municipality of Lagos.

youtu.be/kik4biYIkfE?feature=shared

www.visitalgarve.pt/3493/ecovia-do-litoral-eurovelo-1



Household Electrical Fires – Prevention

WORDS David Thomas

January is the coldest month in Portugal, with an average temperature of 11ºC. With the winter season upon us, there is a bigger demand for heating appliances and other equipment to keep us warm. It is also a time when there is an increase in household fires. Many electrical fires can be prevented by following some simple electricity safety tips.

The home electrical safety checklist below contains ten precautions every homeowner should know and follow. Always remember to ask a professional if you're uncertain about the safety of an electrical outlet or appliance.

- Unplug all your unused appliances to reduce potential risks
- Charge gadgets when you're at home and awake
- Check electrical wires for wear and tear – replace any that are damaged
- Avoid overloading plug/power sockets
- Give your appliances proper space for air circulation to avoid overheating
- Keep electrical devices and outlets away from water to prevent shock
- If you have young children, remove any high-risk electrical items from their reach
- Check that you're using the correct wattage in all your fixtures and appliances
- Christmas tree lights – switch off and unplug them before you go to bed or go out
- Always follow appliance instructions for improved electrical safety

Whether you own or rent your home, it's important to know the signs of a potential electrical problem. Look out for scorch marks, flickering lights, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit breakers that trip for no obvious reason. These could all be signs of loose or dangerous wiring. If in doubt, get them checked by a qualified electrician; you are within your rights to ask your landlord if you are a tenant.

As you continue to upgrade your home with more lighting, appliances and electronics, your home's electrical service capacity may become overburdened. If fuses blow or trip frequently, you may need to increase the capacity of your electrical service or add new branch circuits. A qualified, licensed electrician can determine the appropriate service requirements for your home.

Finally – wiring is not designed to last forever, so hiring an electrician to conduct an electrical inspection is a good idea if you live in an older home. This type of inspection is also recommended during the home-buying process so potential buyers are aware of any outstanding electrical issues or fire risks.

David Thomas is president of Safe Communities Portugal

www.safecommunitiesportugal.com

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The Footfall of Time

The cobblestone paying homage to history



WORDS Sophie Sadler **PHOTOGRAPHY** Paul Gerace

Most people have a love-hate relationship with *calçada*. We love these traditional cobblestones on a sunny day when they gleam in the sun and remind us of Portugal's ancient heritage. We hate it when it's wet from rain or covered in car oil, making navigating it similar to skating onto an ice rink.

Portuguese *calçadas*, or pavements, have become part of Portugal's identity and culture. They adorn many of the outdoor public spaces and add a unique charm and character, often paying homage to the country's maritime heritage and fishing industry.

Maintaining it as part of the country's heritage while navigating the modern need for health and safety is no easy task. This complicated symbiosis is managed in Lagos by Frederico Mendes Paula, the senior technician of the Multi-disciplinary Strategic Projects Team for the historic centre of Lagos. Among his other responsibilities, Frederico has the task of drawing up the Project for the Rehabilitation of Public Spaces in the Historic Centre. This project focuses on the main areas of the city's pedestrian network.

Frederico has been involved with the city's historic centre and the restoration and safeguarding of its heritage since 1993, initially in collaboration with his father, architect Rui Paula. He told me about the fascinating history of this seemingly archaic stone paving.

Calçada dates back to classical antiquity, namely the Roman period, with characteristics entirely different from the so-called *calçada portuguesa* used both on roads and in urban paving. In the Arab period itself, pavements were used in urban streets, and techniques were developed for laying the stones to create rainwater drainage systems. From the 16th century onwards, some commercial streets in Lisbon and Porto began to be paved, corresponding to the period of wealth generated by the Portuguese Discoveries, but it was during the reconstruction of the capital after the 1755 earthquake that cobblestone paving became widespread.

Calçada portuguesa is a specific paving technique using small cubes of limestone and basalt to form decorative motifs. It only appeared in Lisbon in the mid-19th century, later becoming widespread throughout the country, using the stone materials of each region, such as granite and stones that arrived by ship from overseas having served as ballast.

These original pavements should not be confused with the small pavements used for pedestrian use. These appeared later with the specialisation of road traffic and applied to raised pavements, topped with kerbs, which protected them from the carriageways made up of Monchique granite cobblestones. "There are still old streets in Lagos paved with the traditional *calçada*, laid with blocks of white limestone and basalt, hidden under layers of asphalt," explained Frederico. "The traditional way of laying these out was with side ditches, a central strip of white limestone and two strips of basalt in between. The use of basalt, which does not exist in the region, can be explained by the arrival of ships from the central Mediterranean, especially Italy, which brought this stone as ballast to later load fish for salting at the end of the 19th century."



Frederico showing Paul a book with the projects of calçadas he and his father worked on.

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Paul Gerace is a photographer originally from NYC, he retired to Costa Rica, where he lived for eight years, before moving to Lagos four years ago. While enjoying his new life in the Algarve he is relishing photographing the colourful birds, beautiful land and seascapes and capturing the life in his new town.

During his time photographing, he increasingly noted a common thread running through his photos. The *calçadas Portuguesas*. He says, "I love walking around town and seeing how life unfolds with those calçadas as a backdrop. I think it's a subject that deserves attention as these calçadas have become part of Portugal's cultural identity and many people are not aware of them or the hard work that the *calceteiros* do. It is becoming a disappearing art form.

Paul had kindly allowed us to use some of his photographs for this article.

His photo exhibition Celebrating the Calçadas Portuguesas of Lagos will be on display until 13 January at the Mercearia Bio Cafe near the bus station in Lagos. Closed Sundays.

pgerace@aol.com

You can view more images on his website: www.geraceimages.com/p53056863, and a youtube video that he recently created www.youtube.com/watch?v=aef0scOZJcM&t=4s



The Art and Expertise of Portuguese Flooring was inscribed in 2021 by the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage, legally protecting Portuguese *calçada* as cultural heritage. The grounds for this inscription include, according to the text of announcement no. 172/2021 in the Diário da República, the recognition of *calçada Portuguesa* as a "specific technique in the first half of the 19th century". The report goes on to highlight the need to "urgently safeguard this manifestation of intangible cultural heritage" while observing that the lack of "intergenerational transmission of this know-how" poses the risks of "the extinction of this craft practice in the medium or long term".

The same announcement emphasises "the safeguarding and enhancement measures recommended for the future viability of the event, specifically those relating to heritage, science, training and the economy." Frederico believes, "This intention should be matched by concrete actions materialised in support for the training and enhancement of the profession of pavement worker and for the defence of *calçada portuguesa* as Portuguese cultural heritage."

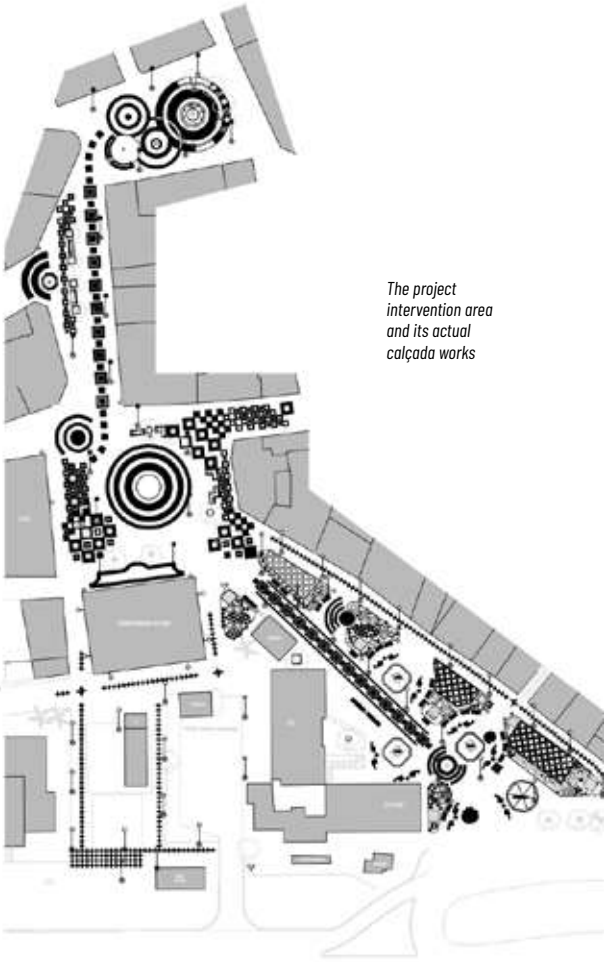
Most of the *calçada* paving in the centre of Lagos consisted of large limestone cubes applied to the entire surface. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the first examples of Portuguese pavement with decorative motifs appeared in the city's main squares, such as Praça do Infante and Praça Luís de Camões. This became more widespread after the construction of Avenida dos Descobrimentos, with the famous Mar Largo motif in Praça do Infante standing out.



Mar Largo motive in Praça do Infante in the 70's

The aim of the Lagos project Frederico is working on is to rehabilitate an area that was remodelled in 1985 and 1995. The project area includes five urban spaces: Praça Gil Eanes, Rua Garrett, Praça Luís de Camões, Rua da Porta de Portugal and Praça da Ribeira das Naus. Those original projects were drawn up by his father's company Gabinete M. Paula Lda; however, they now need refurbishment due to the ageing and unsuitability of much of the street furniture and to facilitate easier maintenance. In this project, the Portuguese cobblestone pavements are particularly important, as they are now considered part of the city's heritage, which should be preserved.

"In the projects I've already mentioned, carried out in 1985 and 1995, the main *calçada portuguesa* pavements that exist in the so-called pedestrian area of the city were created. I was responsible for designing them, combining their aesthetic effect with the principles for the use and management of public space."



The project intervention area and its actual calçada works

Calçada portuguesa, correctly constructed, is a material that is suitable for pedestrian use due to the regularity of the surfaces it creates and the existence of joints between the stone cubes that help to prevent it from being slippery. However, it requires regular maintenance to restore its levelling, which is altered by subsidence, the growth of tree roots or the action of undue traffic, and to avoid excessive polishing of the stone cubes, which makes the surfaces slippery in areas with a steeper slope.

With the art of laying *calçadas* gradually dying out, maintenance and repair of the existing ones becomes challenging. For instance, Lagos council has just two pavers, known as *calceteiros*, at its disposal. It's a profession that requires specialisation; it is hard work that is poorly paid, which means that there are no candidates for the job.

In addition, solutions are needed for safety and the demands of traffic. The requirements of people with reduced mobility must also be considered. Frederico believes the answer is to introduce corridors in comfortable materials, such as granite slabs or bush-hammered limestone, reconciling them with existing designs, as has been the practice in many Portuguese cities.

So, the next time you walk along *calçada*, you may look down and consider its craftsmanship, history and the demands of helping it survive the modern world. You may then wish to remember the people, like Frederico, working hard to ensure it withstands the modern footfall for years to come.





Calçada work in Rua da Porta de Portugal in the 90s, courtesy of Frederico Mendes Paula









Celebrating with CASLAS

WORDS Tom Henshaw

Tomorrow magazine has supported the children's home in Lagos for almost 10 years. And as another year passes, it was wonderful to attend another successful Christmas party for all the children living in the home. The lovely lunch was enjoyed at Munich on the Lagos Avenida overlooking the marina.

The owner, Michael, kindly subsidised the delicious food, and the Tomorrow Algarve Charity Trust (T.A.C.T) covered the cost. The marvellous CASLAS volunteers provided the beautifully wrapped gifts, and seeing the children receive their gifts and vouchers was a real pleasure.

Earlier in the month, our editor, Sophie, popped along to CASLAS to see the children from Aljezur and Barlovento International schools delivering their gifts to the children. Each class contributed Christmas gifts and they also bought a surprise box of fun. The children from the residential home showed their gratitude by baking cookies as a thank-you for their gifts.

Their offerings were combined with the Christmas shoebox campaign run by Lois Herrington. Her email is below should you wish to create a box of treats for one of the children next year.

It is very pleasing for me and the *Tomorrow* team to see what our readers' support brings to all the causes we support. We never forget that your generosity means such a lot to the local underprivileged children and families.

Well done to you all and I wish everyone a great 2024.

herringtonlois@gmail.com

Nandi Charity Update

WORDS Annie O'Dea

It's been a record year for Nandi Animal Charity, which raised a bumper amount throughout the year, including Christmas fundraising at the end of 2023.

In 2023, Nandi fed 420 cats daily thanks to the group of independent volunteers. Over the course of a year, 38.000€ is needed to provide food for abandoned and street animals. Over 90.000€ was spent in 2023 on vet fees for sick and injured animals when owners in the local community could no longer afford to pay for these treatments or when the animals had been abandoned.

The charity also donated over 55.000€ to sanctuaries for mistreated or abandoned animals, widening their provision from dogs and cats to donkeys and horses.

Well done to the Nandi president, Helen Mattacott, her leadership teams, and all their volunteers for their work during 2023, and we hope the support will continue in this new year!

www.facebook.com/thenandicharityshop







Christmas Concert Raises Funds For NECI

WORDS Liz Ryan

The festive season got off to a flying start on 1 December with an Advent Choral Concert held at the magnificent Igreja de Santa Maria church in the heart of Lagos.

Raising funds for NECI were members of Choir Cantus Nortada, more fondly known as the Swedish Choir. Directed by the very talented Birgitta Levick, the 30-strong choir sang their hearts out to a packed church where the acoustics were heavenly and the flickering candles added to the festive atmosphere.

It was a joyous repertoire expertly chosen by Birgitta, with a sprinkling of traditional classics and contemporary popular favourites interspersed with a little gospel and a couple of Sweden's best-known Christmas songs. They gave such an outstanding performance that they had the congregation clapping and on their feet throughout. The finale was Handel's *Hallelujah* which showcased the magical, strong voices of the full choir as they belted it out and had everyone join in. The church was alive with the sound of music and rapturous applause.

The evening was a wonderful success and raised over 1.300€ for NECI, a non-profit organisation which helps the most vulnerable in our community, children and adults with physical and mental disabilities, at their centre based in Praia da Luz.

The choir rehearses on Monday mornings at Club Luzense Cultural Centre in Praia da Luz. There are plans for spring concerts, consisting of a programme of songs from popular movies and musicals. Anyone who is interested in joining the choir should contact the choir's administrator Annika Nyqvist.

annikanyqvist@hotmail.com

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Following in the Footsteps of the Portuguese in

Morocco



Tangier



The bay and marina in Tangier



Asilah



Asilah

WORDS Lena Strang

After our enjoyable first visit to Morocco last April in the campervan, we decided to revisit in May this year. We were keen to explore the Portuguese heritage along the Atlantic coast in more detail. The campervan knew by now its way to Algeciras ferry port, and we arrived there after a swift six-hour drive.

We had the option of crossing to Tangier Med or Ceuta, a Spanish enclave at the tip of the North African coast. Most people opt for Tangier Med as the border controls are more straightforward. In hindsight, I wished we'd chosen Ceuta, as this would have been an appropriate start to our quest.

In 1415, Portugal conquered Ceuta. With its strategic position, it gave control over the main outlets of the lucrative trans-African trade, which included precious gold and, increasingly, the slave trade.

This was the first step in building the Portuguese maritime empire, also opening up crucial sea routes to India, bypassing land-based Muslim-controlled trade routes.

Now the extensive Portuguese expansion began in earnest. Fortified trading posts and settlements were established along the Atlantic coast. These enclaves allowed the Portuguese to control important trade routes. They constructed impressive fortresses, city walls and churches that combined European and Moorish architectural styles.

We arrived in Tangier – the jewel in the crown for the Portuguese. It was won and lost three times but eventually conquered in 1471. We saw remnants of the walls built around the city in the 15th century. As in Ceuta, the Great Mosque of Tangier was converted into a cathedral. It is now a museum but still has some Portuguese architectural features. The 16th-century Kasbah, a palace built by the Portuguese, is a museum with some artefacts from the Portuguese era.

Foreign domains were often used as pawns to serve political interests, and Morocco was no exception. In Tangier, Iberian rule lasted until 1661, when the city was given to King Charles II of England as part of the dowry for the Portuguese Princess Catherine of Braganza.

Tangier is a vibrant city with a distinct Mediterranean feel. Its mix of various influences, including the Portuguese, has contributed to its charm.

Next was the small, picturesque town of Asilah, 31 km south of Tangier. Its strategic port has attracted interest from neighbouring countries over the centuries. In 1471, the Portuguese captured the port and built the wall that still surrounds the medina. It became an important trading post on their gold route across Africa.

These days the medina is an arts hub and a magnet for tourists. We enjoyed strolling along the winding alleyways and browsing in the shops selling artwork and handicrafts. Because of an economic debt crisis, the Portuguese abandoned the town as early as 1549. Later Spanish rule also left its mark on pristine white buildings with their intricate wrought ironwork. And paella is readily on the menus of most restaurants!

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Azemour fortifications





Harbour at Essaouira

The Kasbah in Agadir built in 1540 to fight the Portuguese

Driving along the coast, we bypassed Rabat and Casablanca and did a quick pit stop at Azemmour, which has many well-preserved Portuguese vestiges. In the 15th century, the Portuguese offered protection to the already established town. But as the local governor refused to pay tributes, Portugal sent a massive fleet of 500 ships and a large army led by James, the Duke of Braganza. The town surrendered without resistance. Interestingly, Ferdinand Magellan, who led the first-ever circumnavigation around the world, took part in the battle. His horse died in the skirmish, but he survived to tell the tale.

Parking by the town walls, we entered the ancient medina. Built by the Portuguese, it retains many traces of its past, including ornate doorways. It was a warren of narrow streets with hole-in-the-wall small shops for locals with not a single tourist in sight. There was an eerie feeling – as if time had stood still. The town has long been associated with arts and crafts, and we could see huge painted murals on crumbling walls. In the medina, we visited the old Kasbah castle built by the Portuguese with its six towers and original canons.

We were keen to visit nearby El Jadida, knowing that it housed *La Cité Portugaise*, declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2004. Its old city walls are one of the world's Seven Wonders of Portuguese origin. And what we saw was spectacular. The fortress, with its star-shaped ochre-coloured ramparts, was built in 1506 to protect Portuguese ships heading down the West African coast. The Portuguese called it Mazagan, and it became its most important trading post.



El Jadida

The views from the ramparts over the harbour and the sea beyond were astonishing. We could see the original sea gate where ships unloaded their cargo and from where the Portuguese finally left in 1769, destroying much of the monument.

However, it was interesting to get a sense of Portugal here. When looking at some carpets in a shop, the owner, when realising we were from Portugal, invited us in to browse – in Portuguese. Unfortunately, the atmospheric, vaulted 16th Portuguese cistern was closed for maintenance, so we could only admire the photos on a poster outside. Next time perhaps?

From El Jadida, we drove to Safi on a B road skirting the coastline. We noticed numerous chemical and food processing plants and a large fishing port with sardine canneries. Its position attracted the Portuguese, who took it briefly in 1508. They built the Ksar Bahr fort on the waterside and expanded the town. I'm sure Safi has much to offer and has a beautiful coastline away from the industrial areas. However, we wanted to visit the charming town of Essaouira.

And yes, you've guessed it. Essaouira, further down the coast, had links with Portugal. It was known earlier as Mogador and had a strategic position on the Atlantic coast. The Portuguese built a fortress, Castelo Real de Mogador, on a promontory in 1506 to protect their trading interests. Goods such as sugar, ivory and spices were exported, while textiles, wine and weapons were imported. They also traded slaves from Mogador to other parts of the Portuguese empire. The Portuguese presence only lasted a couple of decades as the Moroccans gained control. The fortress was demolished in the 18th century.

Today its port is still a hive of activity but of a different kind. There is a flurry of fishing boats arriving and departing. We saw the day's catches being landed and sold in the market along the quayside. The walled medina, dating from the late 18th century (another UNESCO World Heritage Site), is a delight. We were happy to get lost in the myriad of narrow streets and *souks* and succumbed to bartering for some colourful items. The final price was to our satisfaction, but the vendor perhaps had the last laugh as usual.

Another vital trading post for the Portuguese was Agadir, further south. Many will recognise it as one of the premier package holiday destinations in Morocco with its lovely crescent-shaped beaches and numerous resorts.

Few, however, will realise it was founded by the Portuguese, who, in 1505, built a wooden castle near a spring and named the settlement Santa Cruz do Cabo de Gué. The hostility of the local population grew and led to an economic and military blockade of the port. In 1540, the Portuguese settlement was besieged, and a year later, they surrendered.

Following the defeat, the Portuguese presence in Agadir and much of Morocco diminished significantly. The final nail in the coffin of Portugal's Moroccan expansion was the ill-fated expedition by Dom Sebastião, the young, ambitious King of Portugal. His burning ambition was to lead a crusade against the Moors in North Africa. His army and the cream of the Portuguese nobility suffered a crushing defeat in the Battle of Alcácer Quibir in 1578. The body of D. Sebastião was never discovered.

This marked a turning point in Portugal's history. Not only did it halt the country's expansionist ambitions in Africa, but it also led to a constitutional and political crisis in Portugal itself.

What legacy has Portugal left in Morocco? It's bound to be a complex one. Along with other European powers who, for centuries, jostled for dominance over the region, Portugal, too, left its marks. The colonial era was wrought with conflict and violence, but positive contributions were made to architecture, language and culture.

Morocco has an astounding mix of different cultural influences, and for us, this makes it such a fascinating country to visit.

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The United Kingdom of

Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves

The kingdom barely lasted ten years but the implications still resonate today.

WORDS Vaughan Willmore



When Napoleonic forces invaded Portugal in 1807, the Portuguese royal family took refuge in Brazil. This move set in motion a series of events that would lead to the establishment of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves and, before too long, the formation of an independent Brazil, free from Portugal's colonial rule.

With Portugal under attack from French forces, approximately 10,000 people evacuated the country and set sail for Brazil, the most notable amongst them being the Portuguese Prince Regent (the future King John VI) and his ailing mother, Queen Maria. The arrival of the royal court in Brazil and the transfer of power it represented was unprecedented. It was the catalyst for increased investment in Brazil and a heightened profile in global affairs. It also fuelled a growing desire for home rule.

Back in Portugal, certain sections of society felt it unwise for the country to be ruled from a colony and were fearful that Brazil would one day seek its independence. This heady combination of events and political manoeuvrings led to King John VI – who was still based in Brazil at the time – enacting legislation which elevated the status of Brazil from a colony to a kingdom. In theory, at least, this made Brazil an equal partner with Portugal. In 1815, the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves was established.

In 1820, what became known as the Liberal Revolution took place and with it was a call for the royal court to return to Portugal and for greater control to be exerted over Brazil. The following year, King John VI returned to Lisbon, but he did so without his heir apparent, Prince Pedro, to whom he granted extra powers and the title of Regent of Brazil.

The drive for independence persisted, however and, with King John VI wrestling with domestic and international challenges, Prince Pedro declared Brazil an independent state in 1822. Did this lead to friction between Prince Pedro and his father? Prince Pedro's love for Portugal and his father seems to have never abated. As for King John VI, he was resigned to

The 'Kingdom of the Algarves' was a nominal kingdom within the Kingdom of Portugal. It had no institutions, special privileges, or autonomy; rather it was an honorific title to reflect the region's importance.





Brazil gaining independence and took the pragmatic approach that it would be better if it happened under the leadership of his family rather than by any other means.

Prince Pedro's declaration of independence brought about an end to the short-lived United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves. Nevertheless, it wasn't until 1825 that the formal dissolution of the kingdom was enacted, thereby paving the way for a new relationship between the two countries, which would eventually flourish into the one we know today.

Timeline

1907: Invasion of Portugal by Napoleonic forces

1808: The Portuguese royal court arrives in Brazil

1815: The United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves is established

1820: Liberal Revolution

1821: The Portuguese royal court returns to Portugal

1822: Brazil declares independence

1825: The United Kingdom is dissolved

1. *The acclamation of King Dom João VI of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves Debret, Jean Baptiste, 1768-1848, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*
2. *The Courts of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves met in Lisbon, in the wake of the Portuguese Revolution of 1820 Public domain / Museu Paulista (USP) Collection*
3. *Pedro I do Brasil Simplício Rodrigues de Sá, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*

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What's on

For more events and activities check our online calendar:
www.tomorrowalgarve.com/calendar

LAC Open Day

An event that aims to show the public the dynamics of the association and the work carried out by the annual artists of PRALAC - LAC's Artist Residency Programme. Two days of open doors to the artists' studios, exhibitions, activities and concerts.

LAC is a non-profit cultural association founded in 1995 by a group of individuals working in different cultural sectors (sculpture, painting, ceramics, music, architecture, cinema, museology, and heritage preservation), with the main objective of stimulating and promoting artistic creation in the region, with a particular focus on the southwest Algarve.

12 and 13 January, 6 pm at LAC – Laboratório de Actividades Criativas
Free entry

www.facebook.com/lac.lagos

Experimental Theatre of Lagos

Open call for a show celebrating the 50th anniversary of 25 April. The cultural association Questão Repetida is looking for volunteers to collaborate on a show that brings together theatre, dance, music and people. It can be on stage, helping with costumes, singing, building sets, whatever anyone wants and can do. There's room for everyone: families, children, young people, seniors, EVERYONE!

26th January and 23rd February, 6 pm to 8 pm at TEL – Experimental Theatre of Lagos

Registration from 2 to 20 January by emailing gatilho.lagos@gmail.com



Buba Espinho

Buba Espinho is one of the most important spokespeople for traditional Portuguese music today. Despite his young age, Buba crosses musical genres like no one else and travels from cante flamenco to fado with the same ease with which he masters national pop music and more urban and current sounds.

After great success in his duets with D.A.M.A and Bárbara Tinoco and live performances as a guest of great artists such as Rui Veloso, Ana Moura and António Zambujo, Buba's new concert is to promote a new album *Voltar*.

12 January, 9.30 pm at Centro Cultural de Lagos – Auditório Duval Pestana 10€

www.cm-lagos.pt/municipio/eventos/11717-buba-espinho-voltar



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Orchestra of the Algarve

The Orquestra do Algarve's New Year concert, under the direction of the charismatic Spanish maestro Pablo Urbina, will be a celebration of 2024: exciting and vibrant like the music that will be heard.

Pablo Urbina is a Spanish conductor who, since 2019, has been the principal conductor of Orquestra Vitae of London. With a strong focus on music promotion, Pablo is an ambassador for The Amber Trust UK. His career highlights have been performances with the Spanish National Radio Orchestra, Balearic Symphony Orchestra and Opera Tenerife, as well as his debut with the Waco Symphony in Texas (USA).

5 January, 9 pm at Tempo – Portimão's Municipal Theatre. Free entry upon prior ticket collection, from 3 January.

www.facebook.com/TEMPOportimao

Singing of the Kings

In keeping with tradition, cultural associations from Lagos will be welcomed by social solidarity institutions performing for the public in the Church of São Sebastião with music associated with the festive season.

5 January, 8 pm at R. Conselheiro Joaquim Machado, 8600-682 Lagos
Free entry

www.facebook.com/filarmonicalagos



Acting & Singing Workshop

The Algarveans Theatre group is hosting workshops in January with Carmen Danen. In the two-hour acting workshop, you will work on improving your acting skills by discovering your creativity through improvising scenes and collecting basic techniques to apply when working on material. In the singing workshop, you will work on and analyse the power of your voice, vocal technique, the dos and don'ts of singing, and the importance of storytelling.

Singing workshop: 4 January
Acting workshop: 18 January
7.30 to 9.30 pm
Little Theatre, Carvoeiro
5€ for members and €10 for non-members

algarveansinfo@gmail.com
www.thealgarveans.com

Loose Ends

Do not be alone just because you are on your own.

November and December have been very successful months for the Loose Ends group. This fun-loving society has grown while members participate in interesting activities and meet-ups. The Christmas party in December at the Adega de Marina was a case in point.

Kiki and Tom really welcome new visitors who wish to 'test the water' and hopefully benefit from the group's plans.

It's a new year and you owe it to yourself to make a NEW start!

Call Kiki on +351 964 822 276 or email Tom tom@tomorrowalgarve.com



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Beat the winter blues with

YELLOW

WORDS Flora Kouta

If you're feeling sluggish after all the Christmas and New Year festivities, the best thing you can do is give yourself a good dose of sunshine yellow. I'm not suggesting you paint your bedroom custard or your loo canary but an uplifting pop of this happy colour will instantly make your home feel optimistic and welcoming.

Have you ever wondered why so many people hang decorative birds outside their houses in the Algarve? It's because the swallow (*andorinha*) is a Portuguese symbol of love, loyalty and family. Swallows mate for life and raise their chicks together, not leaving the nest until all of the babies do (awww). So, swallows represent the importance of family and fidelity. That connection to "the nest"—to a home or a homeland—is so important in Portuguese culture that there is a word for it: *saudade*. A recurring theme in fado music and Portuguese and Brazilian literature, *saudade* refers to an intense longing for someone or something that is absent or unattainable. It's a word I've just learnt and it has no English translation so I'm going to add it to my limited vocabulary because it describes exactly how I feel when I'm in England: I have *saudade* for Portugal.



Anyway, enough sentimentality! The yellow ceramic swallows pictured are handmade by Carmen Pratas in Lisbon. For the best decorative effect, use several of them in different sizes and place them on a wall as if in flight.





January is the coldest month of the year in the Algarve with an average of five hours and thirty- eight minutes of sunshine per day (don't moan, in England, it's a measly one-and-a-half hours). Savour every precious ray with this sunflower window panel made by Ukrainian stained glass artist Vitaliia Karelina at her studio in Porto.







1. Photo taken in Lagos by Flora
2. Yellow still life wall art www.florakouta.com
3. Sunflower stained glass etsy.me/3Tcsp88
4. Yellow ceramic birds etsy.me/3TuXCE3
5. Yellow sofa bit.ly/417P1J3
6. Yellow crochet placemat etsy.me/47Nd8zo
7. Yellow sunhat wall art www.florakouta.com



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According to psychologists, yellow is mentally stimulating and improves functions like memory, analysis and problem-solving. Yellow also enhances free-flowing creative thinking, which makes it a great colour for a home office or work space – unless you have xanthophobia (a fear of the colour yellow). Yes, it is a real thing. Experts are not completely sure why some people are frightened by yellow, but that's another story.



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Whatever your relationship with yellow, it is undisputedly an invigorating colour. Yellow is known to make the brain produce serotonin. I know I get a huge rush when I step off the plane in Faro and see that dazzling yellow sunlight, especially when I've come from the gloom of London.

Speaking of gloom, yellow goes really well with grey. I've just finished a set of warm yellow abstract paintings for my neighbour. Everything in her house is grey and she's ever so minimalist, but she announced after a few Baileys that her New Year's resolution is to be more daring and she asked me to paint something colourful for her living room walls. I thought she might chicken out when I presented her with two bright yellow canvases, but they're still up there sitting happily above a sea of grey and beige.



7

Yellow also makes you hungry (there's a reason why the McDonald's arches are bright yellow). I stumbled across this yellow house in Burgau last week. What a lovely cafe, I thought as I sat down under the yellow umbrellas and made myself comfy on the candy-striped cushions. I wondered why the waiter inside was taking so long to serve me until I realised he was ironing his shirts in front of the football. I apologised and scurried off, but he just rolled his eyes. I obviously wasn't the first person to be drawn in by his symphony of yellow. That's proof enough that yellow is the most inviting of colours – let's welcome it inside and bring a little sunshine into our homes (but don't blame me if you find hungry strangers sitting in your front room!).

1. Yellow chest of drawers bit.ly/3t4zj4M
2. Yellow patterned seat pad bit.ly/3tb8ufl
3. Yellow abstract painting www.florakouta.com
4. Yellow paint pot and yellow bedroom wall https://bit.ly/4a7n9sG
5. Yellow glass candle holder bit.ly/46No8LM
6. Yellow pouffe bit.ly/47ljm3b
7. Photo taken in Burgau by Flora


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An American in the Algarve

Purchasing Property in Portugal

WORDS Meredith Price Levitt

Ever since I moved to Portugal nearly four years ago, I've been asked the same question hundreds of times. "Is it a good investment to buy property in Portugal?" The answer isn't black and white. Although Portugal has attractive foreign investor programs, many of them are rapidly shifting. Be sure to check on the status of the Golden Visa and NHR first if you're purchasing with those factors in mind.

Unlike the United States, where comparables and historical rates are public domain, actual purchase prices here in Portugal can be difficult to understand.

The starting point of every purchase is price. Savvy buyers know that you make your money on the purchase, not the sale. So how can you determine the worth of a property? Without knowing what other things nearby actually sold for and when makes this hard to determine.

Unfortunately, when it comes to prices, Portugal is really the wild west. It's anyone's guess what the final price may or may not have been. Prices in the Algarve have gone up by over 50% in the last few years, which makes things even more difficult to evaluate.

Fortunately, for careful buyers, there are plenty of fabulous investments here in Portugal. But a few tips for what you can do and what to avoid may help you make the right purchase. I've collected a few pro tips to share that I hope will help you avoid the pitfalls and mistakes I learned the hard way. Before you buy anything here, you'll need to get your NIF tax number sorted out and open a local bank account.

Find a good agent who you trust and stick with them

This may be the hardest part of your process. Do your research. Find a reputable agency and do your homework. Ask for references. Get recommendations from friends if you can. A local agent who has the knowledge and expertise of the market will be the most invaluable part of your purchase. Especially since final sale prices are not public, your agent will understand better than anyone what is a good value for what you're getting and what to avoid. They will also know how long properties have been on the market and if there was a shift in its price. I've seen a house on the market for years that just would not sell and then suddenly the price goes up by 50% and it sells. It happens here a lot.

A good agent will know these things and they can help you avoid overpaying. Sticking with your agent will also motivate them to help you. They earn money only when you buy, so if you have a zillion different agents, you may have a harder time getting appointments to see properties and finding out the real story behind the current properties for sale. Having a single person you work with is a good choice for the process here. Even if that agent doesn't have the property you want exclusively, they can get you in to see whatever you want and give you sound advice about the property when you do see it.

Ask the right questions

Whether you're buying a property to live in, as a retirement home for the future or as a rental investment, you should ask about the local taxes, homeowner association fees, water and electricity bills and especially its energy efficiency. Homes in Portugal have a tendency

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towards dampness so be sure you ask about insulation on older homes. If it's a large garden or a large plot of land, you'll want to be sure you have a borehole so you don't spend a fortune to water your plants/crops.

Get a good lawyer to examine the paperwork
Before you buy anything in Portugal, find a good lawyer who you trust to help you. The paperwork can be overwhelming – especially if you don't speak Portuguese. There are many different types of land classifications and rules here about what you can build (or not) on what type of land. For example, if you buy a large plot with the intention to build a house, be sure you have; a) permission to build on that land from the municipality and b) the legal right of passage. If a seller tells you that the project is awaiting approval, make sure a lawyer checks that you will receive approval. That process alone can take years. Literally. Second, double-check that your land can be legally accessed by road. There are many pieces of land here that remain 'land-locked' because you don't actually have the right to get to them. Make sure there's a clear, legal road before you buy a plot to build on. Ask your lawyer to check this. If you're buying an existing property, ask your lawyer to verify the ownership status, taxation history and deeds before you sign any promissory notes.

Calculate your costs
Here in Portugal, the purchase tax (IMT) depends on the type of property and its price. Be sure you include all the hidden fees before you make a final decision. Purchase tax ranges from 2–7.5%, but you also have stamp duty (0.08% of the deed), notary service fees (anywhere from 200€ all the way up to 3.500€), and your lawyer fees (usually 1% of the purchase price plus VAT). Be sure you also understand the local annual tax rates before you purchase, as this is an ongoing fee that needs to be paid every year. It's called the IMI and it varies between regions, but is usually between 0.2% and 0.8% of the purchase price of the property. It's a complex rating based on location, amenities, build year, and construction area.

Visit the Property & Ask About the Seasons Year-Round
The trend towards buying sight unseen has exploded in recent years, and if you have an agent you trust completely, that can work. But if you're able to see it yourself, it's a good idea to visit in person and inquire about the entire year. For example, if you visit in the summer, you may not realise the walls are damp in the winter. Or you may not know that in the low season, when tourism slows down, many nearby bars, shops and restaurants also close. Another huge factor in the Algarve is the wind. North-facing properties here can often be hit hard by the forceful gales. It's possible to construct barriers and plant trees but ask about the wind when you visit. Your agent will know.

Meredith Price Levitt has been a freelance writer for over 20 years. When she's not writing, she's teaching aerial silks. Her new aerial studio & retreat centre 1km from Lagos, called The House of Honey opened this spring. An American expat, she moved to the Algarve in 2020. In her spare time, she's learning how to take care of a small farm.



Property Insight

Building a new community on the west coast

WORDS Sophie Sadler

As specialists in west coast property, Guthrie Rocha predict that 2024 will be an interesting year for property sales due to an inevitable price correction.

Having seen a crazy price hike when the average villa went from 400,000€ up to 700,000€ between 2021 and late 2022, buyers are returning. "We have actually seen a return of a lot of buyers to the table, who had been kicked out of the market when villas went up by over 50% in the post-COVID era, with people wishing to buy property in an under-developed area close to nature," says director Pedro Barata da Rocha.

Due to global market conditions, the property market has inevitably slowed down. However, because there are not many new builds in this area due to building restrictions, stock is always relatively short. Realistic pricing is now key, according to Pedro. "Most of the properties we have for sale still have demand if priced right." He believes there has been a lag time for vendors to get their heads around this reset in pricing. "I think sellers now understand it's real and is actually healthy for our area.

"We seem to have buyers that actually feel incentivised to finally do the move for a simpler life when life is harder in the city or their countries," Pedro says. "So, it's an interesting shift. As long as they can afford the property, they have realistic expectations as they look to implement a new lifestyle, away from the rat run and commercialism. They are looking to integrate into a community sustainably."

Located in Vale de Telha, Guthrie Rocha serves a relatively new and vibrant community of expats who are looking for a life change by moving into the coastal-countryside in the western Algarve, which is slightly cheaper than the prime coastal areas. Pedro's email signature – *Start each day with a grateful energy!* – is unusual for a real estate agent. This sentiment may reflect the mentality of his client base.

The Guthrie Rocha business model certainly works, having been considered one of the best SMEs (small and medium-sized companies) operating in Portugal by *Executive Digest* magazine in a performance and growth study carried out in a universe of 150 thousand companies: https://toppme.pt/empresas/guthrierochaproperties/

Pedro predicts that 2024 will definitely be an interesting year, with a lot of struggles but also lots of rewards as they help their customers and community find their dream home in an area that offers a unique pace of life.

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The Creative Soul

Meet the Artist Avril Thomas





Avril Thomas' road to painting started when COVID-19 was declared. Everything shut down, and for many, it seemed the world was coming to an end and many more sensitive people struggled with panic. While the world may never recover from the way we knew it, many of us have made new roads from what went before and Avril's new road started with painting.

WORDS Alyson Sheldrake

Avril studied art at school and later enrolled at the College of Art in Johannesburg, but she was a restless soul and it did not hold her attention. She was offered a place on the stage and she flourished. "I lived a few years of wonderful dance, entertainment, glitz and glam (others may call it tits and bums). I made fabulous lifelong friends and met my soulmate, but this frantic, super exciting lifestyle is only a moment in a long life and is meant for the young."

Avril and her husband, Viv, travelled an exciting, pleasurable and diverse path, moving countries more than once before finally settling in Portugal in their autumn years. Avril's art was put on hold all this time, mainly because there did not seem to be enough hours in the day to indulge herself.

In March 2020, Avril started online art classes. "It seemed a good thing to do, as everything else had shut down. It allowed me to open old doors and the window of memory and let the inspiration flow in. My classes were filled with all the different mediums that are out there: acrylic, mixed media, oils, inks, charcoal and graphite. I indulged them all and loved them all."

The budding artist has continued with her online classes for the past three years which have allowed her to create a diverse range of work. "I have felt my passion grow and my heart sigh with satisfaction when I step back from each painting and decide, 'it is done'."

She has yet to settle on a particular theme or style and has spent many an hour watching artists create online. But she loves to paint faces and flowers. "Flowers inspire me – the delicateness of them and their beauty. Faces of beauty mixed with fruit or flowers excite me because of the use of mixed media, ink, sticking, and pasting and watercolour. The final piece makes you walk up close to see the mix and then step back and see how it all pulls together."

Avril collects images and ideas until she gets the urge to pull out a canvas or piece of paper and the magic begins. Sometimes, she starts a piece and leaves it for a while, which is quite annoying for her husband because she paints at the kitchen table. "Viv has the patience of Jove and is always so encouraging. The encouragement may be to get my stuff off the kitchen table!"

Just recently, Avril has started to paint turbulent water. "I am useless at capturing the beauty of the sea and waves, but I think I can capture the turbulence of water when it is disturbed by something or someone." She likes to work with thick, enforced acrylic on this subject to get the old masters' look.

She confesses that she is not a dedicated artist; she paints when the whim takes her and admits that the commercial edge of it is secondary to the thrill of seeing the pleasure on the faces of others when they look at her work. "My belief is, never to settle because then the challenge dies and it becomes a job."

Part of the joy of Avril's work is that her creations are made for my pleasure and their vibrancy and colour is sure to delight others as much as they do her.

www.instagram.com/avrilart2020/



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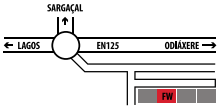


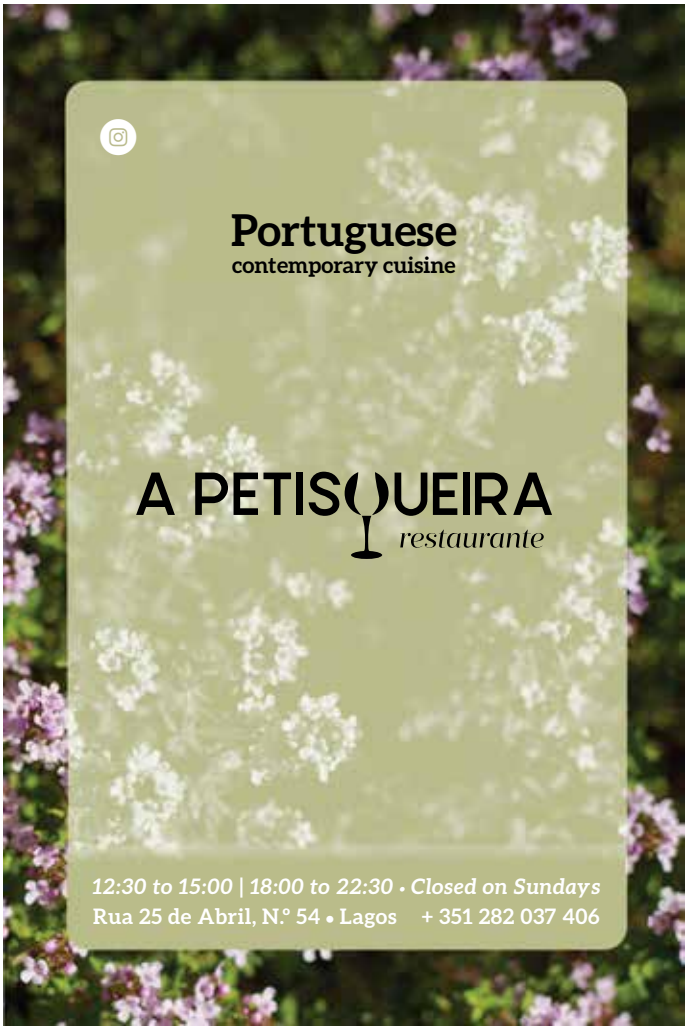
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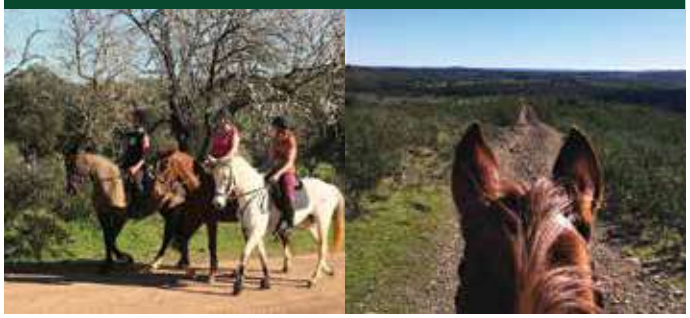




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Sports Round Up

WORDS David Lugg



Rugby

ALGARVE RUGBY

Rugby Club Loulé have two crucial home games in January as they bid to reach the promotion play-off group stages. After four straight defeats, Loulé sit at the bottom of the 'south' group but will be looking to kickstart their season with matches against Setúbal on 13 January and Évora on 20 January. Entrance to the games is free.

The 'Untouchaballs' touch rugby Movember tournament has been hailed as a "massive success" by organiser Phil Soames. Around forty players turned up to the event to raise awareness for men's health charities. If you are interested in playing touch rugby in Lagos, contact Phil: p_soames@hotmail.com

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

Following their World Cup heroics, the Portuguese men's team have announced a mouthwatering one-off test match against world champions South Africa. The game will take place on 20 July and will see Portugal face the Springboks for the first time in their history. After beating Fiji and drawing with Georgia, Portugal won plenty of admirers at the World Cup and many have called for more high-profile matches for the so-called tier two rugby nations. It doesn't get any tougher than an away game against the best side in the world, but it will certainly rank as a huge step forward in promoting rugby in Portugal.

Cricket

Portugal has finished second in the ECI tri-nations tournament in Malaga. Despite some strong individual performances, it was host Spain who secured overall victory after losing just one of their six matches. Despite missing out on the top spot, Portugal's Shayaddur Rahman received the Most Valuable Player of the Tournament award, taking eleven wickets in his five games.

RISING STAR



Henrique Rocha

Young Portuguese tennis player Henrique Rocha has continued his fine form by winning the Vale do Lobo Open. The nineteen-year-old from Porto enjoys playing in the Algarve, having reached the final of the Tavira Open and winning the title at Vila Real de Santo António. This time, he went one better by winning both the singles and doubles titles, the latter alongside his brother Francisco. At an all-time ranking high of 246, he is now the Portuguese number three.

Football

ALGARVE FOOTBALL

After last year's relegation from the women's National Division 2, Guia Feminino have responded well in the regional league of Division 3. After five games, they remain undefeated and sit top of Group M. Winning the league will mean they advance to the playoffs, which will offer them the opportunity to bounce straight back up. Fellow Algarve side FC Ferreiras are fourth in the five-team group but lost 2-1 in the Algarve derby with Guia.

On the week that the Farense stadium turns 100 years old, the Faro-based football club have announced that they are considering playing next season's 'big three' at the Estádio Algarve. The 'big three' represent games against Sporting Lisbon, Benfica and Porto and are always sell-outs. Club president João Rodrigues has stated that though nothing has been decided, the additional revenue of playing these games at a 30,000-capacity stadium could equate to around an extra 1.5 million euros.

INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL

The Portugal men's team have completed their UEFA EURO qualifying campaign with a 100% record following a 2-0 victory over Iceland. Goals from Bruno Fernandes and Ricardo Horta saw them finish top of Group J with 10 wins from 10 games. In truth, Portugal had been placed in one of the easier groups, but with 36 goals scored and just two conceded, coach Roberto Martinez will be delighted with his side's smooth progress.

After enjoying a fabulous first half of the year that included their first-ever World Cup victory, the Portugal women's team have been brought back to earth with a bang. Five defeats in six games in the Nation's League saw them finish bottom of Group A2 and they now face relegation to Tier B. There has been no shortage of shots or possession throughout the campaign, but, ultimately, five goals in six games is a telling statistic. Coach Francisco Neto will have plenty to work on if Portugal are to bounce back up at the first attempt.

If you wish to publicise a sporting event or a 'rising star' contact our sports editor David Lugg: david@tomorrowalgarve.com





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Discovering a Portuguese Brand



I discovered this innovative Portuguese cosmetics range while researching the December edition's Buy Local feature and contacted the founder, Luís Pereira, for an interview to find out more about what it takes to create a unique Portuguese brand.

WORDS Sophie Sadler



Having originally worked for leading international brands like Cartier and Jean Paul Gautier, Luís Pereira founded 100ml in 2008, making him part of a growing trend in Portugal to create brands with a national identity.

Luís gained his experience in this sector, being responsible for the elite French brands in Portugal. He noticed that, while Portugal had some leading soap and scent brands in the 1980s, with the emergence of the mass market, it had become difficult for them to compete on the world stage. What changed in the last 10 to 15 years is the emergence of specialist stores stocking only national products in Portugal.

He cites the "longing for Portuguese products and forgotten traditions as the starting point of this adventure", which led to him launching his first men's brand, Antiga Barbearia de Bairro, in 2010. The brand's products are named after Lisbon's neighbourhoods. Its scents and packaging reflect this beautiful city's sounds, colours, gardens, routines, smells and architecture.

Rui Melo is Antiga Barbearia de Bairro's brand designer who was inspired by the tradition of the Portuguese barbershops, a testimony and a meeting point of its streets and neighbourhood. Today this spirit has been reinvented and rediscovered, and the barbershops are the new meeting points in the city, celebrating the man, new habits and the cult of the beard with a new perspective.

When I question Luís on how he has marketed the range, his simple focus is on getting into the best stores, and he cites Mar D'Éstorias in Lagos as being a good example of a retail outlet stocking only Portuguese products. The company does not sell directly to consumers.

According to data from the National Statistics Institute of Portugal, the country's tourism industry has experienced continuous growth in visitor numbers since 2009. In 2020, there was a slight decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on global travel, which was a tough time for 100ml, as it was for many small businesses. Despite this blip, Portugal has experienced consistent year-on-year increases in tourism arrivals, reflecting its growing popularity as a tourist destination. There is also no doubt that this has increased the demand for products which reflect the country's identity, but Luís also believes that many Portuguese themselves like to buy a national product which reflects pride in their cultural heritage.

Having started his original company 15 years ago, Luís launched Leme in 2023, which takes national identity to the next level with each product celebrating the age of discoveries. The scents are developed by a Portuguese perfume company from the North called I-senses.

In July, Leme launched a new Algarve range, which was a huge success. The scent is evocative of the orange, which is abundant across the Algarve, with a hint of fresh cucumber to give it the feeling of the warmth experienced in the region. The marketing campaign focused on a couple hitchhiking to evoke a sense of freedom and adventure. The soaps are wrapped in beautifully vibrant paper featuring oranges and hand-designed by illustrator, Rita Pereira.

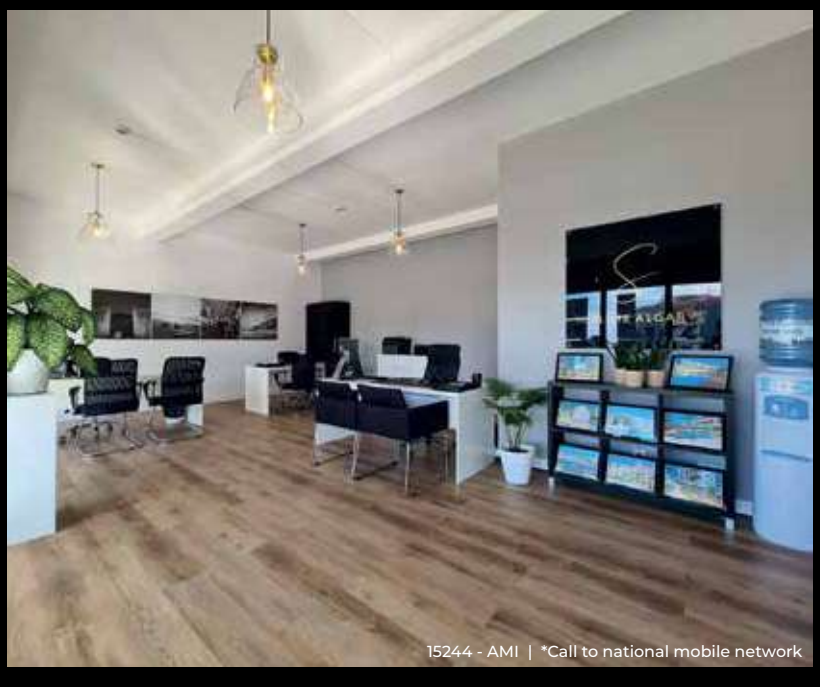


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The Algarve range commemorates 1434 when Gil Eanes discovered Cape Bojador, a headland on the west coast of Western Sahara. Previously it was feared what lay beyond this point and whether sailors would ever return once it was navigated. Passing this barrier led the Portuguese to move further around the North African coast and the discovery of the Azores and the establishment of its colonial empire.

Now, 100ml is trying to expand its empire with Abriga Barberieira de Bairro, currently stocked in over 20 stores in Europe and the UK. Luís tells me that the government offers support to attend international trade fairs to launch Portuguese products abroad. "To start a company is easier than it used to be," he says. "The bureaucracy is better than it was 20 years ago and the EU is a great trading platform, so it is easy to sell abroad."

The 100ml website invites us to discover a new journey across 'seas never sailed before' – this company's voyage of discovery is not only a testament to Portugal's past but also to its future. From what I have seen, there is a new energy in Portugal with business start-ups facilitated by the world rediscovering Portugal's beauty, culture and history.

The perfumes are available on the AndaVer Portugal website and at selected stores.

www.100ml.pt

Breaking Language Barriers

WORDS Sophie Sadler





For many, January is a time to make New Year's resolutions. For many of us living in the Algarve, this might be to learn or improve our spoken Portuguese. Meet Sílvia Ribeiro, who has been working on developing a unique approach to help with what many expats find a frustratingly difficult language to learn.

Sílvia Ribeiro is a native Portuguese speaker, originally from the north of the country. Trained as a nurse, she worked in Belgium but returned to Portugal five years ago. When she moved to Faro to pursue her nursing career, she met her boyfriend, who is an expat, and she eventually moved to Vila do Bispo.

After working for a couple of years as a nurse in Vila do Bispo, Sílvia realised it was time for a long-desired change in life. A year-and-a-half ago, she started her own small business teaching Portuguese to foreigners and expats. Sílvia understands that learning a language is not easy for everybody, so that's why it's important to make it easier and funny, so it doesn't feel like a huge struggle or frustrating.

Sílvia believes her methods are unique and effective in supporting the expat community. She thinks this is because her background is not in teaching, but she has a strong understanding of multiple languages besides Portuguese, mainly English, French, and Spanish, which allows her to understand language barriers.

"What makes my approach unique is the intimate scale. I work with small groups and create a close-knit learning environment.

On sunny days, which is most of the time, we sit in my garden, we have a few chairs and a whiteboard. I take away the usual "school setting environment" that can be very uncomfortable for many expats who are seeking the relaxation of living in sunny southern Portugal, while keeping it professional and pleasant at the same time. The environment in my classes is very calm – full of light and plants."

Having been an expat herself, Sílvia empathises with the challenges learning the native language presents. "I want to work for expats like I once was. There are many, many young adults moving to Sagres and Vila do Bispo looking for a place to settle – their lives and dreams – and they come to me because they want to learn Portuguese in a flexible and structured way."

Sílvia is proud to have developed her own nine-month programme, as well as her own brand of home videos for the classes. She has also created a podcast where she mainly speaks about Portugal's culture.

"I know that there is nobody else doing what I'm doing in this area because these aren't just drop-in classes or following a standard textbook."

So the next time someone asks you 'Fala Português?" maybe you should "Fala com Sílvia"!

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I.T. Can Be Easy

Useful New Year Advice

WORDS Steven Dunwell

With the coming of the New Year, people often look to improve their computer hardware so, based on my experience from speaking to my clients, here are some useful tips on the sort of things to look out for:

- If buying a laptop in Portugal, consider that the keys on the keyboard will be in Portuguese. The language shown on the screen can be set to English. However, the actual physical keys will be in the Portuguese layout with extra characters.
- Before transferring your data to your new computer, phone, or tablet, make sure you have noted down all your passwords that you use to get into any software program. For example, email accounts, banks, online shopping, Portuguese government organisations, utility or service bills, etc. When transferring to a new device, this information does not always transfer.
- If buying a printer, remember cheap is not often the best way to go. A cheap printer may sound like a good option, but check first to see how much the replacement ink cartridges are going to cost you. Cheaper printers also have limited functions and can be very confusing and difficult to set up.
- When you are buying any hardware, consider your priorities i.e. speed, screen size, camera quality, etc.
- Shop around for the best deals, including online. Do not stick to the places you know; Portugal has many dependable and reasonably priced online electronic stores.
- If you have loads of photographs, music, documents, etc, make sure your new device has the capacity to store them. Some models of iPads and cheaper laptops can have limited storage. If possible, pay for the extra storage; it will be worth it in the long run.

Good luck in the January sales, everyone and if you need any help or guidance on any of the items mentioned above, please do call. Always happy to help.

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Peter, Stewart and Susanna



New Markets - New Ideas

Togofor Homes Lda. is a licensed real estate agency (AMI 6902) that has been successfully selling properties throughout the Algarve since 2005. But, 2024 will be an exciting new year for the company, which has recently expanded into the Alentejo.

When Togofor Homes was founded, the concept was to serve the entire Algarve and open offices in the most important metropolitan areas. From a small office in Alvor and a team of three, the company has continually evolved to match the growing real estate market.

A Dynamic Team
Peter and Susanna Gross, founders of the real estate agency Togofor-Homes, come from a classic sales and marketing education. Peter is also an engineer, so this background – combined with a passion for real estate and technical understanding – helped to assert the company within the Algarve market. Offices in the Lagos Marina, Head Office in Vilamoura and Tavira soon replaced the Alvor office. These offices are regular meeting points for clients and staff.

The sales consultants come from international backgrounds and are highly skilled and experienced in their respective areas. Sales teams are regularly and comprehensively trained and updated (in-house) about new real estate legislation via courses and seminars. The focus is always on customer relations and service as well as the search for interesting properties throughout the Algarve. By maintaining a robust customer-based concept and knowledge of marketing and press work, the company has grown into a more prominent agency - and has weathered all crises.

Ourique Office
Due to the sharp rise in Algarve real estate prices and a shortage of properties, the agency has expanded its portfolio to include the adjacent Alentejo province. The market is diverse and offers large, rural properties suitable for self-catering, wineries, equestrian activities, hotels, and guesthouses. A new office was opened in 2023 in Ourique, Beja, with further to follow.

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Healthcare at Home





After one of our readers, Tom Brown, was admitted to the UHD service, he and his wife were so grateful for the care he received that they contacted *Tomorrow* to tell us about this innovative SNS Care at Home service.

WORDS Sophie Sadler

Imagine a hospital ward that exists outside of a hospital, with dedicated health professionals and medicines administered at home. This is the concept of UHD, a home care unit operated by Portimão Hospital. I spoke to specialist nurse Humberto Ferreira to learn more.

Humberto is a rehabilitation nurse who works with seven nurses and four care specialists, whose shared goal is to provide hospital care in people's homes. Anyone who is registered with the SNS is eligible for this service, but you cannot choose it; they choose you! Humberto explains: "The criteria to be chosen are social, geographical and clinical. So you need to be independent or dependent with a permanent caregiver so that we have support during the home visit. You need to be within a 30 km radius of the hospital and we should be able to meet your clinical needs in your home."

Dr Nuno Bernardino Vieira coordinates the medical part of the home care unit with the chief nurse, Alexandra Ferreira. They see patients in their care as being looked after in a remote hospital ward. This concept started in Spain and moved to Lisbon before the Portimão team was created two and a half years ago. It took seven months to open this single ward, as all nurses need a lot of experience. It is challenging work for medical professionals as they are working alone and in a home environment. Its experienced team of internal medicine physicians and nursing staff originate from emergency services and intensive care with some experts in rehabilitation.

The nurses rotate in shifts, and there are eight doctors from Portimão hospital who take it in turns supervising a week in the remote ward. UHD works in conjunction with other wards, such as surgery, so that people can recover from the postoperative period, teaching the patient how to adapt to the new conditions after the surgery, medication, and all the inherent care as UHD. The home care team can do blood tests or send an ambulance if the patient needs to go to the hospital for a test or treatment. However, because your house is seen as a hospital wing, you can not go out! So if you are in this care, you can not go out to the supermarket or go for a walk. You're not allowed to leave your home until you're discharged. Hospitalisation for UHD is the same as a hospital stay, except you do it at home.

Humberto and the team evaluate the patient daily and bring their medication. They change the pill box and leave the medication for the next 24 hours. They have a machine (Infusion Pump CADD), the size of a bag, which monitors taking antibiotics with an infusion into their vein three or four times a day.

Every day, UHD talks to the doctor in charge who makes a diagnosis and a decision about the treatment and will then discharge the patient when they are ready. They communicate with a family doctor to inform them of the treatment they have undergone.

At this time of year, releasing beds makes a vital difference to the hospital. The unit started with five beds and a car, and was increased to two cars and 10 beds after a year and a half. Humberto admits that in winter, having 10 extra beds in the hospital is hugely beneficial for the health service.

Although Humberto says they don't "work for medals", I can tell how much it meant to him and his team that they were awarded Best National Home Hospitalisation Unit in Portugal. "Having had immense success and with very hard work ahead, we hope to continue and maintain the title that was assigned to us."

The UHD team is part of the army of unsung heroes who work within the SNS to deliver free healthcare with love and dedication and deserve all our thanks and good wishes.

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Breast Surgery

WORDS Tiago Baptista-Fernandes

In 2022, over 2.1 million breast augmentations were performed in countries that provide statistics, which represents an increase of almost 30% related to 2021 and 16.8% when compared with five years ago (2018).

While breast surgery improves self-confidence and therefore lifestyle, it is important to know that silicone implants are not lifelong solutions. It's only a matter of time until their replacement or removal is necessary. Normally, women exchange them between 10 to 15 years after the previous surgery.

With the rise in the number of surgeries, there will be a higher number of implant removals. The main reasons for breast surgery are:

- Complications related to the implant
- Tissues ageing (sagging) with time, weight shifts, pregnancy
- Systemic complaints and diseases related to ASIA syndrome – immunological reaction – fatigue, arthralgias, myalgias, dry eyes and dry mouth
- Women who don't want to undergo another replacement in the next 10/15 years

The reason for the surgery rather than replacement has to be well discussed with the surgeon because it's not a simple decision. Patients have to be aware that together with the advantages of having no more implants to deal with come some disadvantages:

- The perfection of the result is not going to be the same (tissues have scars inside, and the elasticity is compromised
- Secondary revisions are more likely because of irregularities
- The volume and shape are going to be less beautiful than after the initial surgery techniques mentioned above

Removal surgeries include:
- Simple breast implant removal
- Implant removal with partial capsulectomy
- Total capsulectomy
- Total capsulectomy em bloc (a method of breast implant removal that removes the scar tissue capsule and the breast implant all at once, without opening the capsule)

Reconstruction:
- Combination of explantation and mastopexy



(breast lift, with areola correction)
- Lipo-filling

The satisfaction rate is very high because the complaints that led patients to the surgery are now gone, and small irregularities and asymmetries are accepted easily.

Surgery time varies between 1h to 4hs, with ambulatory surgery. Recovery time is normally considered to be 10 to 15 days.

Tiago Baptista-Fernandes is a specialist in plastic surgery.

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What's Your Favourite Form of Deceit?

WORDS Becca Williams

Many of us claim to cherish honesty, but the truth is we regularly engage in various forms of dishonesty.

On average, according to research, we will tell lies (including white lies!) approximately every half-hour during conversations. These lies are often not deliberate as we've developed patterns of concealing or altering our genuine inner feelings – both to others and ourselves – and this lack of honesty can undermine our relationships.

Here are some of the most common forms of deception.

Which ones do you find yourself engaging in (I invite you to email me and let me know!)?

- Saying 'yes' when you don't really mean it
- Making excuses when confronted with a situation in which you actually do share some responsibility
- Avoiding mentioning things that might 'upset' someone
- Masking your vulnerability with tightness, defensiveness, anger, or intellectual arguments
- Not saying 'no' directly
- Pretending certainty or expertise when you don't really know or inflating your accomplishments
- Not letting others know what you truly think, feel or want
- When disagreeing, failing to acknowledge what is valid in the other's position
- Avoiding or withdrawing from conflicts that you know need to be worked through
- Complaining about someone to others rather than going to them directly
- Not fully keeping agreements; that is not impeccably doing what we said we would do when we said we would do it
- Exaggerating, withholding, or distorting the facts to 'win your point'
- Not being transparent about your real motivation or agendas
- Using substances, overwork, the internet, or other addictive behaviour to avoid dealing with what you feel

This can also be an excellent subject of discussion with a friend or loved one as it calls for your and their honesty, which helps deepen your connection. As I say let me know how it goes!

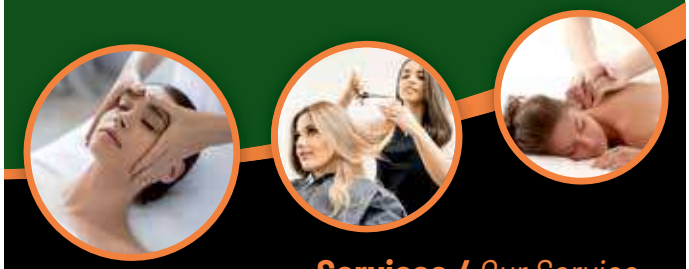


Becca Williams is an emotions therapist and clinician who helps people free themselves from emotional burdens, trauma, and limiting self-beliefs to live more fulfilling lives.

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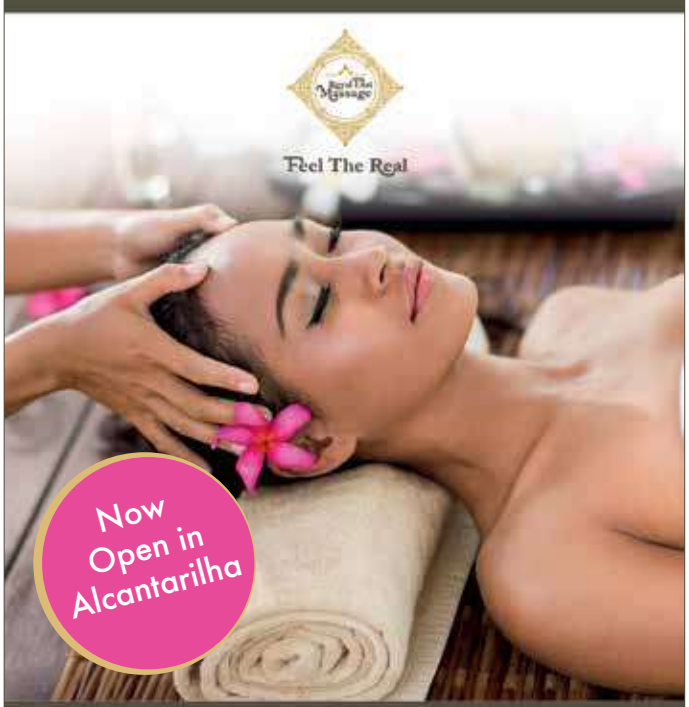
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Magical Audios

Three inspirational women have come together to work magic in female mental health



WORDS Sophie Sadler

In their new project, Andrea Ramirez, Katherin Navarro and Kax Uson are bringing spirituality, business and entrepreneurship into an app they describes as "from women to women". Magical Audios is a mental health app designed for women who are more prone to suffer from depression symptoms and also are more prone to develop auto-immune diseases.

Andrea tells me, "Women's mental health takes a deep and more complex turn when we think we have to deal not only with hormonal changes but are mostly dealing with multiple roles at the same time: mother, professional, wife and daughter while managing the household."

Andrea is living proof of how destructive this responsibility can be. She herself suffered from an auto-immune disease and, although she admits there are several biological circumstances involved in the development of these disorders, how we process the world and the circumstances around us is inevitably linked to our overall health. "In my case, I lost myself in my career and taking care of my team and my household. The result was a monster auto-immune flare-up. I was given three days until I had kidney failure if I didn't stay in the hospital. But personal stories aside, I am nothing but another link in the chain of women losing themselves to their environment and what society and societal roles expect from them."

Andrea observes that mental health is an issue that fortunately has been destigmatised by different world happenings, mainly COVID. "Practical, down-to-earth spirituality is my goal for greater focus, flow, confidence, mindset, and self-care."

This app is aimed to help women in various ways, including pain management (menstrual cramps, arthritis, etc.), anxiety and stress relief (via self-hypnosis, meditation, mindfulness and somatic exercises), self-image issues, eating/weight issues, etc. "We believe that we can heal by changing from the inside out and helping ourselves through these techniques and tools."

Andrea, Kattherin and Kax want to provide as many of these resources as possible for free in a "Freemium" plan. Other plans will offer access to one-to-one sessions with coaches and therapists included in their directory, along with other amenities. They are inviting as many women as possible to sign up for the waiting list to have access to the app as soon as it launches. This is also a call to action for coaches and therapists from all walks of life to add themselves to the directories so that Andrea and her team can contact them by the time the app is launched.



www.magicalaudios.com
@fortunalivingspirit
www.fortunaliving.org



Andrea Ramírez

Andrea Ramírez is the founder of Fortuna Living, she is also a hypnotherapist, channeler, spiritual consultant and counsellor. Her mission is to make practical, down-to-earth spirituality accessible. With a deep commitment to well-being, Andrea's focus centres on holistic wellness, recognising that spirit is the essence of who we are, the source of peace and wisdom, all driven by her passion for healing women.



Katherin Navarro

Katherin Navarro is a passionate advocate for FemTech with over ten years of international experience in marketing, content writing, project management, and business development for startups. Her journey is fueled by the intersection of technology and women's health, and she's committed to pioneering solutions that empower women's well-being and transform healthcare.



Kax Uson

Kax Uson is a Product Leader with extensive experience leading cross-functional teams and building marketplace products that connect people while reducing fraud risks, which ensures seamless product development. She is also a coach and mentor for women in product and product leadership, offering guidance for career growth and helping women achieve their dreams.

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New Year – new beginning?



WORDS Ann Hodges

A new year is when we all try to re-evaluate the important things in our lives. If we were asked to name the most important, the majority of us would probably say the same things – family and friends.

During the past year, some of us may have lost contact with a member of our family or a friend – for whatever reason. Or someone close to us may have passed away and their absence could have robbed us of our sense of purpose and left a large space in our lives. Or perhaps you have just moved here and are looking to make new friends.

Maybe you have previously considered donating your time to a worthy cause – now is the time to take action and start the new year with a new sense of purpose. This is where Cadela Carlota can help on so many levels. We have an international team of volunteers from Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, the United States, and Great Britain. Many have only recently taken up residence in Portugal and are ready to reach out and make friends. This removes two of the anxieties you may feel when it comes to volunteering, i.e. "I cannot speak the language" or "I am shy when it comes to making friends". At Cadela Carlota, we all "sing from the same hymn sheet" because we all want to care for animals.

We need help on so many levels, not just dog-walking. Some animals have been abused and cannot trust humans in any way. So, sitting with them and talking in a calm voice is the very first stage in their rehabilitation. Do you have technical experience of any kind? We need you. Have you recently lost a beloved pet? If so, we need your experience. We are short of foster homes. We need help with our supermarket food collections. And once you start to become involved with our important work, you will suddenly find that you have many new friends. Our cats and dogs need YOU. But maybe you need them more??

A new year – new beginning.....

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Happy New Year, everybody!



WORDS Lars Ramquist

Twenty-twenty-four is now not just a random, large number. Before long, you will be using it as a reference point. From now on, just roll it off your tongue when referencing some adventure that you had (sic) in the year ahead.

At the end of last year (this year, while I am writing this), we saw/have seen a number of dogs affected by the processionary caterpillar. The timing of the caterpillar's appearance does seem to vary from year to year, occasionally appearing in early December, sometimes not until April. I think Jan/Feb will be their season this year! When I say to my wife, 'Look out for the little hairy caterpillar', she just gives me a look and starts chuckling!

The cute little hairs on these caterpillars are extremely irritating should they get stuck in your skin, and even more so should they get stuck on your dog's tongue. The excessive reaction to these little hairs causes *massive* swelling of the tongue and, occasionally, other oral/nasal structures. Following exposure, the dog's tongue will swell to encompass almost the entire mouth cavity. In rare cases, it can also affect breathing. The most common problem is that when the tongue swells so much, it begins to occlude the blood circulation to the tip of the tongue. Post-event, parts of the dog's tongue will slough away, leaving a dog who speaks with a forked tongue (old Indian proverb, apparently).

Should you see your dog (or cat) drooling excessively and pawing at the mouth, please use a wet towel and clean the oral cavity as well as you can, i.e. the whole tongue, inside of cheeks and roof of mouth, gums – the lot! You must remove any remaining fine hairs to stop further reaction. We also recommend pet owners have a packet of cetirizine at home. This is a human antihistamine available at pharmacies. So, if you suspect a caterpillar encounter of the third kind, clean the mouth and call your vet. They will direct you as to how many cetirizine to give and then head to the vet for further injectable medications.

That's the vet talk done. Now you can go on and *carpe annum*! Go and do some things this year to reference 2024 as the year that you ... (fill in the gaps).

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Only a crane to get you out & about in January!

WORDS Luis Teves Costa



Following the excitement of Christmas, most of us are feeling a bit sluggish with all the partying, eating and drinking; we may be regretting some of the festive season excesses.

For nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts, why not start the year with a little adventure and a drive out to the neighbouring Alentejo region in search of a charismatic winter visitor, the common crane (*Grus grus*)? This large bird, approximately the size of a stork, spends winter months in the Alentejo plains, sometimes in impressive numbers reaching the thousands. The crane is a graceful animal with a long neck and long legs, mostly grey in colour, with a black and white head and a distinctive red marking atop. The tail feathers are long and curved and stand out from the rest of the plumage.

Head out to Ourique and then towards Castro Verde and beyond into Alentejo country. The scenery here should be green at this time of the year, with the plains stretching for miles. Cereal fields with scattered oak trees contrast with oak forest areas, vineyards and large plantations of olive and almond trees. The usual arid and brown terrain is now covered only for a few months in a lush green grass carpet, wet with winter's dew. Grasslands, wetlands and forest areas are ideal places to spot our wintering cranes, who spend most of the day on the ground feeding on grass shoots, acorns, olives, small insects, and even small mice and lizards. At the end of a crisp winter's day, cranes fly together in magnificent V-shape formations to their chosen overnight spot.

In their northern Europe and Asia breeding grounds, this majestic bird displays its elegant mating rituals, including neck back-flicking in symphony with their pairs. As monogamous animals, cranes tend to pair for life.

Worldwide, there are 15 species of cranes distributed over five continents. Amongst these is the demoiselle crane (*Grus virgo*). Native to Central Asia, it's the smallest of the cranes and is famous for battling the elements relentlessly as it flies over the Himalayas on its migration to India. The largest of the crane family is the sarus crane (*Antigone antigone*), which can stand up to 180 cm tall, making it the tallest flying bird.

In the upper-Alentejo region (Portalegre district), Campo Maior has been hosting a crane festival – Festival dos Grous – since 2019. Focused primarily on the observation of this species, the program offers a range of birdwatching walks and seminars over a weekend. The 6th edition of this festival will take place on the first weekend of February. Participants will need to enrol ahead of the event.

www.geda.pt

Facts

Name: common crane (*Grus grus*)
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Wingspan: 240 cm
Weight: 5-7 kg
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Join Frankie's Adoption Team!

Becoming part of The Frankie Foundation's new Adoption Team is a great way to start the new year and help our four-legged friends.

WORDS Vaughan Willmore

Great work takes place in public and private shelters throughout the Algarve, helping to make this world a better place for our feline and canine friends. The team at Animal Rescue Algarve (ARA) are busy in local schools educating young children about the importance of animal care and there are numerous agencies dedicated to sterilising animals and helping stem the tide of dogs and cats being sent to shelters.

Despite everyone's best efforts, many shelters are often inundated with dogs (and cats), who can remain there for months and, in some cases, even years. To help tackle this problem, a new 'Adoption Team' initiative led by The Frankie Foundation is being launched this month.

As Neil explained, "The intention is to create a dedicated group of people with the skills and knowledge to find permanent loving homes for dogs currently residing in shelters. By becoming part of the team, people will learn new skills, both in terms of the handling of dogs and the use of social media. We're also committed to making it an enjoyable experience for everyone involved."



The Frankie Foundation has developed an 'eight-step plan' explaining exactly what's involved:

- Commit in your own mind to helping shelter animals to find new homes
- Attend the 'shelter dog training' course provided by @the_dog_dominator
- Contact local shelters and agree on the dogs you'll work to find homes for
- Launch your very own Adoption Team social media page(s)
- Wherever possible, exercise your dogs in public areas (wearing your Adoption Team T-shirt) to 'showcase' them
- Show your social media followers your progress by publishing videos and photographs
- Seek suitable homes from your social media network
- Repeat!

In terms of the training course, which will take place on a Monday or Thursday in Tavira, it will help team members to learn the fundamentals of training and calming dogs who find themselves in shelters, some of whom may not be used to interacting with other dogs or people, and might be shy and even scared. There will be one-hour group training sessions for eight weeks. The cost is just 50 euros and, at the end, a certificate of completion will be presented by dog trainer Nuno Nunes.

If you'd like to help rehome animals in need by training them, creating your social media pages to aid their adoption, and being part of a dedicated team, please check out The Frankie Foundation website (details below). It's a great way to start the new year and help our four-legged friends.

The Frankie Foundation has led and supported numerous initiatives, working particularly closely with dog trainer Nuno Nunes of Incríveis Tavira. They've paid for the training of dogs to help them become calmer and, therefore, more suitable for adoption, and have used social media to highlight current issues and to share good practices. Neil and Elisabeth also paid for the sterilisation and feeding of dogs and cats, funding much of this work themselves by donating 20% of sales from their animal print polo shirt range to The Frankie Foundation.

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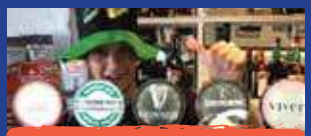


The Frankie Foundation

In late 2018, while wintering in Tavira, Neil Webb and Elisabeth Esterl adopted a lovable rescue kitten whom they named Frankie and he quickly became a much-loved family member. Tragically, at the age of only three, Frankie was killed in a road accident. Neil and Elisabeth were heartbroken. Determined to provide Frankie with a lasting legacy and create something positive from such a dreadful event, they founded The Frankie Foundation.



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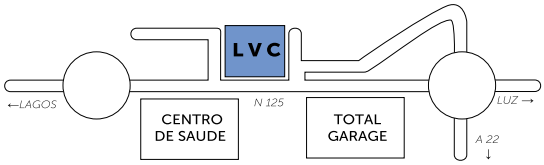


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