

FREE EDITION: Vol. X

Nov. - Dec., 2017

# THE MADRID METROPOLITAN

Madrid's only English language newspaper

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## MADRID TREASURE HUNT



"Port side of the Royal Backside will point you to which famous Madrid archway" - Take a selfie and send it through to win a chance of 12 bottles of the finest Castilian Wine!

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**Madrid Adventures** - team building events with a Castilian twist.



**H**appy Yuletide Greetings from all of us at the Madrid Metropolitan - Madrid's only English language printed and online newspaper. We are delighted to announce that from the New Year we will be expanding to include a wider Spain newsdesk and have invested in a new online platform for the paper to reach a wider audience.

In the meantime we hope you enjoy our features and recipes to keep us warm over the festive period!

We hope you enjoy reading.

**The Madrid Metropolitan team**

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## Madrid Castizo

Castizo, there's a word. Wikipedia tells us "it is used in Madrid for costumes, music, and speech typical of the Madrid populace about the end of the 19th century. A person dressed in *castizo* fashion can be called *manolo/manola* and *chulapo/chulapa*." Actually it is still used as an adjective to describe all things authentically *madrileñas*.

November is one of our favourite months in Madrid.



The days are still warm, and *el Retiro* is at its best. November 9 is also when we celebrate the *Almudena*, Madrid's favourite Virgin! So, this month AIL Madrid is celebrating all things *madrileño*. We recommend you celebrate it yourself by taking a stroll in *El Retiro* and looking out for the *barquilleros* dressed as *chulapos* playing music on the *organillo* and selling wafers (*barquillos*.) That's about as *madrileño* as it gets!

## Featured Staff Member

Esta es Donelia, originaria de Albacete, y una de nuestras profesoras más populares. Vive en Madrid desde hace 4 años, y le encanta la ciudad y todas las oportunidades que ofrece para conocer estudiantes extranjeros de todo el mundo. A Donelia siempre le han gustado los idiomas y dice que le apasiona tanto aprender como enseñar. Su otra gran pasión es actuar, sobre todo en el teatro, lo que encaja a la perfección con la enseñanza. Siempre intenta sacar a la Angelina Jolie o al Brad Pitt que lleva dentro, ya que cree que es algo que todos escondemos, y además le gusta meterse en un personaje para explicar cosas del idioma, o incluso para conseguir que los estudiantes interpreten diálogos, así aprenden a comunicarse con mayor facilidad y tener seguridad en sí mismos. ¡Y todo esto para darle vida al lenguaje mientras se divierten!



Meet Donelia, from Albacete, one of the most popular teachers. She has been in Madrid for 4 years now, and loves the city and the opportunities it gives her to meet language students from all over the world. Donelia has always had an affinity for languages and claims that she learns as much as she teaches when she's in the classroom. Her other great passion is acting, particularly the theatre, and it's a passion that fits in perfectly with her vocation for teaching. She's always looking to free the inner Angelina Jolie or Brad Pitt that she believes lurks somewhere inside all of us, and she loves to get into a role to explain a piece of language, or even better to get the students to act out dialogues, as they learn to communicate fluently and confidently in Spanish. It's all about bringing language to life, while having as much fun as possible!

## Speaking Castizo Style

Like any big city Madrid has its own distinctive slang. So if you want to sound like a real *madrileño* try dropping some of these words into your speech. First, you'll have to match the slang with the definition.

1. ¡Este bar mola **mazo**!
2. En mi **keli** no tengo internet.
3. Esta canción está **fetén**.
4. Espérame abajo, luego **en 0 coma**.
5. Esta mañana el **bule** iba llenísimo.

genial  
autobús  
rápidamente  
casa  
mucho

1. Mucho (a lot) 2. Casa (house) 3. Casa (house) 4. Rápidamente (right away) 5. Autobús (bus)

## Eating Madrid Style: Receta Castiza

One of the great things about Madrid is you can find excellent food from all over Spain. But there is also an authentic Madrid gastronomy. Its flagship dish is the famous cocido madrileño, a formidable chickpea, cabbage, and meat stew designed to get you through the winter. You can try it in a classic Madrid restaurants like La Bola, but why not have a go yourself? And learn some key cooking vocabulary! Afterwards, give it a try and complete the sentences below so you can clear the steps to make the perfect *cocido*!

### El cocido madrileño:

#### Ingredients for 4:

300 g de garbanzos (chickpeas)  
1 morcilla (black pudding)  
1 muslo de pollo (a chicken leg)  
1 chorizo de puchero (one chorizo for stewing)  
1 hueso de jamón (a ham bone)  
2 zanahorias (carrots)  
½ repollo (cabbage)  
2 patatas (potatoes)  
Sal (salt)

### Cooking vocabulary:

Llenar  
Sazonar  
Poner  
Cocer  
Pelar  
En remojo  
Hervir  
Echar  
Añadir  
En remojo  
¡Que aproveche!

1. a)..... los garbanzos b)..... toda la noche.
2. a)..... la olla de agua, b)..... la morcilla, el chorizo y el hueso de jamón y c)..... con sal al gusto.
3. Cuando empiece a a)....., b)..... los garbanzos y c)..... todo 30 minutos.
4. A continuación, añadir el repollo partido en dos y cocer 15 minutos más.
5. Finalmente, a)..... las patatas y las zanahorias, añadir las enteras con el muslo de pollo y cocer otros 10 minutos.

1. a) Poner (to place), b) En remojo (to soak), 2. a) Llenar (to fill), b) Añadir (to add), c) Sazonar (to season), 3. a) Hervir (to boil), b) Echar (to pour/add), c) Cocer (to cook), 5. a) Pelar (to peel)

## Spanish course of the month- Private Classes

One of the best ways to make rapid progress in a language is to have private one to one classes. There are several advantages to this format. Firstly, you will enjoy maximum contact with the language, with plenty of opportunity to speak, and of course personalised correction. Secondly, the one to one programme allows you to progress at the rhythm that best suits you, spending more time on difficult or weak areas. Finally, it allows you to focus on areas of special interest, or vocabulary for a specific field.

AIL Madrid has extensive experience in designing and delivering fully personalised one to one programmes for individuals who need to optimize their learning time. We can provide general Spanish, business programmes, exam preparations, whatever your particular Spanish needs. And you choose the times and the days that best suit you!

Prices: 35 euros per lesson (30 euros if you book 10 or more!)

### AIL Madrid's location:



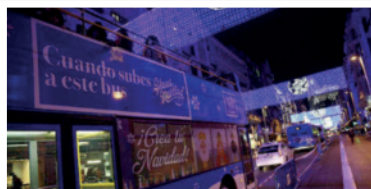


The Madrid Metropolitan's selection of the best that can be enjoyed in the capital this yuletide.

## Christmas Bus - running till January 6th

The Naviluz, the Christmas double-decker that takes you on a magical winter's tour of the centre and takes in all the sites of the city and of course the Christmas lights.

<http://naviluz.emtmadrid.es>



## Cortylandia - running till January 5th



No Madrid Christmas is complete without a visit to Cortylandia - El Corte Inglés department store on Calle del Maestro Victoria. Every

year brings its own flavour and this is no exception with animated characters, snowmen and animals on a train will sing Christmas carols all day long!

## The Christmas Lottery - Dec. 22nd



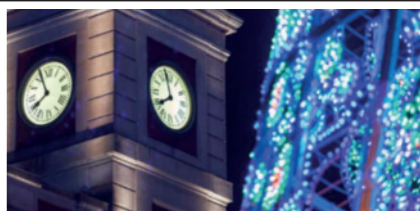
“El Gordo! - you know Christmas is here when the country comes to a stop on the 22nd December to hear the traditional

draw ( that dates back to 1812) which will give over 2 billion euros in cash prizes to the expectant populace.

Will you be one of them?

## 12 Grapes In Sol - December 31st

All eyes on the Puerta del Sol and the Real Casa de Correos clock for the traditional chimes ringing in the New Year and heralding the beginning of 60 seconds worth of grape gorging! 12 grapes for 12 chimes - make sure no cheating now - pips and all!



## Circo Mágico - Dec. 6th - Jan. 28th

The Circo del Hielo magical Christmas show is a delight for all the family.

<https://elcircomagico.es>



## A Christmas Carol - Dec. 2nd - 23rd

No Christmas is complete without Ebenezer Scrooge and the visits of the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Face 2 Face Theatre return for a second year of the Dickens classic ghost tale and thoroughly recommended for all the family.

<https://gruposmedia.com/cartelera/a-christmas-carol>



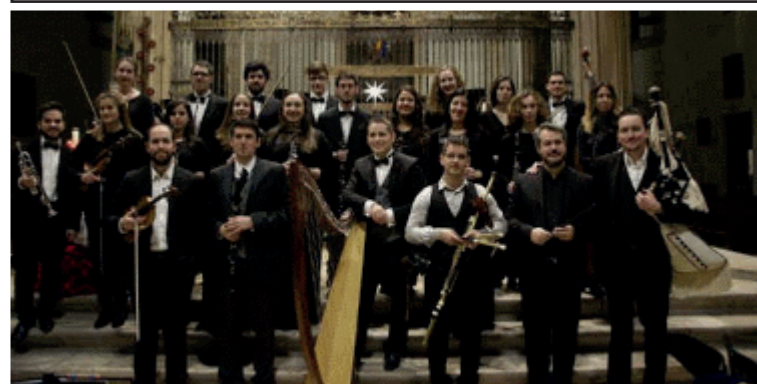
## The Three Kings Parade - January 5th



The traditional triumphant arrival of the three kings of the orient - Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar, bringing

with them gifts galore for the waiting children. **The procession starts at 18:30 and ends in Plaza de Cibeles at 20.45**

## Celtic Christmas Concert - Dec. 18th



The Celtic Chamber Orchestra and Boys of The Hills combine to give a traditional Celtic Christmas con-

cert of Irish carols and folks songs as part of their Christmas concert <https://gruposmedia.com/cartelera/celtic-christmas-celebration>

## El Clásico - December 23rd

Now a global event with an audience in the hundreds of millions. The Bernabéu stadium hosts the Catalan champions for



another long awaited classic. Now that Ronaldo has claimed himself the greatest player of all time - Madrid expects!

## La Fiesta Escénica circus show, Galtük



After last year's success La Fiesta Escénica is back with Galtük - A Christmas dream. This is a new show for all the family full of acrobatics that

takes us a magical journey through childhood and dreams.

<http://www.summumusic.com/galtuk-sueno-navidad>



## Harry Potter - extended till April 2nd



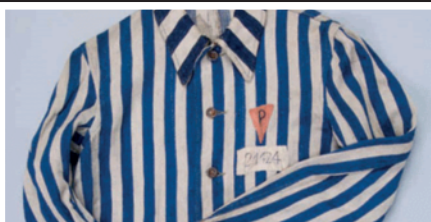
The world tour stops in Madrid (only stop in Spain) for an exhibition of all things Harry Potter. The Exhibition consists of hundreds of

film sets and objects used in the series. Game of Quidditch anyone

<http://www.harrypotterexhibition.es>

## Exhibition Auschwitz - Runs till June 17

The exhibit, produced by Musealia, who had previously staged the impressive Titanic and Human Bodies exhibitions is part of a global exhibition tour showing the horrors of this largest of the Nazi extermination camps. Some 600 original objects from Auschwitz are on display including the many personal belongings



of the victims and inmates of the camp.

<http://auschwitz.net>

## Picasso

The Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum presents an exhibition Pablo Picasso's Paris work and in particular his relationship with Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and the Post-impressionist movement.



[www.museothyssen.org/thyssen/exposiciones\\_proximas/150](http://www.museothyssen.org/thyssen/exposiciones_proximas/150)

## THE BARMAIDS TALE

This month we interview **Petya Radulova** who is well known to all those who frequent "Finnegans" Plaza Salesas, 9 in Madrid.

### What brought you to Madrid?

My parents brought me to Madrid. They had been here for 14 years and when I finished up University I came here so that we could all be together. I was living alone in Bulgaria for many years.

### How long have you been here?

I am here 10 years, a long time!

### What do you do?

I work in an Irish bar "Finnegans" as a barmaid and I'm responsible for the night shift!

### Tell us a little about your work?

My workday is always different, no two days are alike. I arrive at the bar in the afternoon, we show rugby matches, football games, tennis and so on. Many foreigners come

here and we all feel like a big family! Some of us have gotten to know each other very well, others, not so much. We spend our afternoons together sharing beer, happiness and a lot of celebration! Of course there are stressful moments but that is normal when it's busy!

### Whats the best part of your day?

The best part of a workday are those moments when you see that you have done a good job and you have made people happy and they feel at home, joking with them, laughing and shots with them haha, when you meet new people with different interests and you can talk to them with all the trust that they always place in you!

### What do you like most about Madrid?

The best of Madrid! - the freedom you have here, the possibilities of living well and peacefully, how everything is organized - public transport, roads, parks, the happiness and the people's ability to be active!

## Ara Malykian - December 29th

The Incredible History of the Violin tour comes to Madrid and is the star of the show of this must see concert by one of the world's leading concert violinists combining tremendous talent and extraordinary stage performances.  
<https://aramalikian.com>



## Cirque De Soleil - Totem - till Jan. 14th

Totem is the latest offering by the world acclaimed The Cirque du Soleil who are in Madrid for their latest show that travels from our earliest beginnings as amphibians through human evolution to our ultimate desire to fly.



[www.cirquedusoleil.com/es/totem](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com/es/totem)

## Gamergy - December 15 - 17th

Spain's most important gaming event is an amazing fair of the best of video and online gaming: Gamergy: E-sports & Gaming Festival:  
[www.gamergy.es](http://www.gamergy.es)



## Retromóvil Madrid - Dec. 15 - 17th

Retromóvil Madrid. XV Clasic Motor

Show is returning with a show and the ideal fair for car lovers and collectors including the exhibition of the iconic SEAT 124 whose 50th anniversary is being celebrated this year.

[www.eventosmotor.com/2017/xv-retromovil-madrid.html](http://www.eventosmotor.com/2017/xv-retromovil-madrid.html)



### What can you do in Madrid that you cant do in your hometown?

Theres nothing I can do here that I can't do in my hometown! There you have to do everything you want to do.

### What do you miss about your hometown?

I miss my family, my friends, the air, cold weather, snow. I miss the customs and the way of life of the Bulgarians. I miss the wonderful life that I had there. All everything, because there I feel happy like nowhere in the world, but that's life!

### What do you least like about Madrid?

The traffic jams, there are not enough places to park, and the racism that exists here!

### What do you do to relax?

I don't have a lot of time to relax, I usually go out with friends, I go to a spa, cinema or I travel!

### Whats your resolution for the new year?

My resolution of the new year is to be healthier, more love, more happiness, less aggression in the world, less children with hunger and more and better work for all!  
**Happy Holidays!!!**



## SHORT STORY: THE PILGRIM

*The Pilgrim, or 'Peregrino' in Spanish, was some two weeks into his 'camino' to visit the resting place of St James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, northern Spain. The apostle James had been given the Iberian Peninsula as his missionary zone and spent several years there preaching the teachings of Jesus. Returning to Rome in 44 AD, he was martyred and beheaded by Herod Agrippa. His followers brought his body back to Spain in a stone boat, through the straits of Gibraltar, up the coastline and it was there where the boat was shipwrecked and washed up on the shores of Finis-terre, Galicia. St James's body and his two servants were recovered and buried in a forest on the headland.*

Many years passed and in the early 9th Century a hermit called Pelayo noticed a bright light shining over a spot in the forest and uncovered the remains. The place in Latin was called 'Campus Stellae'. The local Bishop was called and he interred the bones over which he built a small chapel. It is rumored the first pilgrim to visit was Alphonso II, King of Asturias and Galicia and he named for his Kingdom St James – Santiago – as the Pilgrim Saint of Spain. During the 11th Century, the foundations were laid over the old chapel for today's Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and so the legend of the 'Way of Saint James' began.

As Christianity gradually took hold, the Way of St. James became one of the three medieval pilgrim routes, the other two being Rome and Jerusalem. Once taken it would "free a person from the penance due from sins" and lead to spiritual growth – the Pilgrimage. Nowadays the route is regularly taken by thousands of people from all over the world, each with their own motives for taking the pilgrimage, yet all finding unmatched solace in the peace and tranquility of their own thoughts as they weave and stroll towards their final destination. The Way of St James, known as the 'Camino', originally initiated from France and whilst there are many other starting places, today the most popular, the French Route, is from Roncesvalle near the French-Spanish border, a distance of some 800 kms to Santiago de Compostela. Pilgrims can either walk, horse ride or cycle and at the end of each day they will receive a Compostela stamp in a passport, issued from either the local church, bar or hostel, which proves they have indeed been on the route. Upon arrival in Santiago the pilgrims are issued with a formal Certificate.

This Pilgrim, however, was taking a different route, one that started from Madrid in central Spain, a route that would take him through the famous medieval cities of Segovia, Valladolid, Leon and finally Santiago. And on this particular late summer morning he could be found on a woodland

path by the banks of a small stream. The sun was high and hot and, keeping in the shade as much as possible, the crystal clear running water was becoming more and more tempting. When a suitable pool in the stream could be found it would be time for a welcome rest. Rounding a corner he spied the perfect spot – but it was occupied by the strangest figure he had ever seen.

Sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream was a small figure of a man. Dressed all in green with a lopsided top hat and orange colored waistcoat, the little man had a red beard and was smoking an old-fashioned clay pipe. His breeches stopped at the knees, his black buckled shoes were at his side and his legs and feet were dangling in the water. Cautiously he approached, the little man looked up and with a twinkle in his green eyes said: "Top of the morning to you sir and isn't dis de best way to cool off on a hot day!". Not a little taken aback, the Pilgrim could but only agree and with a beckoning gesture from the little man, removed his socks and shoes and joined him on the rock...now with now two pairs of legs and feet dangling in the water. A blissful silence descended, both the Pilgrim and the little man in their own worlds until, breaking the silence the Pilgrim enquired if the little man perhaps might be one of those Irish Leprechauns he'd seen in books and read about in folklore and fairytales.

"And aren't you an observable fellow and here's me tinkin us Leprechauns are just a figment of your imagination", came the reply.

"Then how does a figment of my imagination meet a real live Leprechaun sitting in the middle of a stream in the middle of Spain on the Camino to Santiago?"

"Well, first of all I've got a ting about Pilgrims and second I've been wanting, for over a thousand years, to see what youse been up to and what's it all about. You see der's been a vote and I've been chosen to come over and to join you on de walk – if you'll have me."

"I would love to have your company although I don't know if you would be able to keep up with me with those little legs of yours" the Pilgrim replied.

"Dat's no problem, dese legs could keep up with a ferret chasing a rabbit and if you see one give us a shout cus I'm getting a bit peckish."

Now the Pilgrim was quite a knowledgeable man and from what he'd read about Leprechauns he understood them to be of a mischievous nature, prone to playing jokes and pranks and not to be trusted.

Stepping out of the stream, the pair of them put on their socks and shoes, the Pilgrim lifted his rucksack while the Leprechaun stoked his pipe.

"Now isn't dat a nasty piece of vandalism in dese lovely woods" the Leprechaun said, pointing at the yellow arrow painted on one of the trees.

"Those arrows point the Way of St James" the Pilgrim explained, "and they are painted by volunteers to guide you all the way to Santiago."

"By gore dese painters must be strong fellas carrying dem big pots





of paint all dat way and what if someone cuts down the tree, tell me den what happens and how would you know which way to go?"

"And another ting" he said, "how do you get across the waters, coming from Ireland? You've got to cross de Irish Sea and der ain't no trees you can paint your arrows on."

Before the Pilgrim could reply, the Leprechaun said "I know, ye paint an arrow on de back of de boat - ha ha!"

This kind of banter went on and on, backwards and forwards, the Leprechaun never seemed to tire of talking and the Pilgrim was beginning to wonder whether he'd done the right thing in inviting him along. The peace and tranquility of being alone had evaporated.

He'd read that if you could capture a Leprechaun, he would have to give you three wishes to be released, although he thought one wish would do for a bit of peace and quiet. Searching his mind as to how you could capture one, for physically tying him up did not count and he realized that the Leprechaun never looked him in the eyes, always over his shoulder as though talking to someone in the distance.

That's it! He remembered - the secret was to look into his eyes, hold his gaze and capture the mischievous spirit lurking behind.

Now the trouble was how to get him to look into his eyes, for Leprechauns were tricky little fellas and not easily fooled. Pausing for a rest he leaned against a tree trunk and then with a cry held his hand up to his left eye.

"Hell this hurts!" he cried, sinking down onto the floor. The Leprechaun came over and asked what the matter was. The Pilgrim said he had got something in his eye and asked if he could see if there was anything there and help remove it otherwise he would not be able to continue.

"Let's have a little look den" said the Leprechaun, and taking the Pilgrim's hand from his eye, stared hard and fast to see what was there. The Pilgrim locked eyes and the spirit, surprised and startled was captured!

"What a dastardly ting to do and me only trying to help, what's de



world coming to and how did you know about dat sneaky trick?" the Leprechaun said.

That's when the tantrum started - jumping, spinning and stomping up and down, hat flying off, tearing his hair out, arms waving in all directions. Finally, exhausted and eventually calming down he said "and I suppose you now want de tree wishes?"

"How much time do I have to ask for these wishes, or will I run out of time before we reach Santiago?" the Pilgrim asked.

"All de time in de world" the Leprechaun replied "but don't keep me waiting der too long caus dey might be calling me back any minute now."

Mischievous little devil, thought the Pilgrim, for he knew he was up to trickery and any wish asked for could be turned and twisted.

"OK" said the Pilgrim, still not quite convinced this was for real.

"Let's see just what you can or cannot do. How about this - whenever I see a bird flying in the sky it's something I've envied and something I've always wanted to be able to do"

"My first wish therefore is to be able to fly".

"Done and dat's no problem" the Leprechaun said and putting his hand into his pocket, pulled out a return Ryan Air flight ticket, economy class, Gatwick to Malaga.

Sneaky. "I'll have to be careful with this one", thought the Pilgrim as he considered his next wish.

Power, now that would be something that politicians and the like crave and, while quite content with his lifestyle, why not see what it could feel like.

So his next wish was for Power - and out of the blue he was hit with a bolt of lightning, lifting him of his feet and throwing him fifty feet into the bushes. Stunned and singed he struggled to his feet and the Leprechaun with a twinkle in his eye said

"And did you not like dat little bit of power you so wanted!"

It seemed that whatever wish he wanted and asked for the Leprechaun could somehow twist and turn into something totally different. This next and final one therefore had to be the undoing of the 'little green fairytale fella' from Ireland.

"I've got three wishes and used up two, you've been very crafty and I hold no grudges" said the Pilgrim "but I think my last wish will put paid to all your tricks".

"Tell me den" said the Leprechaun "I'm all pointed ears"

"Then here is my final wish" said the Pilgrim "It is for an infinite number of wishes."

"By gore dat's clever and you've put me on me back feet. But you've got to know dat one last wish can't grant you an infinite number of wishes widout one condition."

"And dat's dis - I'll grant you your wish but you don't get any of dem 'till you first tell me what dey all are - ha ha".

The Pilgrim was now frustrated and annoyed with the turn of events and the cockiness of the Leprechaun. There was an underlying nasty streak to him behind all the taunting and teasing.

All he really wanted to do was to complete the Camino and preferably on his own but at the same time get one over the little man and put him in his place.

'Tic Tac Toe'

The game is a simple naughts and crosses, a grid of nine squares, one in the centre and surrounded by eight other squares. The game has two players and the object of the game is for one player to obtain a

straight line of three X's or O's to win.

Taking it in turns to play, if both players are determined to win, the games can be endless and only a lack of concentration will produce a winner.

With only one player it is different and the Pilgrim recalled a sci-fi film called War Games in which a super computer had malfunctioned and was about to launch missiles that would start World War III and annihilate mankind.

To stop the computer it was fooled into playing Tic Tac Toe, taking turns to be both X and O, in which to win was an impossibility as you can't defeat yourself, you can only draw.

After billions of attempts the computer overloaded and crashed.

And so the Pilgrim laid his trap. "I can see you like to play games" he said to the Leprechaun.

"Oh I love games but what that has dat to do with youse tird wish?" he replied.

To which the Pilgrim said, "My infinite number of wishes are very simple, and each and every one of them are the same. My wish is for you to play the game of Tic Tac Toe and win. But see that if you win you would also lose and to lose means you can never win".

"Enjoy yourself... you have an infinite number wishes and eternity to play them!"

AND alone at last, and with a smile on his face and a spring in his step the Pilgrim continued on his Camino on the Way of St James.

By Barry Haslam-Walker

Madrid October 2014

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## The Crystal Ball

*Nearly a year ago as the second issue of Madrid Metropolitan hit the streets, we looked into the crystal ball to see what lay ahead for business and the economy. How did we do in our predictions?*

Describing the view in the crystal ball as 'murky', we warned how events in 'far-away' lands could stymie the best-laid plans for the economy. No doubt we were alluding to dangers posed by North Korea's nuclear capability, tweet-happy Presidents, or the unravelling of Brexit negotiations, but if we had looked closer to home we may not have missed potentially the darkest cloud on Spain's business horizon - the Catalan declaration of independence.

In fact, while Catalonia has dominated headlines for the last three months, any significant economic effects in Madrid and Spain as a whole are still to feed through. GDP growth for 2017 looks like ending the year at around 3%, well above the consensus 2.5% which most experts and our own in-house soothsayers were predicting 12 months ago. Depending on how things pan out, the aftermath is likely to be a drag on growth and unemployment in the coming year in Spain, with Catalonia, unsurprisingly, noticing it more.

"Don't expect the Government to hit the deficit targets" we warned. It looks like we got that right, but only just. The signs are that the final deficit will be fractionally above the 3.1% 'agreed' with Brussels, although it was only close thanks to a sneaky measure to make large companies pay cor-

poration tax earlier, based on expected rather than actual earnings. It means better cash flow for the state rather than a real improvement in finances.

Neither of the two big construction projects we wrote about, and which should have been approved by now, have as yet been given the green light. The US group Cordish saw its huge leisure complex turned down by the Madrid Government, despite Reed Cordish's close relations with

President Trump and his family. With the even bigger and much more transformational Castellana Norte project, there seems to be some kind of agreement between the developers, landowners and administrations, but those of us who have been following the saga for 20 years will not be holding our breaths.

We predicted that radical changes under Rajoy's minority Government would be scarce, and they were. The 2017 budget was only voted through in June, thanks to the votes of the Basque Nationalist party PNV, in exchange for an even more favourable tax share-out than the Basque country already enjoys. One of the few measures introduced increased workers National Insurance contributions, including those of the notoriously un-pampered self-employed, who despite being praised by politicians as the backbone of the economy, are still one of the first ports

of call when it comes to fill the public coffers. And then people wonder why unemployment remains stubbornly high.

Our final forecast was that Madrid would intensify efforts to attract foreign investment, and especially from a post-Brexit UK. Latest figures showed Madrid as receiving over half the foreign Direct Investment into Spain. This included successes in the tech sector; Ryanair announced the opening in Madrid of its 3rd Travel Lab innovation centre, while Danish allergy immunotherapy group ALK also decided to locate its new IT hub here. There are few signs of a mass landing of pinstriped bankers from the City, but we did recently come across a City hedge fund manager who has made the move from Canary Wharf to the Castellana. And China's 4th biggest Law firm Grandall saw fit to choose Madrid as its hub for international expansion.

So it's fair to say that in 2017 the economy came out relatively unscathed. It's not so clear that we can claim the same for our predictive powers.

**By Roger Pike**

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## Mindlessness: An Alternative Approach

*There are many things that are annoying about being alive in the early 21st century. Like identity politics, phones, Donald Trump, call centres, franchises, entrepreneurs, almost every living celebrity, surveillance cameras, the police state in general, anything containing the word global, The Guardian, religious lunatics, modern football, ageing creaking knees, ageing creaking backs, ageing creaking anything, failing eyesight, the effects of gravity, the growing list of dead icons, the ever closer approach of the eternal void, Nigel bleeding Farage and his nemesis that arrogant old twat Jeane-Claude Juncker, and of course the hideous Americanisation of our language. However, all of this pales into insignificance compared with the sheer grating horror that is "Mindfulness."*

Mindfulness is a patronising distillation of complex oriental philosophies into a ready-made-world-view -to- go for the modern western consumer, anxious to recharge the old batteries while maintaining the essence of the lifestyle that has drained them in the first place. It is a metaphorical sprinkling of eastern spices on the greasy hamburger of life, a fat dollop of esoteric wisdom for the terminally unwise. And it is everywhere. Mindfulness basically

holds that as much as possible we should all be in thrall to the present, and that we should engage with our actions in such a way that...well, in such a way that we do everything very slowly while thinking about it a lot. I imagine many of the people dawdling along the streets of Madrid, blocking the pavements for those of us who are in a hurry, are indulging in some form of mindfulness. Likewise those enemies of the people who stand on the left hand side of the escalator, communing in low gear with the universe, and driving those of us who are happy enough to just get on with life into a cold murderous fury. As with most half-baked 21st century thought it is inherently narcissistic, as if the main problem with contemporary western society were a lack of self-centredness. It is perhaps surprising that it seems to have seized the collective imagination of people who like to think of themselves as egalitarian progressives. But then ultimately Mindfulness is a socially acceptable way for shallow arty types to place themselves at the centre of the universe while the neo-liberal madness continues to rain down upon us all from above. Never mind the collapse of civic society. Let's all disappear up the khyber pass of enlightenment.

The word alone is irritating enough, and the irritation factor quadruples when used in conjunc-



tion with the word "coach." These overly healthy smug purveyors of happiness for the price of a monthly subscription attempt to reduce everything to the level of the individual experience. People it seems are unfulfilled not because they have no job or nowhere to live, or because of failing public services, falling real wages, zero hours contracts, the collective triumph of evil corporate oligarchs, oncoming global ecological meltdown, or simply not having much of a future in general, but instead because they are not sufficiently engaged with the existential experience of sipping camomile tea. It is an ostrich like retreat into me, me, me. Proponents of mindfulness will say that I have misunderstood it, but actually I haven't.

So, as an alternative to this pseudo spiritual bollocks for the feeble minded, I propose that we embrace an entirely different philosophy, namely Mindlessness. It is my belief that we are actually happier when involved in genuinely mindless behaviour. Children do not sit around contemplating vases or sunsets. They run around like mad little bastards having fun. Most of the best times in your life

are to be had when you cease to engage with yourself and instead have a laugh with your mates, preferably without much regard for your own immediate well-being. That's why getting pissed is so rewarding, although as one gets older the zen nature of drunkenness does seem to come at a terrible price, but then historically this has been the case with all stages on the path to enlightenment. There is ultimately no better philosophy than "fuck it." Moving on is always better than staying where you are. The present is unattainable, partly because we process the world through a delay, and partly because it is in our nature to revisit the past and to relish the future. Who wants to sit at a metaphorical bus stop savouring the non-arrival of the metaphorical bus? And so dear reader, I urge you to break away from the shackles of contemplation, to free yourself from the tenuous connection between mind and body, to resist your inevitably doomed attempts to relate to the cosmic vibe, and instead to greet every new day as mindlessly as you can. Life is short. And pointless. So you might as well get on with it.



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## Zoya Gai



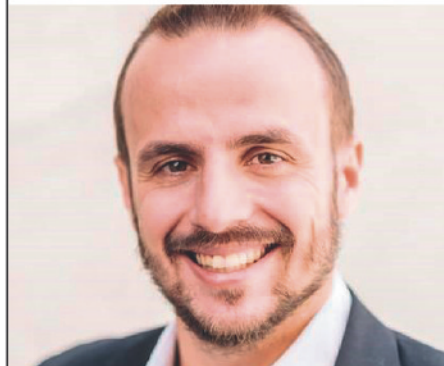
I'm Zoya Gai from Canada. I'm lucky enough to have similar work to what I did back home. I work as a Brand Manager for SC Johnson España. Fate moved me to Madrid! I wanted a change and to work in a new market. Around that time I met my partner in Madrid and fell in love with the city and my partner very quickly. With work that's 100% in Spanish I'm fluent now, but NOWHERE close to bilingual (I still dream in English). It wasn't easy. I envy those who are bi/tri-lingual and have the illusive "gift" for languages. For me it took a four-month intensive course and total immersion at home. It was one of the most challenging things I've done in my adult life and even after that I felt nowhere close to being "at a decent level" (which I define as being able to argue with the Vodafone guy over the phone). It wasn't until 18 months in that things started to click and speaking Spanish started to feel more natural. My favourite place in Madrid is Mercado de Maravillas. It's nothing like any of the touristy markets. Madrid in one word: **Underrated!**

## Servando Rodríguez

My name is Servando Rodríguez, I'm from Venezuela. After six years working for multi-national financial consultancies in my home country, a sector for which I trained academically, I decided to go to Europe to learn English. I studied English in London and then came to Madrid to pursue a Masters in Marketing and by that time I'd decided to stay in Madrid. I consider myself a social person (too social for financial consultancy) and always enjoyed meeting people from other cultures so it was obvious I should pursue a career in the tourism and language industries. With this goal I established my company 'Se habla español en Madrid' - organisers of social and language activities in Madrid. My favourite place in Madrid is Parque de las siete tetas, you can see the sunset over the entire city. Madrid in one word: **Vibrant!**



## Pierre Waters



I'm Pierre Waters from France. As part of my Masters in Business I had the options of learning Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese or Spanish. Clearly, Spanish had the best "return on investment" so was the winner. I came to Madrid and within six months I was fluent and that shows the power of immersion. I had failed Spanish at high school!

Shortly after mastering Spanish I landed a top consultancy job but what I really wanted was to start a business helping international people in Madrid. After saving €10,000 I decided to create a company to help expats move to Madrid, several years later my company moving2madrid.com is well established and allows me to help people move to and invest in a city I love. Madrid in one word: **Human.** It's the people. The feeling that you can speak to anyone, make random encounters and have an interesting talk with people you would have never imagined to meet.

## Deliang Tong



My name is Deliang Tong, I'm from China. I work in finance for a Chinese technology company in Madrid.

Before my work brought me here I lived in several other countries. The best things about Madrid are sunlight and the green spaces, especially Juan Carlos Park. I learned Spanish from zero, and am still learning now. Madrid in one word: **Brilliant!**

## Chris Webb

I'm Chris Webb, from the UK. I'm a Partner at The Spectrum IFA Group, a pan European financial advisory providing specialist independent financial advice to expatriates. I also run The Business Lunch Madrid, a monthly English speaking networking lunch. Before Madrid I lived in Singapore but I wanted to come back to Europe and settle in a country with a good work / life balance. I narrowed it down to Spain and after receiving advice from other expats I decided on Madrid. My favourite place in Madrid is Retiro, it's a great place for the entire family and it's amazing to see the park during the different seasons. My Spanish is constantly improving but I struggle with the past, present, future tenses and masculine/feminine. Madrid in one word: **Stunning!**



## Mirjam Van der Kamp



I'm Mirjam van der Kamp from the Netherlands. I'm an entrepreneur and for the past four years I've been running my translation agency. Before moving to Madrid I lived in Italy and Germany but Spain had always been high on the list of places I wanted to live. I arrived in Madrid in 2003 when I was 22, with just enough Spanish to order a glass of wine. It didn't take long to completely fall in love with the city, with the friendly locals, terrific food and good weather. Madrid soon became my home so it became a necessity to learn Spanish. Within two months of having classes (with lots of out of class practice), I was able to have a basic conversation. My favourite thing about Madrid is that there is always something to do. Even after living here for 13 years, I'm still in love with Madrid; the beautiful buildings by night time, the plazas and the amazing parks still impresses me. Madrid in one word: **Diversity!**

If you would like to be considered for the next *Madrileños extranjeros* please email [website@ailmadrid.com](mailto:website@ailmadrid.com) to introduce yourself!

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## ISFAHAN – THE YEARLY SINGULAR BAZAAR IN THE CAPITAL

Once again, Isfahan – that fabled city in Iran famed for its stunning Persian Islamic architecture and impressive boulevards covered with bridges will take Madrid by storm and stay put for a few days.

It is indeed a treasure chest for culture vultures and other visitors who may show curiosity for this old civilization. Yours sincerely expected to see an array of stalls on an open ground on his first visit. However, it was otherwise. As a matter of fact, this treasure trove is neat and compact akin to the wartime old bookshop at 84 Charring Cross Road in London. Once inside you are drawn to the curios, handicrafts and artifacts orderly displayed both on the walls and on the tables. In the midst of the paraphernalia, a silent weaver is busy at work.

Isfahan, the ancient city prides itself in Katam Hari – a delicate art consisting of an elaborate proc-

ess wherein skillful artisans inlay such materials as bone, mother-of-pearl, wood (various colors), metal, gold, silver, brass, aluminium and twisted wire decorating these surfaces mainly in geometrical shapes depicting the daily life of the royalty and noblemen hunting, playing polo holding court etc.

The world-renowned Ghalamaker carpets are hand painted and stamped with patterns adding one color at a time. Check out the colorful tapestries too. A special mention must also be made of Kashikari tiles from the blue mosques of Isfahan.

The owner Mr. Taheri as well as the knowledgeable shareholders are at hand to answer any questions in impeccable Spanish the visitors may put to them. The quaint store happens to be multi-fold - a conference hall, a travel agency organizing guided trip to Iran, various cultural activities



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(such as Sufi music recitals), and Persian classes.

You can also shop for unusual gifts for the Yuletide – costume

jewelry, stunning long colorful dresses, tunics etc.

By Christopher Miller

## BOOK REVIEW: UNTIL THE CURTAIN FALLS

Madrid is literally at the heart of David Ebsworth's latest novel, *Until the Curtain Falls* – with its Spanish version, *Hasta Que Caiga el Telón*, due for publication this month.

The book is a gritty thriller set in the final six months of the Spanish Civil War and follows the exploits of journalist Jack Telford from Pamplona, in territory then occupied by Franco's rebels, to the siege of Madrid and, finally, to the closing weeks of the tragedy in Alicante on the Mediterranean coast.

But, during the journey, Telford slowly becomes aware that his own government may have been playing a dirty game – and he's going to pay a deadly price for the knowledge.

Ebsworth (the pen name of retired union negotiator, Dave McCall) says: 'We live for much of each year in Guardamar del Segura – just south of Alicante. It's a favourite summer holiday destination for many madrileños, of course, and I was inspired by them to focus on the lesser-known story



of Madrid in the final years of the war.'

The novel's depiction of Madrid, then in the third year of its siege, is compelling. And its fictional protagonists mingle realistically with true-life characters like the British consul, John Milanes, the Republican priest, Father Leocadio Lobo, and many others.

Set against archive evidence that the British intelligence services played an active part in helping Franco launch his military coup, then turned a blind eye as Britain's armaments industry was deprived of badly-needed Spanish mineral wealth, *Until the Curtain Falls* leads Telford to conclude that, should there be a wider con-

flict against Hitler and Mussolini on the heels of the Spanish Civil War, Britain will not be its innocent victim but, rather, one of its causes.

'I'd already written an earlier Spanish Civil War thriller, *The Assassin's Mark*,' says David Ebsworth, 'based on the bizarre fact that Franco enticed literally thousands of international holiday-makers to northern Spain, while the conflict was still raging, to take part in battlefield tours. But *Until the Curtain Falls* gave me the chance to use archive and artifact sources as the background to many other stranger-than-fiction aspects of the conflict. And I'm simply delighted that my publisher, SilverWood Books, is now launching the Spanish edition here.'

For more information about David Ebsworth's novels and buying links, his website is:

[www.davidebsworth.org](http://www.davidebsworth.org)

His novels are available through **Amazon.es** and other outlets, and the Spanish edition will be available through all good bookstores, distributed by: **Martín Fierro Libros, SA, Alicante.**

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## Autumn Recipe: Mango Chutney - By Jemima Butler



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*The nights are drawing in, it is finally getting colder after our Indian Summer or the 'verano' (new spanish word recently coined for verano and otoño) we have been enjoying and there is talk of Christmas parties and Christmas plans afoot.*

Ever since a child I have always been taken by surprise by the arrival of this time of the year and couldn't understand what all the fuss was about - that we must get ready for Christmas.

Growing up my family, I remember the way my mother got in the mood for Christmas by prepar-

ing tasty things for us to eat during the festive celebration. So many things that we like to enjoy eating over this festive Season take some preparation to make. Christmas pudding, Christmas Cake and Mincemeat all need a good few days especially for the soaking of different dried fruits in brandy. I remember lots of stirring for the Christmas Cake and each member of the family had to have a stir and make a wish. Then there was the weeks of maturing awaiting the great day that we were to able to taste the amazing creation that took so long to make.

## Recipe: My Mango Chutney

## Ingredients

8 mangoes, ripe total wight 2.5 kg  
32 fl oz (800 ml) apple or cider vinegar  
8 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed  
2 large onions, peeled and finely chopped  
700 g soft/fine brown sugar (panela)  
1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
2 teaspoons coriander seeds  
12 cardamom pods  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 teaspoon ground turmeric  
110 g fresh root ginger, peeled and grated  
1 teaspoon ground cloves (optional)

## Equipment:

For this you will need a large heavy based pan (preserving pan), and 3 x 500mls preserving jars, sterilised.

## Method:

Start by preparing the mangoes the day before.

To peel the mangoes use a potato peeler that way you remove only the peel and very little fruit. With a small sharp knife, cut wedges out of them, each about 1 cm thick.

It is very easy, just cut each segment to the large stone like segmenting oranges, if you do it over a large bowl, you can just let the peices and juices drop into it. If you have any fruit remaining on the stone, you can just scrape it off into the rest of the mangoes.

Next sprinkle the sugar over the fruit in the bowl, making sure the fruit is totally covered, then cover with clingfilm and leave it in a cool place overnight.



Next day continue the recipe by heating a small frying pan to dry-roast the cumin, coriander and cardamom pods for a couple of



In most places all over the world Christmas cooking and baking is where we use the fruits and spices collected and dehydrated from the bounty of the Summer months. This summer we had a tremendous bounty from our mango trees in Andalucia... They were incredible and as with all fruit and vegetables they were are ready and ripe to eat around the same time. So what to do with my bounty of ready and ripe mangoes??

Well, as I really love spending so much time in the kitchen, I have decided this year that my journey towards Christmas will be by making my Christmas presents myself and with my children and that all my Christmas presents will be edible.... And that i show I decided on making mango chutney. This recipe calls for a good amount of time in your routine, I prepared the mangoes the night before a day I

knew I could be available to keep an eye on a hot pot on the go on the stove. The next day I let it bubble gently away. It is a soothing thing to do and a good way to keep warm on a cold day.

As you probably have noticed in my previous articles and recipes I find cooking soothing yet creative and as the Winter months roll on I do enjoy being by the warm hob or the hot oven - not so in the hot Spanish Summer months I hasten to add.

As in most Christmas recipes after the chutney is made and in jars you must leave it for the flavours to mingle and rejoice ready to be given as gifts with festive labels and pretty ribbon on Christmas Day and to be eaten on Boxing Day with some left over Turkey or curry! It is also great with cheese on crackers.

minutes to draw out their full flavour.

Put the warm seeds into a pestle and mortar and crush them up - once crushed put it all into the preserving pan including the cardamom pods. together with all the other ingredients, including the mangoes and their syrup.

Then bring everything up to a gentle simmer and leave it to gently simmer for about 3 hours, stirring every once in a while until the mango loses its orange color,

the liquid has almost cooked down, leaving behind a thick syrup.

You still need to do more stirring from time to time towards the end to prevent it sticking.

When finished take the chutney from the heat, let it cool for 15 minutes then ladle it into warm sterilized jars.

Seal the jars whilst the chutney is still hot but label them when cold.

Now you're going to have to forget all about it for 8 weeks so that it can mellow and mature.

**NOTE:** To sterilise jars, wash the jars and lids in warm, soapy water, rinse well (again in warm water), then dry them thoroughly with a clean tea cloth, place them on a baking tray and pop them in a medium oven, gas mark 4, 350°F (180°C) for a minimum of 5 minutes.

Add their contents while they are still hot.



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