

March – April, 2020

MADRID METROPOLITAN

Madrid in English

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COGNITA



Welcome to our new edition

Despite this difficult time the Madrid Metropolitan soldiers through with you. The edition front cover is emblematic of another difficult time when Madrid faced the agony of war and suffering. The symbol of “No pasaran” has gone down in history as one of heroic resistance and courage in face of adversity. Today we say “No pasaran” – not to an ideology but to a disease and together we shall overcome.

Olaf Clayton

Olaf Clayton
PUBLISHER

The iconic Deco-style Capitol Building on Gran Vía.

Photo by Alberto Restifo on Unsplash.com

Who's writing this month?

Roger Pike

UK born and bred, with a Catalan mother, Roger was sent to Madrid by his company on a one-year assignment in 1990, but managed to stay on for 29 years. Writing about business and the economy from his long experience of working in Corporate Banking, he now helps companies enter new international markets. He is currently living in New York, but his home is in Madrid.



Luke Darracott

Originally from the UK, Luke is a qualified alcoholic who studied languages at University. Apart from a year out in Moscow he has lived in Madrid giving wine tastings and gastronomic food tours and writing about Spain since 2009. In 2018 he opened an independent wine shop called Madrid & Darracott with his friend and business partner Roque Madrid. His passion is food, travel and wine; in particular the communication of wine without the pretentiousness.



Abi Clark

Since moving to Madrid in 1997 Abi has been working in the Television & Radio world as a Freelance Journalist, Voice Actress/Radio Presenter and Executive Producer. She has worked extensively with Radio Nacional 5 with her programme 'Un Paseo Por El Mundo' and has written articles for El País and various English language magazines for the Asian market. Apart from a 3 year gap in 2005 working in Television in China and plenty of foreign travel for both work and pleasure, Madrid has been her much loved home for more than 2 decades.



MADRID METROPOLITAN

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Gastro Experiences

with Catalina Brennan



Hello all!!
Flowers are blooming and spring is nigh! For me, it's Madrid's best season (except for allergies :O), so, let's take to the streets and enjoy our wonderful gastronomy.

Today, I'm bringing you one of our national treasures and the recipe to a perfect TORTILLA. It's very easy to make once you know how, and yet, easy to find brick, dry pinchos de tortilla all around. Very frustrating...

You should know that one of our national debates is tortilla with or without onion. For me, there's no doubt...always with! Mellow and juicier tortillas. Also, pls, NEVER allow the bar to warm yesterday's tortilla in the microwave, you will ruin it.

THE PERFECT TORTILLA

(serves 4 or 2 very hungry)

INGREDIENTS:

• 5 eggs • 5 potatoes • ½ onion • Virgin olive oil & salt • Basic: non-stick pan

Julienne the onion and add it to a small pot, with oil. Stir and add salt, so it will cook in it's own juices. We want it to brown at first, to get the taste, but then we will just let it cook slowly, low heat until soft. With the lid on, and if necessary, we can add a bit of water, so it won't burn. Set aside.

Peel and chop potatoes. We will fry them in lots of olive oil, high heat when we put them in, and low heat for the rest of time. We want them to confit, not fry.

Once soft, place on big colander to drain excess oil.

In a big bowl, whisk thoroughly the eggs. Add

the potatoes and the drained onion. Mix so the potato will break a bit. Add salt, and taste. The amount of egg per potato is something you will have to learn with experience, not all potatoes are the same nor the size of the eggs. Basically, not too liquid. The mixture has to become one, you will not see runny egg on one side and potatoes on the other.

Find the best non-stick pan. I like them small (16-18cm) and I keep one just for tortillas.

Now, very high temperature and a teaspoon of olive oil. If the pan is not hot enough, the tortilla will stick....Add the mixture and do not touch for 2 or 3 minutes. Swirl the pan, so it will come off the edges, and let it cook for 3 more minutes aprox. Place a big plate on the pan, and carefully, flip it around so now you have the tortilla on the plate. Let it slide back to the pan and cook for another 5 minutes. Voilà!

Nice bread and red wine or Madrid's best beer, Mahou!

As a Chef and foodie, I like to discover new restaurants, talk to Chefs and try out new dishes and ingredients, which I will share gladly with you every month!

*Restaurante Muñagorri
Calle Padilla, 56 Madrid 28006*

This is one of the best Basque restaurants in Madrid, my favourite!

2 different areas, the Gastrobar, "barra de

pintxos" typical from San Sebastián, and the restaurant.

The food here is top notch quality, great produce, pampered by Pedro and his staff. Beautiful dishes, such as gildas (with the greatest anchovies), croquetas de jamón (ibérico, of course) and extra crispy on the outside, ensaladilla and lots of pinchos.

The place is also well known for it's special meat dishes. 35 day matured red meat, grilled with perfect embers, an amazing carpaccio flavoured only with salt and garlic oil, and the jewel of the crown, this mellow and full flavor Steak tartar on bone marrow.

Also, great wines, including Txacolí (from Basque country, white and sparkling, but with small bubbles, as I like it!) and Baines Patxarán, you must try this one. Totally different, authentic, not like the extra sweet stuff you get in some places. It has a beautifully round flavor, acid, sweet and sour.

Soo, look out for Pedro, and tell him you come from Catalina, he's the nicest lad.

MOREINFO:

<https://chefinhousecatalina.com/club-de-foodies-viajeros/> For cookery workshops, corporate events, showcookings, or personal Chef experiences: www.chefinhousecatalina.com

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Photo: Vanessa Bucceri

ARE OUR YOUTH READY FOR THE FUTURE?

So what will young people need to thrive in an increasingly automated world? Daniel Susskind, Oxford economist, was asked what career path he would advise a 16-year-old to follow:

Very crudely, I'd say, there are two strategies: either you learn to be good at the sorts of things these systems and machines cannot do or you try to build the machines.



Photo: Rachel

So one aspect is making sure young people are given the opportunity to learn how to programme computers and at Hastings we now offer Computer Science as a subject all the way up to eighteen. Some of our oldest students are even being given the opportunity to develop their own machine learning platform.

However, this will always be for a minority of students with a particular aptitude and passion for writing computer code (an incredibly difficult and intellectual process). Most of our students will need to compete for jobs where distinctly 'human' qualities are prized. The World Economic Forum sees the top ten for the future as being:

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordination with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility

So what do we as schools need to do to adapt to these challenges? At Hastings we have been working with Professor Guy Claxton, one of the most prominent British thinkers in the field of education, as to how we achieve both excellent examination results AND help young people develop the characteristics they

will need later in life.

The key is to build this explicitly into the model of education. Teachers still have to consider the subject matter they need to teach, for example the causes of the First World War, and how they will assess whether students have understood this. However, in addition, teachers need to think how they can use the opportunity to develop critical thinking, teamwork, creativity etc.

Most important for us is that the students are required to think for themselves. This sounds terribly obvious but in too many traditional lessons, the teacher stands at the front and does all the thinking. Students passively receive the information and then re-produce it. This can, if the student is diligent and motivated, produce good examination results but as a life skill it is completely useless! If young people have to solve problems, show resilience to overcome difficulties, work collaboratively to solve problems etc they get better exam results and develop the qualities they will need in the real world. And it is more fun! A win win.

In order to help us develop this educational experience further, we have recently opened a new, 21st century learning space, Hastings Nexus, for our oldest students. Here we aim to train students in these 21st century skills and provide a genuine bridge between school, university and life beyond.

The world of the future is uncertain but exciting – schools have to change with the times in order to give our students the best chance of success.



RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES SPAIN

Many families travel far from home and spend several weeks or months to get treatment for their seriously ill or injured children – a long time to be away or to divide a family. And, for children facing a serious medical crisis, nothing seems scarier than not having mom and dad close by for love and support. A Ronald McDonald House provides a place for families to call home so they can stay close by their hospitalized child at little to no cost.

by providing a place to stay at little or sometimes no cost.

SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

AT EVERY HOUSE, FAMILIES CAN ENJOY:

- Home-cooked meals
- Private bedrooms with bathrooms
- Playrooms for children
- Special suites for children with suppressed immune systems
- Accredited education programs
- Recreational activities

In Spain there are four Ronald McDonald Houses situated in Barcelona, Málaga, Valencia and Madrid offering in total 75 bedrooms to families with sick children who have to travel from a far.

We also have two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms Hospital de La Paz and Vall de Hebron where families can rest from there stressful Hospital ambiance just a few meters away from their child's bed.

In the Houses and Family Rooms families can share their experiences and develop spontaneous support groups, because nobody understands a mother with a sick child better than another mother with a sick child.

We support families not just offering a place to stay but also a range of activities are organized by our fabulous team of volunteers. Theatre, dance, cooking, baking, handcrafts are just a few of the many activities held at the Houses each day.

We are very thankful to all of our volunteers and donors who make it all possible.

Our Houses are built on the simple idea that nothing else should matter when a family is focused on the health of their child – not where they can afford to stay, where they will get their next meal or where they will lay their head at night to rest. We believe that when a child is hospitalized the love and support of family is as powerful as the strongest medicine prescribed.

ALLOW FAMILIES TO FACE THE WEIGHT OF ILLNESS TOGETHER

Families are stronger when they are together. By staying at a Ronald McDonald House, parents can better communicate with their child's medical team and keep up with complicated treatment plans when needed. They can also focus on the health of their child, rather than grocery shopping, cleaning or cooking meals.

ALLOW CHILDREN TO GET THE BEST CARE

When your child is sick, you want the best care possible – even if it is hundreds or thousands of miles away. The Ronald McDonald House allows families to access specialized medical treatment





Photo: Anita Jankovic

CHOOSING A SCHOOL IN MADRID? THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

The school application process in Madrid is in full swing. If you will be enrolling your child in school this year, then it's likely you have many questions! These are the most common ones:

WHAT DOES CONCERTADO MEAN?

In general, there are three types of schools: public, concertado and private. Public schools are funded by the government. While the tuition is free, you have to pay for lunch and other activities (field trips, extra-curriculars, etc.).

Concertados are private schools subsidized by the government. Technically, the tuition is free, but the school will ask you to make a donation for their specific educational project. This donation varies between 20€ a month to more than 100€ depending on the school. Most concertado schools are religious.

Private schools are not subsidized by the government and the tuition varies per school. The cost can be anything from 400€ to 800€, plus uniform, lunchroom, school bus, etc. This is especially for you if you're looking for a school with an alternative methodology or an international school.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A BILINGUAL SCHOOL?

Not all bilingual schools are the same. A bilingual school basically means that the media of instruction are English and Spanish. However, which subjects are taught in English vary per school. Aside



Photo: Jon-Tyson

from actual English classes, the more common subjects are Social Science, Natural Science, Music, Art and P.E.

Some schools call themselves trilingual. This usually means that at 5th grade, the children start learning a third language,

normally French or German.

HOW DO I APPLY?

The process for public schools and concertados are the same. Whether you get in or not is based on a point system. You are assigned points according to a variety of factors such as where you live, annual income and family size.

You can get the application form either from the school of your choice or through the Comunidad de Madrid website.

For all the official information on this process, visit <https://www.comunidad.madrid/servicios/educacion/solicita-tu-admision-educacion-infantil-obligatoria-bachillerato>.

For private schools, simply speak to the school directly to learn their process. They normally ask for an interview along with the necessary paperwork.

Are you feeling overwhelmed after reading all this information? Don't worry, I've got you covered! Here are some tips for choosing the right school for your child:

1 KNOW YOUR PRIORITIES.

The perfect school does not exist. Decide in advance which factors are important to you. Focus on finding a school that meets your non-negotiables and not the ones where "it would be nice if..."

2 DIG DEEPER INTO OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS.

When asking parents their thoughts on schools, remember that they are not you. What they like about the school might be something that would make you cross the school off your list, or vice versa. Go past the "My child is happy there" and figure out why. Look for concrete reasons.

3 KEEP YOUR FAMILY SITUATION IN MIND.

If you only plan on living in Madrid until your child turns 6, then there's no point in looking at the Primary level of schools. However, if you're here for the long haul, you might want to know how the school is like past that first year.

Choosing a school for your child is one of the biggest decisions we make as parents. It won't only affect your child in September, but in all the years to come. When it comes to choosing a school, there are lots of small decisions that lead up to the big one. All these decisions take up a lot of time and energy, and while they are important, you also have other things to do! As a parenting coach, one of the things I do is help you make decisions quickly, efficiently and with reasons that you like. Avail of my special school/childcare-focused offer of 197€ for three sessions. To schedule a free 30-minute clarity call, send me an email at info@denisesuarez.com.

DENISE SUAREZ

Since moving to Madrid in 2011, Denise has experienced first-hand how the bilingual education system has evolved. She first worked as an English teacher at a private school in Madrid, before becoming an editor of bilingual textbooks. In 2019 she started her business, Con Cariño, where she is a bilingual parenting coach and certified "How to Talk so Kids Will Listen" workshop facilitator. She helps parents enjoy parenting.

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THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Barbara Scalera, The Success Hypno Coach talks to Susannah Grant about what it takes to override our subconscious to achieve our own personal or business goals.

WHAT IS IT EXACTLY THAT YOU DO?

I am a fully accredited hypnotherapist and practitioner who helps people overcome their limiting beliefs, doubts and fears and then I coach them through the pathway to success in their business and personal lives so that they can have or achieve what they want.

WHY DO PEOPLE HAVE HANG-UPS ABOUT MONEY AND EARNING IT?

Our beliefs about money and our ability to earn it, grow it, save it and enjoy it are formed in our subconscious by the time we are 10 years old. We then tend to live according to those beliefs as adults. So if you were taught "money doesn't bring happiness" or that "money is limited" your subconscious will rule your actions to prevent you from acquiring the wealth you consciously would like to have. If you do end up having access to significant

wealth through your partner or your own salary you may still overspend it, hoard it or sabotage it unless you use tools like hypnosis that work at the subconscious level to rewrite your belief system.

WHY DID YOU SWITCH FROM THE WINE INDUSTRY TO BECOMING A SUCCESS HYPNO COACH?

Don't get me wrong I still love a good glass of wine (or two or three) but I found more and more over my 20 years in the industry that what I loved most was developing my teams of wonderful people who worked for me. I knew that helping people let go of their negative emotions and self-doubt, and being able to empower them to do and be what and who they want to be was going to be more fulfilling and meaningful work for me than persuading people to drink one wine brand vs another.

WHAT SORT OF CHALLENGES DOES THE OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE PRESENT FOR YOUR EXPAT CLIENTS?

The expat experience can really trigger underlying negative beliefs as newcomers navigate through the challenges of fitting in socially, linguistically and culturally to their new environment. Every day can feel like the first day of school all over again. In addition, overseas entrepreneurs can often struggle to promote their services boldly and charge their worth abroad. Lack of inner confidence is a recurring theme in many expat scenarios and it's wonderful to see clients shift from conflicted to comfortable, not just in their new home but in their own skin, regardless of where life takes them.

ARE THERE ANY INTERESTING EMERGING TRENDS IN YOUR SECTOR?

I am pleased to see that little by little coaching and even therapy are becoming more accepted and 'normal' here in Madrid, albeit on a lesser scale than in places like New York or London. Techniques like Mindfulness and Meditation are becoming more popular and this is opening up the field for other modalities as well.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS IN 10 YEARS?

I will be creating additional online programmes, taking advantage of virtual reality to bring to life clients' aspirations and implementing hypnosis techniques in the workplace to increase morale and performance.

<https://successhypno.coach/>

****As the first Spring of a new decade there is no better time to finally let go of limiting beliefs, fears and doubts and make a fresh start with an empowered belief system and a practical action plan for better wealth, health, happiness, fulfilment and/or success. I'm offering MM readers a 'Spring Clean Your Success Mindset' hypnosis & coaching package of just €297 (RRP 550) for 5 hours of hypnosis and coaching, plus a bespoke hypnosis track focussed on your specific personal or professional goal. Offer expires 30 April 2020. Email barbara@successhypno.coach to arrange a free call to discuss whether hypno-coaching is right for you.**

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WHAT DO YOU NEED FOR A COMFORTABLE RETIREMENT?



One of the most common questions I hear as a Financial Adviser is, "How much do I need to retire on?"

The answer to that question differs from person to person and the numbers I discuss with my clients vary massively. To some, having a quiet retirement with little requirements is the goal; others will want to continue playing golf and attend social events weekly. There is a huge difference in what you will need in your pocket with these different scenarios.

SO, WHAT DO THE EXPERTS THINK?

Researchers have calculated how much money a person needs per year in order to enjoy a comfortable retirement. The numbers were calculated by Loughborough's Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP), The Pensions & Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) and Retirement Living Standards (RLS). A report from Loughborough University and the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association aims to help people understand how much they will need for a minimum, moderate or comfortable quality of life once they retire.

In the UK a full state pension comes in at just over £8,500, but it's the other savings you accrue over your working life that will make the difference in people's post-work years.

Experts found that a single person will need about £10,200 a year to achieve the minimum living standard, £20,200 a year for moderate living standards and £33,000 a year for comfortable living standards. For couples, the minimum standard came in at £15,700, moderate was £29,100 and comfortable worked out as £47,500. The results are based on consultations with members of the public and consider what is needed in retirement for home DIY and maintenance, household and personal goods, holidays, food, transport, clothing and social engagements.

The new Retirement Living Standards describe three different standards of living with associated costs for each – all established by what the public considers realistic and relevant expectations. Associated costs are made up of household bills, food and drink, transport, holidays and leisure, clothing and personal and helping others. The standards cover a range of goods and services that are relevant to most people. These and other costs, such as tax on pension income, may need to be added depending on individual circumstances.

A series of profiles and infographics have been created on the PLSA website to help people calculate their own finances. The research for the Retirement Living Standards was adapted from the approach used to produce the Minimum Income Standard – a calculation of what the public

thinks is an acceptable minimum standard of living. The data was gathered through 26 group discussions with around 250 members of the public already retired or approaching retirement, from a wide range of backgrounds. Expert views were taken into account for some areas, such as transport, energy usage and food costs.

The discussions set the parameters for how higher living standards should be described and defined. Through these discussions, three retirement living standards were agreed: minimum, moderate and comfortable.

THE STANDARDS:

At a cost of £10,200 per year for a single person and £15,700 for a couple, the minimum lifestyle covers all your needs plus enough for some fun – including social participation and social occasions.

The moderate lifestyle (£20,200 a year for singles and £29,100 for couples) provides, in addition to the minimum lifestyle, more financial security and more flexibility.

At the comfortable level (£33,000 a year for singles and £47,500 for couples), retirees could enjoy some luxuries like regular beauty treatments, theatre trips and three weeks in Europe a year.

BREAKING DOWN THE RLS

House: Household utility bills, decorating and maintenance, furniture, cleaning supplies, lightbulbs, cooking utensils, appliances (e.g. fridge, washing machine), garden supplies, towels, bedding, gardener/cleaner/window cleaner & funeral plan.

Food and Drink: Household food shopping, eating out, beer & wine.

Transport: Car running costs, railcard/train

*Table from <https://www.retirementlivingstandards.org.uk/>

	MINIMUM	MODERATE	COMFORTABLE
SINGLE	£10,200 a year	£20,200 a year	£33,000 a year
What standard of living could you have?	Cover all your needs with some leftover for fun	More financial security and flexibility	More financial freedom and some luxuries
 HOUSE	DIY maintenance and decorating one room a year	Some help with maintenance and decorating a year	Replace kitchen and bathroom every 10/15 years
 FOOD AND DRINK	A £38 weekly food shop	A £46 weekly food shop	A £56 weekly food shop
 TRANSPORT	No car	3-year old car replaced every 10 years	2-year old car replaced every five years
 HOLIDAYS AND LEISURE	A week and a long weekend in the UK every year	2 weeks in Europe and a long weekend in the UK every year	3 weeks in Europe every year
 CLOTHING AND PERSONAL	£460 for clothing and footwear each year	£750 for clothing and footwear each year	£1,000-£1,500 for clothing and footwear each year
 HELPING OTHERS	£10 for each birthday present	£30 for each birthday present	£50 for each birthday present

travel & taxis.

Holidays and Leisure: TV, DVD player, laptop, printer, speakers, CDs, stationery supplies, TV license and subscriptions, internet, activities & holidays.

Clothing and Personal: Clothing, footwear, cosmetics, toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving supplies, hair styling, beauty treatments, dentist, opticians, podiatry & minor first aid supplies.

Helping Others: Gifts, helping others (if applicable) & charitable donations

Planning early is key to getting your retirement plans in order. You can look up another of my articles on this subject titled "It Is Never Too Early" here <https://www.spectrum-ifa.com/it-is-never-too-early-to-start-planning-your-financial-future/>

Don't delay your financial plans. For planning, yesterday is better than today, which is better than tomorrow. Contact me, Chris webb on 639 118 185 or chris.webb@spectrum-ifa.com if you want to discuss your own circumstances.

Sources:

Loughborough's Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP). Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) Retirement Living Standards (RLS)



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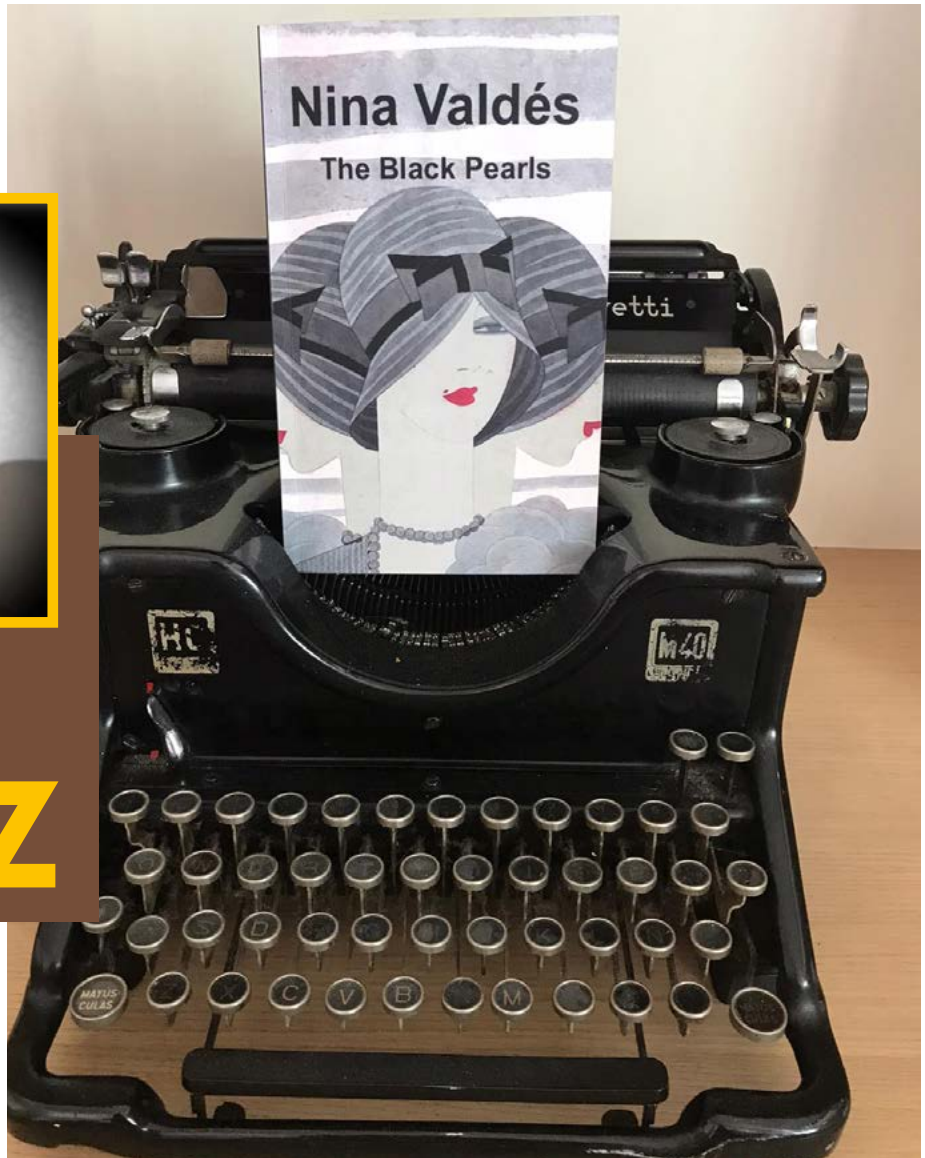
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Nina's Latest novel "The Black Pearls" Out Now!

Jenny Osborne catches up with Madrid icon



NINA VALDEZ



What do you like about living in Madrid?

I think the typical response would be the weather, the food, transportation, good travel location, etc. However, without a hint of doubt, and the sincere desire that I don't sound hokey, what has affected my quality of life in Madrid has been the caliber of friendships I've forged which have sustained me for over fifteen years. Three weeks after my husband and I arrived, our re-locator suggested I join one of the English clubs, to which I replied, "No way, that's not my thing." But, he convinced me to check out the American Women's Club, the American Club, and INC. The rest is history...they are an integral part of my life today

Where is your favourite place to eat?

My home. I'm a foodie, a chef, an avid socializer and experiment with every spice imaginable. There's no cuisine I couldn't tackle in my shoebox kitchen.

How do you relax? Do you have a hobby?

Actually reading, and cooking are my methods for total relaxation. It used to be sewing, but I no longer have the need or space required for a sewing machine. However, I was a seamstress for years until I became good enough to design clothes for other people. It was a tremendous high for me at that time. However, I am inspired by learning new things. I've had seven or eight career changes, and never had a job I didn't like.

What is the one thing you couldn't live without?

Nothing I couldn't live without. But, please don't take away my copa de vino.

If you were stranded on a deserted island

and you could only have one item, what would it be?

Battery powered Ipad and sufficient batteries. Then I could get YouTube and learn how to construct any necessary item to sustain life, plus, have a bit of entertainment. I could also ask Google pertinent questions regarding my chance of survival.

What inspired you to start writing?

Many life experiences. For a time, the negative overshadowed the positive, and I was desperate to find an outlet to express myself. It became a compulsion, for which I did not seek therapy. I spent a year writing the first book, and published it anonymously, because of the extreme uncomfortable sexual content. However, it became apparent to me that the more I exposed my pain, the better I felt. Although it forced me to relive agonizing, painful incidents; when completed, it was the ultimate catharsis. When I write, I'm totally disciplined and focused. I start early in the morning and do not stop until I'm hungry.

How long did it take to write 'The Black Pearls'?

This last book took about 6 months because it was basically an interview

that delved into the lives of two people, and I transformed it into a book. It was a poignant story that moved me a great deal, and I felt a need to share it.

If your book was to be made into a movie, who are the celebrities that would star in it?

Since the most recent book, *The Black Pearls*, is about a couple's relationship that spanned many years, I think the relevant actors should be senior citizens. I could feasibly cast Sean Connery in the role of Colin, and Rita Moreno, a timeless beauty, would portray Maria. I believe both of them were characters of the same names in previous films. I don't know about the younger version of this couple. I'd have to think long and hard. Perhaps because I believe their older years have more substance.

How many half-finished books do you have?

I don't leave anything unfinished. Give me a deadline, and I meet it. Give me a task, and I complete it.

Where can readers find out more about you and your books?

Readers can find out about me...

Website. So easy. NinaValdes.com

Hard times need extra happiness.



Personal development means investing in you to manage yourself efficiently. Instead of waiting for things to happen, personal development makes you think proactively and make it happen yourself. You may not achieve all your goals. However, you get a rewarding life and richer experiences along the way for the rest of your life.

OVERCOME ANYTHING

Benefits of Personal Development

There are many benefits associated with personal development. However, the journey is scary, tough, and long. As stated earlier, the result might not be achieved but many life skills and experiences are derived that lead to a happier, richer, and more satisfying life. The benefits are as follows:

1. Happiness

This is one of the most important benefits of personal development. You always feel pleasure after building relationships, creating networks, and improving your personality. This might not be a straight forward success, but something that continuously works in your favor.

2. Building Relations and Connections

Personal development makes you improve yourself as well as your connections with others. It draws people to you automatically with such trusted relations. That is why communication, networking, and relationships are very important topics in personal development.

3. You Get New Experiences and Learn New Things

Learning, knowledge, and education are the main elements of personal development. In this way, you will not only learn new things but also know about yourself. Personal development enables you to learn new skills and experiences that are not taught in educational institutions.

Personal
Development
Consultant and
Multi-Award-
Winning Author
LINDA LEE

4. You Live a Better Life and Adapt To Change

The overall quality of your life improves with good relationships, more happiness, and accomplishments. Additionally, you become good at adapting to changes when you find and accept any change in your life. Personal development allows you to face these good or bad changes by making your mind flexible.

5. Better Problem Solving Skills

Personal development helps you to live your life more effectively. A personally developed person can make better decisions compared to the rest of the people. In this way, you become more effective by solving any problems that you face during life.

6. More Chances of Being Successful

The chances of your success increase as personal development affects all aspects of your life including your career and financial areas. When you know how to win a friend's heart, the chances of your success also become more practical and all this becomes possible due to personal development.

7. You Become Inspiration For Others

Everyone in the world gets inspiration from those who become successful or develop themselves personally. That is why others notice you when you are personally growing and getting success. The story of your progress becomes an inspiration for others and influences them to change their lives accordingly.

8. Better Awareness

Awareness is one of the very first steps in personal development. In this way, you



learn about yourself and things around you. It keeps you in reality regarding your skills. Personal development is very important in self-awareness.

9. Greater Flexibility

Personal development not only enables you to tackle tough things professionally but also builds skills to get out of those. When you get control over these, it makes you stay strong even in the toughest situations of your life.

10. Better Sense of Direction

Personal development helps you discover yourself and provides you with a better sense of direction. In this way, you contribute a lot to your life and value your ideas.

11. You Overcome Fear and Tackle New Things

Personal development pushes you out of your comfort zone and you face fears and scary things. In this way, you get the courage to overcome fear and fix problems by doing new things.

Best Personal Development Consultant - Linda Lee

Linda Lee is the CEO of a Personal Development Consultancy Company. She helps people in building relationships and creates Emotion Management Strategies. Linda has won many awards for doing amazingly well in providing people with the best personal development services all around the world. She always encourages women to take the step forward and show their power.

Linda Lee is organizing a free personal

development networking event to empower women. The event is going to be organized on 24 April, 2020 at Costello Rio Café 4 Plaza General, Maroto, Madrid, Spain. That is why a multi-award-winning author - Linda Lee wants females to come out and join this event to empower themselves. There is so much to learn about personal development and women empowerment from the story of Linda Lee.

Why is empowerment important?

Empowerment is very important in today's modern world. Ladies are encouraged to come out and join this amazing event for personal development. A few of the benefits of empowerment are as follows:

• Benefits For Business Success

A business having empowered employees becomes more successful as people are creative, positive, willing, and ready to help others. Empowered employees not only build trust and loyalty but they also feel proud to work for the organization and contribute with full devotion. The productivity, quality, internal cooperation, motivation, and flexibility increases and the production costs reduce.

• Benefits For Managers

People will be cooperative, interested in the decision-making, and willing to help others in improving performance and quality. Empowerment also makes employees accept any mistake they commit and remain honest with their managers. People consider every new thing as a challenge and adapt to changes saving your precious time and becoming more practical. That is

why employee empowerment makes the life of managers a lot easier.

Why is this personal development networking event important?

The personal development networking event organized by Linda Lee is of utmost importance for every woman. She is a multi-award-winning author and a professional personal development consultant. Linda Lee wants ladies to come out and be empowered. The best way to get on track is by joining this great event. So, what are females waiting for? Just decide to join today and learn the art of changing your life with personal development and empowerment. This event can certainly change the lives of women.

Final Words

Personal development is what gets the job done for you professionally when you know about yourself and your abilities. After looking at the benefits of personal development and empowerment, women must be thinking to learn about these and lift their lives to high-standards.

The best chance for them is to join this personal development networking event that is going to be organized in Spain by Linda Lee, a professional personal development consultant. She encourages them to come out and achieve business goals by taking advantage of personal development and employee empowerment. The success of Linda Lee as a personal development consultant is a motivation for all women looking to become successful and accomplish business goals.

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GREY ELEPHANT

A tribute to a very special playschool in the centre of Madrid.



BY ANNA CONNOLLY.

"Nobody tells you about how lonely it can get", says one parent friend. "There is so much expectation from the moment babies appear, so much judgment ... I feel like I am failing at everything - constantly." Being a parent is exhausting on every level, the lack of time can lead to a sense of losing oneself, leading to the conundrum every parent puzzles over: "what did I do with all that time before?" There is an immense amount of preparation on hand for pregnancy and birth; a vast array of literature on breast-feeding and weaning; courses on how to Feng shui, or radically minimize homes for the teeny tot's arrival, but very little in the way of preparing for the all-encompassing task of being a parent. Of course there are some wonderful authors on child development and writers who carefully explain steps of how we can parent mindfully; however it is ironic that at the very moment these are needed, you have the

concentration level of a goldfish and the patience level of a bull with a wasp stinging in their butt. Theories are all well and good, they have their place. However, in the heat of battle what is needed is practical experience. For countless parents in Madrid this came in the shape of Grey Elephant.

Irina Verhoeve a Nursery Teacher at Grey Elephant best sums up Sara Varela's playschool, "it is not really a school, but rather a place where we come together and help each other grow." After just over a decade Grey Elephant has closed; the properties, including fourteen other buildings in the local area, have been bought over. Other beloved local business take overs include, Museo de la Radio and Baobab, the selling of which have been described as 'inhumane'. This domino-like effect of gentrification reflects a shocking lack of legal protection for smaller, independent businesses, in favour of property development, big chains or tourist accommodation. Grey Elephant has been active for well over a decade, and now there is nothing to recognise the act of nurturing so many families, and having such profound impact on the community, both locally and internationally.

Since the end of December, the property has become vacant, and the choir of

children playing is muted until further notice. Causes for Grey's closure include the relentless gentrification of our barrio La Latina, named after Beatriz Galindo, another phenomenal woman who, like Sara Varela, was a pioneer of her day. It is notoriously difficult to run an independent business here in Madrid; taxes include 'normal' taxes, plus a substantial monthly fee of up to 250 euros to claim an 'autónomo' status. According to the National Statistics Institute (INE) at the end of 2019 nearly 14% of the population, that's more than 3.2 million people, have been affected by unemployment. With unemployment high in Spain, it is nonsensical to demotivate and charge people who are trying to work outside the cookie cut version of employment. These figures highlight the understandable general lack of entrepreneurship, but equally shine light on the uniqueness of Grey Elephant; with which Varela managed to thrive in creating something so distinct from the common model of childcare.

Sara Varela understands the challenges of being a parent, specifically a mother and specifically a mother in a city; who likely does not have the abuelos nearby, or on hand to help when needed. Through Grey Elephant Varela put into action practical support for working parents, and was always distinctly un rushed to offer guidance on child development, or on parenting methods. Joanne Hitch from the Sticky Fingers and Little Bunnies playgroup says that Sara has "been an inspiration for so many adults and children all over the capital", that she is, 'an amazing person and professional'. Hitch remembers, "in its early beginnings, everyone knew how unique and innovative Grey Elephant was and different in so many ways to the standard 'ofertas' for little ones in Madrid. And over the years, Grey Elephant has gone from strength to strength!"

The abrupt finish to the Grey Elephant legacy has left many parents in limbo, feeling devastated that this place, this home for so many will be no more. Irina says, "many people leave their home in the morning to go to work. I, on the other hand, get to go to my other home and get to spend the day with my family. I am so grateful for this whole life changing experience and there are no words in the world to describe the place Sara holds in my heart." The way that Sara creates communities from a group of strangers is magical. She knows instinctively what children need to flourish – space and play, LOTS of play. She is always eager to discuss her pedagogy which places the children at the centre; the rights of the children come first, and child-led play is the best way to develop emotionally intelligent adults and ultimately future citizens.

It is with great sadness that Grey Elephant has closed. It will affect countless families who have found refuge from the frenetic, fast-paced city at Grey; it has a wonderful team of staff who support not only child development, but encourage curious, kind parenting. They are flexible, caring and passionate about learning through play. It's motto, 'we are grey', really sums up a state of being, instead of pledging allegiance to one ideal over another. At Grey: we play. Rosa Planchart Badenas, ballerina and dance teacher at Grey Elephant reflects, "it has been great to feel the warmth of it by teaching there for hello! English. Sara's innovative and



restlessness energy to provide for families and friends engaged with Grey Elephant will be deeply missed." The plethora of bi-lingual activities run at Grey included: yoga, dance, painting, photography, storytelling, music, summer camps and parties for Easter, Halloween and Christmas. This was all in addition to the superb daily childcare.

As a mother and teacher, I admire Sara, and will be bereft of her guiding light. However, I would like to politely challenge the concept that she is innovative, an adjective everyone I have spoken to has described her as. I suggest instead that she is doing something far more radical and beneficial to our current global needs; Sara runs her business using a matriarchal structure. It is not driven by short term goals and easily identified outcomes, but instead she is planting acorns so that mighty forests may grow. Like the elephants, her herd is female-led, community-wise, protective, intelligent and empathetic. Qualities our world leaders should aspire to.

I first met Sara at one of the many activities that Grey Elephant offered, this one Hartbeeps, an interactive, multi-sensory experience for children. Sara was wearing an orange handkerchief on her head and was leading a wobbly group of toddlers and their parents in

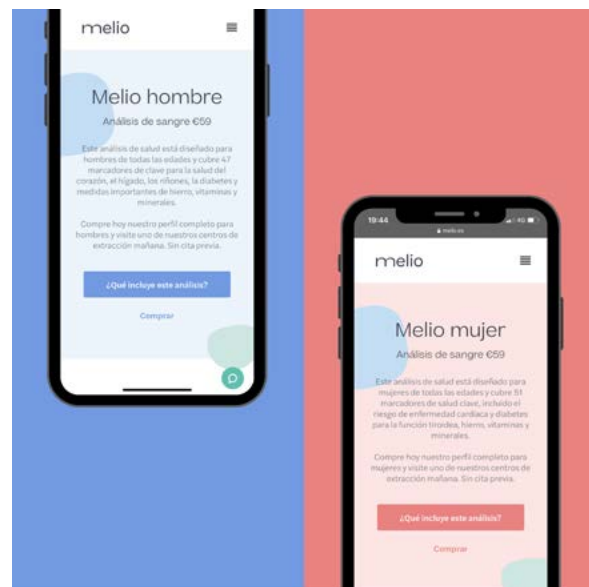
a circle while bubbles blew, and disco lights flashed; she asked us all to walk like different animals. I was running late with my then one-year old child. We frantically kicked off our shoes, threw off our coats and unquestioningly jumped into the beautifully surreal herd. Sara stopped for a micro second, winked at me and continued. We later got talking with some other parents about mother's guilt, of which according to NUK the baby care product company, nearly 90% of mothers experience. The majority of mothers feel guilty to work, guilty not to work - it seems that the way modern western society is set up so the mamá can never win. Having attentively listened Sara added with perfectly timed debonair, 'bueno, sometimes you just want to stop, sit and drink a warm cup of coffee instead of sipping at cold coffee'. Bullseye.

Being a parent in a city has huge advantages. There are often international meet-ups to cast a net out to, there are less expectations of what success looks like and Culture comes as a given. Families come in all shapes; one size truly does not fit all. However, what most parents sacrifice is the familiar back up. Ties to roots are temporarily put on hold for a life with more excitement and ultimately opportunities, even though we city-dwellers are undoubtedly more caffeinated than our pueblo contemporaries. According to dream psychologists' grey elephants are supposed to symbolize wandering off the traditional path, but the journey grey elephants take from their wandering leads to enlightenment: a fortuitous emblem perhaps?... I know this is not the last we have seen from Sara Varela, quite the opposite, this is just the beginning. Having worked for countless charities in different countries, including refugee camps, Sara has a wealth of experience to draw from, and a firm vision for creating safe, playful spaces for all children. Besides, as Sara puts it, 'I always wanted an outdoor space anyway'. When one door closes, another one opens. Plans are already being made for an eco-wonderland that will be magnificent. Watch this space.



melio

'BLOOD TALKS'



ABI LINDSAY CLARK

At the Madrid January Business Lunch, our guest speaker was William Stoddart the co-founder (with business partner Mario) of 'Melio' a British company whose first market is in Spain soon to be followed with a setup in the UK. Melio opened its doors here in Madrid in October last year offering convenient, frequent health testing to the general public.

William is not a doctor but in 2007, living in Sweden with his wife and small

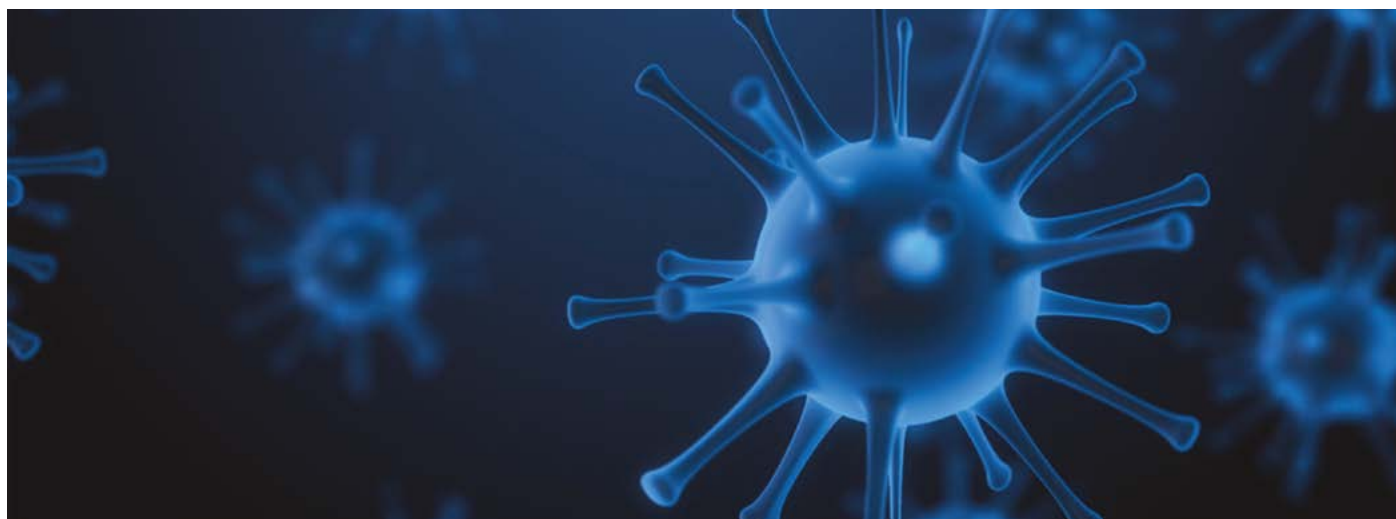
daughter their lives suddenly changed dramatically. On a Wednesday his wife went in for a scan due to headaches and on the Thursday, she was on an operating table to remove a tumour. It was during the following 3 years while receiving healthcare, when William realised how terrible the journey was for everyone. His wife sadly lost her battle in 2010 just after the birth of their son.

This made him realise that he could do something to help and in 2011 he set up a company with his twin brother helping people answer questions and with blood testing they could be more accurate. William explained how in Sweden at the time you had to explain your symptoms and then you might get a blood test based

only on those. There was no access to new diagnostics and ranges of tests unless you went private and at great expensive. So, they setup a blood testing company. They tested 100,000 people and a huge 80% of these had some form of health problem.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOME ISOLATION IN COVID-19 CASES

Recommendations at the place of isolation



Stay at home, avoid going out of the isolated room.



Use your own bathroom. If it is shared it should be cleaned after every use



Avoid distances of less than 1 meter

Recommendations at the place of isolation



Keep hand hygiene products in the room

Avoid visits



Have a pedal bin in the room.

How to prevent contagion



When sneezing, cover up with a disposable tissue

Throw it to the bin



We are **EVERYONE'S** Health



Wash your hand with water and soap



Do not share personal utilities



Use a mask when using common spaces



Clean objects and surfaces daily with disposable cloths and bleach after each use

For the ones taking care of the infected



Use gloves for any contact with secretions. Use a mask when using common spaces. Wash your hands if you are in contact with an infected object, surface, or person, even if you wear gloves.

Caregivers will perform self-monitoring of possible symptoms and should not present the following risk factors:



Chronic illness

Elderly

Diabetes

Arterial hypertension



People with lung diseases



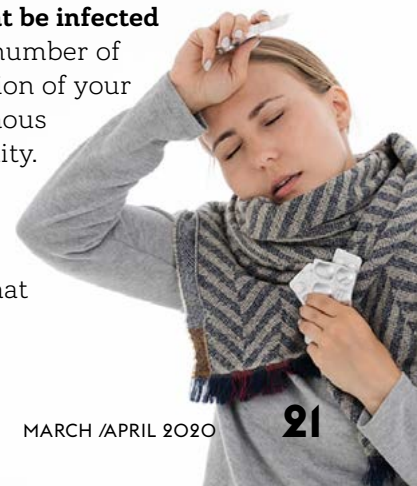
Pregnancy, as a precaution

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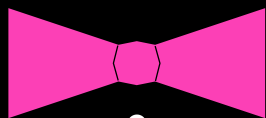
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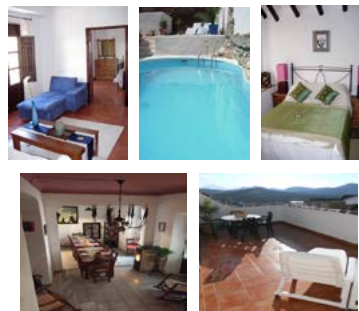
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