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PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY  
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

**SUNDAY:**  
**MARRYBELL MADURO**  
SINGER  
6:30 - 8:30pm

**MONDAY:**  
**ANGELA FLORES**  
VIOLINIST  
6:30 - 8:30pm

**TUESDAY:**  
**JEAN PAUL**  
SAXOPHONIST  
6:30 - 8:30pm

**WEDNESDAY:**  
**EDDIE KROON**  
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

**MAILLEYN ALVARADO**  
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

**KARAOKE** 9:00 - 11:00pm

**THURSDAY:**  
**MARRYBELL MADURO**  
SINGER  
6:30 - 8:30pm

**FRIDAY:**  
**RICKY THOMAS**  
GUITARIST  
7:00 - 9:00pm

**SATURDAY:**  
**EDDIE KROON**  
SINGER  
4:00 - 6:00pm

**ANGELA FLORES**  
VIOLINIST  
6:30 - 8:30pm

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## Trump and Putin will speak this week on Russia-Ukraine war, U.S. envoy says

By **MICHELLE L. PRICE**  
**Associated Press**

**WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)**

— President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin are expected to speak this week as the U.S. tries to broker a ceasefire in the Russia-Ukraine war, according to Trump special envoy Steve Witkoff.

It would be the second publicized call between the two leaders since Trump began his second term in January. Trump and Putin spoke in

February and agreed to start high-level talks over ending the war in Ukraine.

"I think the two presidents are going to have a really good and positive discussion this week," Witkoff said Sunday on CNN's "State of the Union." Witkoff this week met with Putin in Russia for talks aimed at ending the country's invasion of Ukraine and said he expects to see a deal soon. "The president uses the time-frame weeks and I don't disagree with him. I am really

hopeful that we are going to see some real progress here," Witkoff said.

When Witkoff appeared later Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation," he again spoke about a prospective Putin-Trump call but did not offer specifics on what decisions might be made coming out of the discussion.

Witkoff said they forged a relationship in Trump's first term and that he expects the call this week to be "very positive and constructive."



**U.S. Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff attends and interview after participating in a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, U.S. national security adviser Mike Waltz, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Russian President Vladimir Putin's foreign policy advisor Yuri Ushakov, at Diriyah Palace, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Feb. 18, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

Trump's first call to Putin came after Witkoff traveled to Russia to bring home Marc Fogel, an American history teacher the U.S. had deemed wrongfully detained.

One day after the prisoner swap, Trump announced that he spoke to Putin and said their call was "lengthy and highly productive."

Witkoff demurred on whether Putin and Trump will decide in the call to move forward with a U.S.-proposed 30-day ceasefire. Ukraine has agreed to the deal. Putin has said he agrees in principle with the proposal but there are details to be worked out. "President Trump is the ultimate decision maker, our decision maker, and President Putin, for the country of Russia, is their decision maker," Witkoff said. "I think it's a very positive sign that the

two of them will be talking at some point. I think that's showing that there's positive momentum."

Witkoff also brushed aside a recent assessment from French President Emmanuel Macron, who said in a statement that Russia "does not seem to be sincerely seeking peace" and that Putin was intensifying the fighting before negotiating.

Witkoff said he was not aware of Macron's comments but said, "it's unfortunate when people make those sort of assessments" when "they don't have necessarily firsthand knowledge." "I know what I heard, the body language I witnessed," Witkoff said of his meeting with Putin. "I saw a constructive effort, over a long period of time to to discuss the specifics of what's going on in the field." □




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# Trump administration deports hundreds of immigrants even as a judge orders their removals be stopped

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI** and  
**REGINA GARCIA CANO**  
Associated Press

The Trump administration has transferred hundreds of immigrants to El Salvador even as a federal judge issued an order temporarily barring the deportations under an 18th century wartime declaration targeting Venezuelan gang members, officials said Sunday. Flights were in the air at the time of the ruling.

U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg issued an order Saturday blocking the deportations, but lawyers told him there were already two planes with immigrants in the air — one headed for El Salvador, the other for Honduras. Boasberg verbally ordered the planes be turned around, but they apparently were not and he did not include the directive in his written order.

In a court filing Sunday, the Department of Justice, which has appealed Boasberg's decision, said the immigrants "had already been removed from U.S. territory" when the written order was issued at 7:26 pm.

Trump's allies were gleeful over the results.

"Oopsie...Too late," Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele, who agreed to house about 300 immigrants for a year at a cost of \$6 million in his country's prisons, wrote on the social media site X above



In this photo provided by El Salvador's presidential press office, prison guards transfer deportees from the U.S., alleged to be Venezuelan gang members, to the Terrorism Confinement Center in Tecoluca, El Salvador, Sunday, March 16, 2025.

an article about Boasberg's ruling. That post was recirculated by White House communications director Steven Cheung.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who negotiated an earlier deal with Bukele to house immigrants, posted on the site: "We sent over 250 alien enemy members of Tren de Aragua which El Salvador has agreed to hold in their very good jails at a fair price that will also save our taxpayer dollars."

Steve Vladeck, a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center, said that Boasberg's verbal directive to turn

around the planes was not technically part of his final order but that the Trump administration clearly violated the "spirit" of it.

"This just incentivizes future courts to be hyper specific in their orders and not give the government any wiggle room," Vladeck said.

The immigrants were deported after Trump's declaration of the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, which has been used only three times in U.S. history. The law, invoked during the War of 1812 and World Wars I and II, requires a president to declare the United States is at war, giving him extraor-

dinary powers to detain or remove foreigners who otherwise would have protections under immigration or criminal laws. It was last used to justify the detention of Japanese-American civilians during World War II.

A Justice Department spokesperson on Sunday referred to an earlier statement from Attorney General Pam Bondi blasting Boasberg's ruling and didn't immediately answer questions about whether the administration ignored the court's order. Venezuela's government in a statement Sunday rejected the use of Trump's declara-

tion of the law, characterizing it as evocative of "the darkest episodes in human history, from slavery to the horror of the Nazi concentration camps."

Tren de Aragua originated in an infamously lawless prison in the central state of Aragua and accompanied an exodus of millions of Venezuelans, the overwhelming majority of whom were seeking better living conditions after their nation's economy came undone during the past decade. Trump seized on the gang during his campaign to paint misleading pictures of communities that he contended were "taken over" by what were actually a handful of lawbreakers.

The Trump administration has not identified the immigrants deported, provided any evidence they are in fact members of Tren de Aragua or that they committed any crimes in the United States. It also sent two top members of the Salvadoran MS-13 gang to El Salvador who had been arrested in the United States. Video released by El Salvador's government Sunday showed men exiting airplanes onto an airport tarmac lined by officers in riot gear. The men, who had their hands and ankles shackled, struggled to walk as officers pushed their heads down to have them bend down at the waist. □

Associated Press

## Cybersecurity officials warn against potentially costly Medusa ransomware attacks

By **SARAH PARVINI**  
AP Technology Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — The FBI and the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency are warning against a dangerous ransomware scheme.

In an advisory posted earlier this week, government officials warned that a ransomware-as-a-service software called Medusa, which has launched ransomware attacks since 2021, has recently affected hundreds of people. Medusa uses phishing campaigns as its main method for stealing victims'

credentials, according to CISA.

To protect against the ransomware, officials recommended patching operating systems, software and firmware, in addition to using multifactor authentication for all services such as email and VPNs. Experts also recommended using long passwords, and warned against frequently recurring password changes because they can weaken security. Medusa developers and affiliates — called "Medusa actors" — use a double extortion model, where they

"encrypt victim data and threaten to publicly release exfiltrated data if a ransom is not paid," the advisory said. Medusa operates a data-leak site that shows victims alongside countdowns to the release of information. "Ransom demands are posted on the site, with direct hyperlinks to Medusa affiliated cryptocurrency wallets," the advisory said. "At this stage, Medusa concurrently advertises sale of the data to interested parties before the countdown timer ends. Victims can additionally pay \$10,000 USD in



This June 14, 2018 file photo shows an FBI seal on a podium before a news conference at the agency's headquarters in Washington.

Associated Press

cryptocurrency to add a day to the countdown timer." Since February, Medusa developers and affiliates have hit more than 300 victims

across industries, including the medical, education, legal, insurance, technology and manufacturing sectors, CISA said. □



# At least 37 dead after tornadoes, wildfires and dust storms wreak havoc across multiple US states

By **SARA CLINE** and **REBECCA REYNOLDS**  
**Associated Press**

**TYLERTOWN, Miss. (AP)** — Unusually vicious and damaging weather across multiple U.S. states spawned violent tornadoes, blinding dust storms and fast-moving wildfires this weekend, leaving at least 37 people dead.

Hailey Hart and her fiancé Steve Romero hunkered down with their three huskies inside their 1994 Toyota Celica as a tornado ripped apart their home Saturday in Tylertown, Mississippi.

Romero said he prayed out loud and hugged Hart as the car rolled onto its side, windows shattering, before it landed on its wheels again. After the twister passed, they could hear people nearby screaming for help.

"It was a bad dream come true," Romero said.

Next door, Hart's grandparents crawled out from the rubble of their destroyed house after they sought shelter in a bathroom as falling trees collapsed the roof.

"Everything was coming down on us," said Donna Blansett, Hart's grandmother. "All I could do was pray to God to save us."

They escaped with just a few scratches and aches. Family members, friends and volunteers spent Sunday removing debris and salvaging anything they could find —



**Residents look for personal belongings in the damage after a tornado passed through where two people lost their lives, Sunday, March 16, 2025, in Plantersville, Ala.**

**Associated Press**

some damp clothes, a photo album and a few toiletries. "I'm so happy you're alive," Hart said through tears, as she embraced her grandmother on Sunday.

The National Weather Service said tornado watches had mostly expired, but dangerous winds were still possible in the Carolinas, east Georgia and northern Florida through Sunday evening.

Forecasters warned of dangerous conditions that turned deadly.

The dynamic storm that began Friday earned an unusual "high risk" designation from weather forecasters. Still, experts said it's not un-

usual to see such weather extremes in March.

President Donald Trump said in a post on his social media network that his administration is ready to assist affected communities.

"Please join Melania and me in praying for everyone impacted by these terrible storms!" he posted Sunday.

At least three people, including an 82-year-old woman, were killed in central Alabama when multiple tornadoes swept across the state. In Troy, Alabama, parks officials said the recreation center where many residents had taken refuge had to be closed due to damage from

overnight storms. No one was injured.

"We are thankful the Lord provided protection over our community, and over 200 guests at the Recreation Center storm shelter on Saturday night," the parks department said in a statement. Fatalities from twisters in battered Missouri reach 12.

Missouri resident Dakota Henderson said he and others rescuing trapped neighbors found five bodies scattered in rubble Friday night outside what remained of his aunt's house in hard-hit Wayne County. Scattered twisters killed at least a dozen people in the state, authorities said.

"It's really disturbing for what happened to the people, the casualties last night," Henderson said Saturday, not far from the splintered home he said they rescued his aunt through a window of the only room left standing. Coroner Jim Akers of Butler County, Missouri, described the home where one man was killed as "just a debris field."

"The floor was upside down," he said. "We were walking on walls."

Six deaths in Mississippi; three die in Arkansas

In Mississippi, Gov. Tate Reeves announced that six people died and more than 200 were displaced after tornadoes sowed devastation across three counties. And in the northern part of the state, roads were inundated and some people were stranded by flood waters.

One of the deaths occurred in Covington County, where Seminary resident Traci Ladner said she watched a tornado knock down trees and power lines and destroy a house Saturday as she drove home from Ward's Restaurant.

The twister touched down briefly, traveled over Highway 49 and then went back up before making another quick descent, she said.

"I was crying. My legs were shaking. It was pretty scary," she said. □



**This is the Starbucks sign on Black Friday shoppers line at a Starbucks kiosk in the Walden Galleria in Buffalo, N.Y., Friday, Nov. 29, 2024.**

**Associated Press**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — A delivery driver has won \$50 million in a lawsuit after being seriously burned when

a Starbucks drink spilled in his lap at a California drive-through, court records show.

## California man wins \$50 million in lawsuit over burns from Starbucks tea

A Los Angeles County jury found Friday for Michael Garcia, who underwent skin grafts and other procedures on his genitals after a venti-sized tea drink spilled instantly after he collected it on Feb. 8, 2020. He has suffered permanent and life-changing disfigurement, according to his attorneys. Garcia's negligence lawsuit blamed his injuries on Starbucks, saying that an employee didn't wedge the scalding-hot tea firmly enough into a takeout tray. "This jury verdict is a critical step in holding Starbucks accountable for flagrant

disregard for customer safety and failure to accept responsibility," one of Garcia's attorneys, Nick Rowley, said in a statement. Starbucks said it sympathized with Garcia but planned to appeal.

"We disagree with the jury's decision that we were at fault for this incident and believe the damages awarded to be excessive," the Seattle-based coffee giant said in a statement, adding that it was "committed to the highest safety standards" in handling hot drinks.

U.S. eateries have faced

lawsuits before over customer burns.

In one famous 1990s case, a New Mexico jury awarded a woman nearly \$3 million in damages for burns she suffered while trying to pry the lid off a cup of coffee at a McDonald's drive-through. A judge later reduced the award, and the case ultimately was settled for an undisclosed sum under \$600,000.

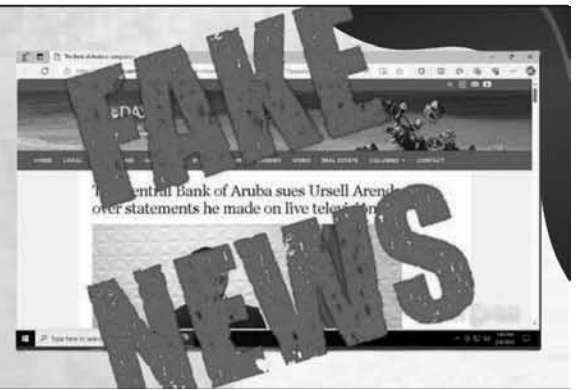
Juries have sided with restaurants at times, as in another 1990s case involving a child who tipped a cup of McDonald's coffee onto himself in Iowa. □



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## U.S. and Iran-backed Houthis both vow escalation after airstrikes target rebels in Yemen

By SAMY MAGDY  
Associated Press

**CAIRO (AP)** — The United States and Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen are both vowing escalation after the U.S. launched airstrikes to deter the rebels from attacking military and commercial vessels on one of the world's busiest shipping corridors. "We're not going to have these people controlling which ships can go through and which ones cannot. And so your question is, how long will this go on? It will go on until they no longer have the capability to do that," Secretary of State Marco Rubio told CBS on Sunday. He said these are not the one-off retaliation strikes the Biden administration carried out after Houthi attacks. President Donald Trump on Saturday vowed to use "overwhelming lethal force" until the Houthis cease their attacks, and warned that Tehran would be held "fully accountable" for their actions. The Houthis have repeatedly targeted international shipping in the Red Sea, sinking two vessels, in what they call acts of solidarity with the



Yemenis clean debris in front of their shops after a U.S. airstrikes in Sanaa, Yemen, Sunday, March 16, 2025.

Palestinians in Gaza, where Israel has been at war with Hamas, another Iranian ally. The attacks stopped when a Israel-Hamas ceasefire took hold in January — a day before Trump took office — but last week the Houthis said they would renew attacks against Israeli vessels after Israel cut off the flow of humanitarian aid to Gaza this month. There have been no Houthi attacks reported since then. The Houthi-run

Health Ministry said the overnight U.S. strikes killed at least 31 people, including women and children, and wounded over 100 in the capital of Sanaa and the northern province of Saada, the rebels' stronghold on the border with Saudi Arabia. The airstrikes were one of the most extensive attacks against the Houthis since the war in Gaza began in October 2023. Trump's national security adviser, Michael Waltz, on Sun-

day told ABC that the strikes "actually targeted multiple Houthi leaders and took them out." He didn't identify them or give evidence. Rubio said some Houthi facilities had been destroyed. The Houthis' political bureau has said the rebels will respond to the U.S. strikes and "meet escalation with escalation." The rebels on Sunday claimed to have targeted the USS Harry S. Truman car-

rier strike group with missiles and a drone, but two U.S. officials told The Associated Press they were not tracking anything. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations. The spokesperson for U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a statement called for "utmost restraint and a cessation of all military activities," while warning of the "grave risks" to the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation. Rubio said that over the past 18 months the Houthis had attacked the U.S. Navy "directly" 174 times and targeted commercial shipping 145 times using "guided precision anti-ship weaponry." The attacks sparked the most serious combat the U.S. Navy had seen since World War II. On Sunday, the head of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Gen. Hossein Salami, denied his country was involved in the Houthis' attacks, saying it "plays no role in setting the national or operational policies" of the militant groups it is allied with across the region, according to state-run TV. □

## At least 16 people killed after ordnance from Syrian civil war explodes in port city of Latakia

Associated Press

**DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)** — Ordnance from Syria's 13-year conflict exploded in the coastal city of Latakia, collapsing a building and killing more than a dozen people, the Syrian Civil Defense said Sunday. The paramedic group known as the White Helmets said it worked overnight, searching through debris and recovered 16 bodies, including five women and five children, and that 18 others

were injured. The group and residents said the explosion occurred in a metal scrap storage space on the ground floor of the four-story building. Elsewhere, the Syrian Defense Ministry late Sunday accused the Lebanese Hezbollah militant group of crossing the Lebanon-Syria border and killing three Syrian soldiers. Hezbollah denied any involvement in the killing that took place near northeastern Lebanon, where clashes between Syrian forces and

Lebanese clans happened last month. Local Lebanese media have reported Syrian shelling on the northeastern Lebanese border town of Al-Qasr. The United Nations said in February that about a hundred have been killed from exploding ordnance during the last 13 years, adding that since the ouster of Bashar Assad in December, over 1,400 unexploded devices across Syria have been safely disposed of and 138



In this photo provided by the Syrian Civil Defense White Helmets, members of their team search through the debris of a four-story building after an ordnance from Syria's 13-year conflict exploded in the coastal city of Latakia, Syria, early Sunday, March 16, 2025.

Associated Press

minefields and contaminated areas identified in Idleb,

Aleppo, Hama, Deir-ez-Zor and Lattakia. □



# Fire rips through overcrowded nightclub in North Macedonia, leaving dozens dead in panicked escape

By KONSTANTIN TESTORIDES and BORIS GRDANOSKI  
Associated Press

KOCANI, North Macedonia (AP) —

A massive fire tore through an overcrowded nightclub in North Macedonia on Sunday, killing 59 people and injuring 155 in a chaotic escape during a live concert. The tragedy focused national attention on corruption in the small Balkan country as authorities detained 15 people.

The death toll may rise further, with 20 of the injured remain in critical condition, according to Health Minister Arben Taravari. The government has declared seven days of national mourning.

The pre-dawn blaze in the eastern town of Kocani left mostly young people dead and injured due to burns, smoke inhalation and a stampede in the desperate effort to reach the building's single exit, officials said. People as young as 16 were among the casualties, they said.

Videos showed sparkling pyrotechnics on the stage hitting the ceiling followed by scenes of chaos inside the club, with young people running through the smoke as the musicians urged them to escape as quickly as possible.

"We even tried to get out through the bathroom, only to find bars (on the windows)," Marija Taseva, 19,



Police officers hold plastic bags on the site of a nightclub in the town of Kocani, North Macedonia, Sunday, March 16, 2025, following a massive fire in the nightclub early Sunday.

Associated Press

told The Associated Press, describing the fire that erupted after watching a local pop group at Club Pulse. "I somehow managed to get out. I fell down the stairs and they ran over me, trampled me. ... I barely stayed alive and could hardly breathe." She suffered an injury to her face.

The fire caused the roof of the single-story building to partially collapse, revealing the charred remains of wooden beams and debris. Police cordoned off the site and sent in evidence gathering teams in an operation also involving state

prosecutors. Interior Minister Panche Toshkovski said 15 people were detained for questioning after a preliminary inspection revealed the club was operating without a proper license. He said the number of people inside the club was at least double its official capacity of 250.

"We have grounds for suspicion that there is bribery and corruption in this case," he told reporters without elaborating.

Neighbors offer condolences and assistance

The fire is the worst tragedy in recent memory to befall the landlocked nation,

whose population is less than 2 million, and the latest in a slew of deadly nightclub fires around the world.

Condolences poured in from leaders around Europe as well as from the office of Pope Francis, who has been hospitalized for a month for double pneumonia.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also sent messages of support. "I wish those who were injured a speedy recovery. Ukraine mourns alongside our (North) Macedonian friends on this sad day," Zelenskyy wrote in

a post on X.

Health Ministry officials said the government had accepted offers of assistance from several neighboring countries, including Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Turkey, where preparations were being made to receive patients with life-threatening injuries. In the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki, three people with severe burns aged 25, 25 and 19 were being treated at a civilian hospital, with one undergoing surgery, health authorities said. Their conditions are critical.

'The most difficult day of my life' - PM

Throughout Sunday, relatives gathered in front of hospitals and city offices in Kocani, some 115 kilometers (72 miles) east of the capital, Skopje, begging authorities for more information. Resident Dragi Stojanov was informed that his 21-year-old son Tomce had died in the fire.

"He was my only child. I don't need my life anymore. ... 150 families have been devastated," he said. "Children burnt beyond recognition. There are corpses, just corpses inside (the club). ... And the bosses (of organized crime), just putting money into their pockets."

President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova visited burn victims at a hospital in Skopje and spoke to parents waiting outside. □



Ronen Bar, chief of Israel's domestic Shin Bet security agency, attends a ceremony marking Memorial Day for fallen soldiers of Israel's wars and victims of attacks at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl military cemetery, May 13, 2024.

Associated Press

By MELANIE LIDMAN

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Ne-

tanyahu announced Sunday he will seek to dismiss the head of the country's internal security service this week,

## Netanyahu says he will seek to dismiss the head of Israel's internal security service

following a power struggle over the Hamas attack that sparked the war in Gaza.

Netanyahu said in a statement the he has had "ongoing distrust" with Shin Bet Director Ronen Bar, and "this distrust has grown over time." The Shin Bet is responsible for monitoring Palestinian militant groups, and recently issued a report accepting responsibility for its failures around the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack. But it also criticized Netanyahu, saying failed government policies helped create the climate that led to it.

The tensions boiled over this weekend when Bar's predecessor, Nadav Argaman, said he would release sensitive information about Netanyahu if it is found that the prime minister had broken the law. Netanyahu accused Argaman of blackmail and filed a police complaint.

The Shin Bet did not have an immediate response to Netanyahu's announcement. Netanyahu has resisted calls for an official state commission of inquiry into the Oct. 7 attack and has tried to blame the failures on the army and security agencies.

In recent months, a number of senior security officials, including a defense minister and army chief, have been fired or forced to step down. Bar had been one of the few remaining senior security officials since the Oct. 7 attack to remain in office.

Netanyahu said removing Bar from his position would help Israel "achieve its war goals and prevent the next disaster."

The prime minister is expected to appoint a loyalist in his place, slowing any momentum for the commission of inquiry. □



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## Activities for Anthem and Flag Day



Tomorrow, March 18, 2025, Aruba will celebrate Anthem and Flag Day with various events across the island that families can enjoy. Among the scheduled activities are:

March 17, 2025

**Centro di Bario Brazil**  
(6:00 PM - 10:00 PM)

Anthem and Flag Celebration / Sports Activities

**Plaza Betico Croes**  
(7:30 PM - 10:30 PM)

Cultural Manifestation

March 18, 2025

**Plaza Betico Croes**  
(8:30 AM - 12:00 PM)

Protocol Ceremony

**National Library of Aruba**  
(9:00 AM - 2:00 PM)

Book Market, Food, and Music

**Washington Youth Center**  
(9:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

Celebrate March 18

**National Archaeological Museum of Aruba**  
(10:00 AM - 3:00 PM)

Anthem and Flag at Mana

**National Archives of Aruba**  
(10:00 AM - 6:00 PM)

Exhibition and National Festival

**Centro di Bario Savaneta**  
(10:00 AM - 6:00 PM)

Celebrating Our Culture, Music, and Delicious Food

**Papaya Ranch**  
(10:00 AM - 8:00 PM)

Criollo Bowling Tournament (Bolas)

**Centro di Bario Brazil**  
(11:00 AM - 3:00 PM)

Anthem and Flag Celebration – Food and Traditional Games

**Dam di Kas Ariba**  
(1:00 PM - 8:00 PM)

Traditional Games: Don Flip Racing Foundation

**Bushiri Karting Speedway**  
(2:00 PM - 10:00 PM)

Monster Motor Madness 2025

**Huchada**  
(7:00 AM - 2:00 PM)

Anthem and Flag: Traditional Cuisine



**Centro di Bario Lago Heights**  
(3:00 PM - 10:00 PM)

Anthem and Flag Celebration

**Renaissance Marketplace**  
(3:00 PM - 10:30 PM)

Celebrate Our Anthem and Flag

**Paseo Herencia**  
(6:00 PM - 9:00 PM)

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**infini**  
by Urvin Coetzee

f Infini Aruba  
www.infiniaruba.com  
J.E. Irausquin Blvd  
@ infiniaruba  
+297 699 3982  
reservations@infiniaruba.com



## Infini's new dining experience takes your senses on an exciting culinary tour around the island!



Infini's newly introduced menu this season is prepared to take your senses on an innovative gastronomic journey around Aruba. A chef-crafted, eight-course menu complete with locally-produced ingredients, paired with a wide selection of exquisite old-world wines, and an exciting first-of-its-kind fragrance collaboration invites you for a night you won't want to miss.

### The best of Aruba to your table

Come and experience the best of what Aruban cuisine has to offer through Infini's eight-course dining spectacle. Crafted beautifully by the Infini crew, Menu XII takes on an Asian-Caribbean twist inspired by Chef Urvin's roots, and highlights the collaboration between Infini and the 12-15 local producers who helped perfect his vision. From locally grown veggies and cured meat and fresh bread incorporated in the menu to even the handcrafted dinnerware, this gastronomic journey push-

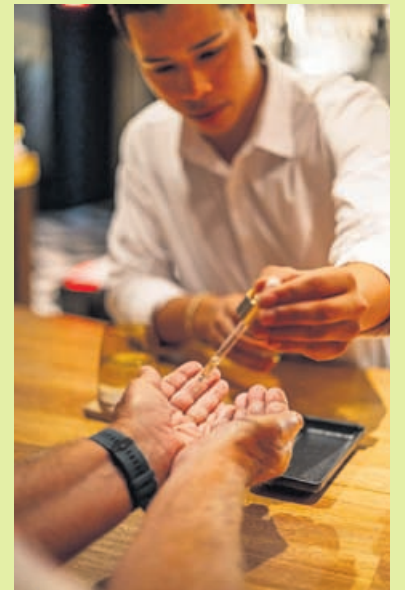
es the limit and sets a new standard for fine dining on the island, bringing the story of each local producer into the spotlight and taking the guests on a grand culinary tour of the island. Enjoy their superb menu with a wide selection of Old World wines from Spain, Portugal, France and even Lebanon.

### Infini x LOVEmade

Infini's innovative streak doesn't stop there. For the first time in the culinary world



of Aruba, Infini has collaborated with LOVEmade Aruba to create their signature fragrance, available only at Infini. Adding another layer of luxury to the fine dining experience, Infini pampers their guest with a luxurious and organic cleansing oil made from Cayena flower. This added service is included in the carefully-crafted dining course, inviting guests to be part of this exclusive and unique partnership.



### Reserve your experience today!

Infini invites you to discover the limitless possibilities of fine dining. Book your table now and be part of this exciting new chapter: call at +297 6993982 or book your reservations online at [reservations@infiniaruba.com](mailto:reservations@infiniaruba.com)



## Visit the island's hidden natural pools

**(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two "hidden" natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.**

### Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known "Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any

4x4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set! If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will

be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

### Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the

ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it's still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

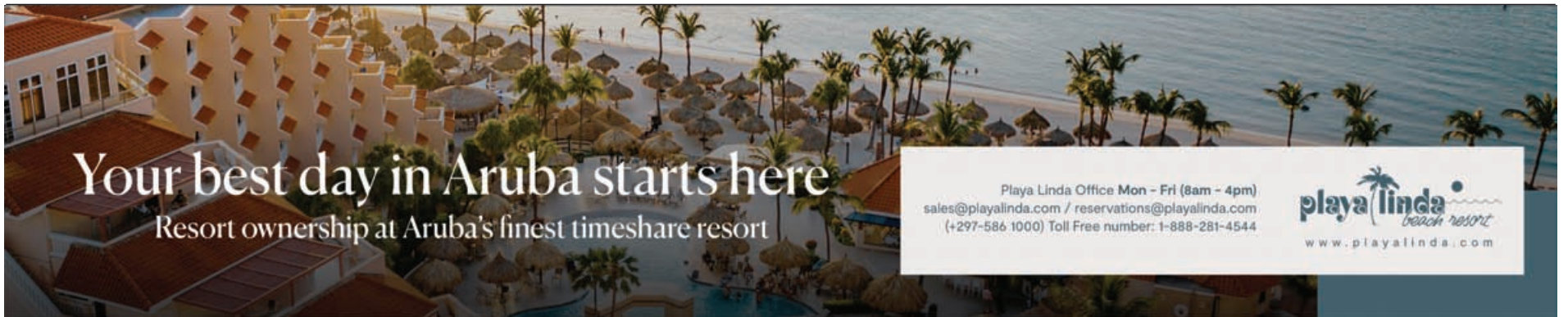
When you get there, maybe you won't be able to spot the pool immediately, because

you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you'll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder. □

**Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours**





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## Chef David Lizano Sarmiento brings a new flare to Caya House!



(Oranjestad)—Caya House is adding a new member to the family: Chef David Lizano Sarmiento! Born and bred in Peru, Chef David's passion for the culinary arts started from a very young age and inspired him to work with some of the greats. Now, he's excited to bring his expertise and passion to Caya!

For David, cooking isn't just a career; it's a passion rooted in family and tradition. Growing up in Peru, he began cooking to help his parents, but it was his mother who recognized his innate talent for creating

delicious food. She encouraged him to pursue his culinary dreams, and he hasn't looked back.

David's culinary journey took him to Nova Escuela and Cenfotur in Lima, where he refined his skills and deepened his understanding of Peruvian cuisine. He had the privilege of working at Madam Tusan, a restaurant by the internationally acclaimed Chef Gaston Acurio, a true inspiration in the culinary world. This experience instilled in him a commitment to quality and innovation.

Prior to joining the Caya team, David led the kitchens of two popular local restaurants as Executive Chef.



### Get a taste of what Chef David has to offer

Caya House is excited and proud to present some Caribbean Nikkei dishes on their new menu with the collaboration of Chef David on March 17. Here's a small preview of what Chef David offers his guests:

#### Beef Tataki Chino Latino

Potato and beets salad served with marinated tenderloin, pickled onions, piccalilli mayo, fried onions, cilantro, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, avocado and

a Maggi seasoning sauce vinaigrette

### Join Caya on their new adventure!

Make your reservation at +297-6993982 or reservations@caya.aw. Caya House is located at J.E. Irausquin Blvd 372, Noord, Aruba and is open Mondays through Sundays, 5:30 pm – 11:00 pm.

#### About Caya House

Founded in 2022, Caya House is built upon the foundation of a beautifully restored Aruban Cunucu House. Our goal was to preserve the essence of traditional architecture while creating a space where the rich flavors of Latin America and the Caribbean could be celebrated. □

## Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

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"Funchi Hasa" with Gouda cheese

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**THE RITZ-CARLTON**  
ARUBA

## Visit the island's popular cave sites!

(Oranjestad)—Among the endless sea of dark brown sand and cacti, there are two caves hidden in the outskirts of San Nicolas, in the north-eastern area of the island. These caves, The Quadirikiri cave and The Fontein Cave are open to visitors of the Arikok National Park, so if you ever decide to take an “off-road” tour in the park, be sure to visit these prehistoric caves...and be sure to bring a flashlight!

### Quadirikiri Cave

Known for its two chambers accompanied by a skylight, the Quadirikiri Cave is the most popular cave among locals and tourists, as it is easy to walk through and

provides great lighting for pictures.

As with all prehistoric or ancient sites, there is always a folk legend that adds to the lore and mystery of the site. The Quadirikiri cave is no different. The most well-known legend behind the cave could be considered as Aruba's first love story, as it tells the tale of the undying love between the chief's daughter and her beloved. As legend would have it, the chief disapproved of his daughter's choice of lover, as he thought him unworthy. Stubborn and filled with anger, the daughter refused to turn away her beloved.



So, the chief decided to lock her up in the Quadirikiri Cave, in hopes that she would soon calm down and turn away her lover. Her beloved, in turn, was locked away in the Tunnel of Love (Now known as the Huliba Cave).

for rituals and other spiritual ceremonies.

### The Huliba Cave/ Tunnel of Love

The Huliba Cave, formerly known as the Tunnel of Love, was once open to the public, and was the biggest and most accessible of all three caves. This cave had five chambers, including one that is heart-shaped. This cave had narrow stairs that led to long pathways deep into the cave, with a staircase leading to the exit on the other side. In one of the chambers, there used to be the carving of the Virgin Mary, put there for the protection of the cave.

However, the Huliba Cave has been permanently closed for a few years now, as a way to preserve the bat population that lives in the cave. These Long Tongue Fruit Bats and Insect Eater Bats are very important to the ecosystem of the island. Though this cave is no longer accessible to the public, it surely is interesting to learn more about the history of these caves and the Awarak tribes that resided or utilized them.

Through the pathways underneath the Tunnel of Love running up to the Quadirikiri cave, the two love birds found each other, and refused to let each other go. Because of their stubbornness, they both died in the Quadirikiri Cave, their ascending spirits burning two holes in the ceiling of the cave. This is why the cave has two holes through which sunlight passes through to illuminate the chamber.

Though there have been discoveries of Amerindian drawing on the wall, these have mostly been ruined by vandalism. However, the Fontein Cave further up north, provides a better glimpse in prehistoric Amerindian paintings.

### Fontein Cave

Longer than the Quadirikiri Cave, the Fontein Cave contains pathways that stretch to the limestone walls further down. Here is also where prehistoric drawings can be seen. Though this cave does not have its own legend, this was speculated to have been occupied—or at least used by prehistoric Arawak settlers on the island

Do note that these caves are very dark, humid, hot, and are inhabited by bats. Do wear comfortable clothing and shoes, as the pathways in these caves may be rough and bumpy, and don't forget to bring a flashlight!☐



Your beaches are so admirable,  
adorned with palm trees.  
Your shield and flag are the  
pride of us all.

## Happy Flag & Anthem Day

**ARUBA** ARUBA TOURISM AUTHORITY



## Best spots to view the sunset

(Oranjestad)—What can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset. Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

### California Light House

Of course, being one of the highest point easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House

hill not only offers a tremendous view of the sunset, but also a breath taking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

### Manchebo & Eagle Beach

Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the entire western

coast of the island starting from behind Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort up to the Amsterdam Manor roundabout. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing—it can only be described as an experience!\*

### Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to



be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just before you drive up the hill to the California Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacular canvas for the sun to create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple hue.

### Hooiberg Hill

These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in

and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on top the 587-step stairs and reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

### Casibari Rock Formation

If you're a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It's no Yosemite, but it does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back.

Editor's note: This spot may be my personal favorite, if you couldn't already tell... □



## Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Picuda", a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? This is an informative article that illustrate some fish and their names in Papiamentu, which the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, known as "Santa Rosa", wants to share and also obtain information from the public.

### Picuda, Sphyrna barracuda, Greater Barracuda

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is Sphyrna barracuda. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a so-called "ambush predator" that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white flesh in fish soup. In fish-



ing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names vary according to size.

### Description

The Picuda is a long fish, with a round body like a torpedo and silver in color with shiny black stripes. Below, that is, the belly, is whiter, while the top part is darker. Its snout is very pointed, and the lower jaw is longer than the upper one. Its

peduncle, where the body meets the tail, is thick, while the tail also forms a crescent but in this case one more "full" than that of mullet or conefish. This reflects the hunting style of the Picuda. It needs to be able to accelerate quickly when the prey gets close.

### In Aruba:

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is ed-

ible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore with a line or rod, or by jigging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions. □

Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.



## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 37 2011

1 Exploding stars #1 hit by Lady Gaga

6 Miser Marner 40 Follow as a result

11 Make blank 41 Fry lightly

12 Move with stealth 42 Most new drivers

13 1977 Top 10 hit by Aerosmith 43 Promoted

15 Seine summer

16 Light metal

17 Shark feature

18 Passes on, as a story

20 Snacked

21 Horse healer

22 "— bien!"

23 More rational

26 Garden pests

27 A party to

28 Sheep sound

29 Lawn coating

30 Speaks brusquely to

34 Angry rock

35 Belief, in brief

36 Freud topic

COSMO SEMI  
ASIAN AMEND  
VALET SONAR  
EGO RAH TWO  
DESTINATION  
METAL SENDS  
ITEM BEE  
DESPERATION  
ART VOW SUE  
IN AWE ALANS  
RATON REACT  
LENT DICES

8 Airline enticement

9 Looked for

10 Cunning

14 Sword part

19 Smooth

22 Ship wood

23 Secondary gambling action

24 Showy flower

25 Unchanged

26 Balmy

28 Wild party

30 Quick snacks

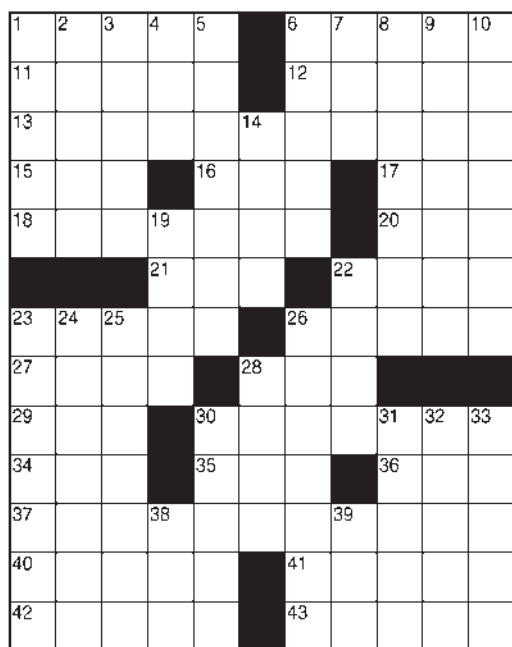
31 Conclude successfully

32 Banded quartz

33 Trifled

38 Sister, of sorts

39 Utter



3-19

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-19 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

B O D F P Q F B P Z Y H D C ' B I Z X U J

B Z X F P Q , " W C Y ' B O Z D Y X ! "

— D U G F P I F W W F Z L B

**Cryptoquote:** FORGIVE OTHERS,  
NOT BECAUSE THEY DESERVE FORGIVENESS,  
BUT BECAUSE YOU DESERVE PEACE. —  
JONATHAN LOCKWOOD HUIE

## Cruise ship Schedule: March 15 - 21 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
SAT	15	EMERALD PRINCESS EXPLORER OF THE SEAS STAR PRIDE	09.00 16.30 06.00	22.00 **** 18.00	B C F	1 1 1
SUN	16	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS - Dept. SILVER MOON	**** 08.00	17.00 23.00	C B	- 1
MON	17	AIDAPERLA RESILIENT LADY NORWEGIAN GEM	08.00 09.00 07.00	18.00 23.59 17.00	B C I	1 1 1
TUE	18	MSC DIVINA CARNIVAL HORIZON NORWEGIAN VIVA	08.00 09.00 13.00	22.00 23.00 21.00	B C I	1 1 1
WED	19	CELEBRITY REFLECTION	10.30	23.00	C	1
THU	20	WIND STAR ROTTERDAM	10.00 08.00	23.00 17.00	G C	1 1
FRI	21	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	11.30	20.30	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

### Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Drinking water

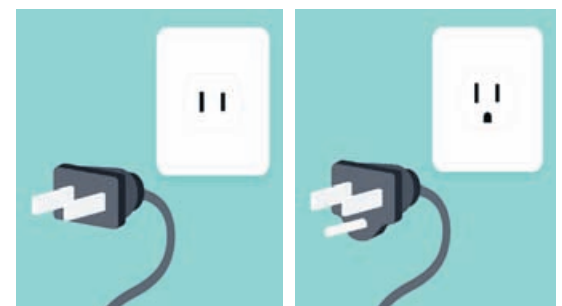
The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.





# Make room Starbucks and McDonald's. China's Mixue and other brands win fans in Southeast Asia

By KANIS LEUNG, VINCENT THIAN and TIAN MACLEOD JI  
Associated Press

**HONG KONG (AP)** — Chinese food and beverage brands are gaining ground across Southeast Asia, offering alternatives to big name American chains and expanding Beijing's commercial and cultural influence in neighboring economies.

The Chinese beverage giant Mixue Group has become the world's largest F&B chain by number of outlets, overtaking Starbucks and McDonald's.

The company, whose brand name Mixue Bingcheng means "Honey Snow Ice City," in Chinese, is capitalizing on the region-wide sweet tooth with affordable offerings of ice cream, coffee and bubble tea drinks. "Even on social media like TikTok and others, there is a joke that any empty shop-house would soon turn into a Mixue store," Rahma Yuliana said, referring to a popular saying in Indonesia, where Mixue has more than 2,600 outlets.

The single mother, who runs an online business, takes her daughter for afterschool treats that won't drain her wallet, such as a cup of brown sugar milk tea that costs \$1.10, about one-third cheaper than similar offerings by rival Taiwanese tea chain Chatime. An ice cream sells for as little as 50 cents, undercutting McDonald's.



Customer service assistant Saleha Baharuddin enjoys Mixue after finishing work at a shopping outlet in Sepang, Malaysia, Tuesday, Feb 25, 2025.

Associated Press

As of September, Mixue Group had over 45,000 stores carrying its Mixue tea drinks, ice creams and Lucky Cup coffee products, more than the store numbers of Starbucks and McDonald's, industry analysts reported. About 40,000 of those are in China.

More broadly, by December, Chinese F&B brands had opened over 6,100 outlets in Southeast Asia, Singapore-headquartered research firm Momentum Works reported. India and Vietnam account for roughly two-thirds, while there are relatively more Chinese brands in Singapore and Malaysia, which have sizable Chinese-speaking populations.

Nearly all of Mixue's stores are franchises that the company supplies with ingredients for drinks like Creamy Mango Boba, Mango Oats

Jasmine Tea and Coconut Jelly Milk Tea.

Apart from Mixue, other market stars include hotpot giant Haidilao, Fish With You

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sauerkraut fish restaurants, and well-known beverage brands such as Luckin Coffee, Heytea and Chagee. Mixue's shares have doubled from their IPO price since their March 3 trading debut in Hong Kong.

Momentum Works CEO Jijiang Li said Chinese businesses are actively seeking new growth in Southeast Asia after facing fierce competition in their home market. □



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2 Bed WK 7 and 14 - all views

## GOLD SEASON

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2 Bed Ocean view \$14,500  
2 Bed Garden view \$13,000  
3 Bed Ocean view \$30,000

## Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

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2 Bed Ocean view \$29,000  
1 Bed Ocean front \$23,000  
1 Bed Ocean View \$17,000

## GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$22,500  
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1 Bed Oceanfront \$13,000  
1 Bed Ocean View \$11,500

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Sta. Cruz	527 2900
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Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



# March Madness brackets have Auburn as the overall No. 1 followed by Duke, Houston, Florida

By **EDDIE PELLIS**  
AP National Writer

Auburn is the top overall seed in the NCAA Tournament, with Duke, Houston and Florida joining the Tigers on the No. 1 line in the March Madness brackets released Sunday. The NCAA selection committee favored the regular-season champs of the record-setting Southeastern Conference despite three losses in their last four games, along with a loss to Duke back in December. The Tigers (28-5) and Gators were two of the 14 SEC teams to make the field, which are the most for a conference in the history of the tournament. It's Florida, which captured the SEC tournament by winning three games with an average margin of 15 points, that opens as a slight favorite to win it all at the Final Four in San Antonio on April 5 and 7, according to BetMGM Sportsbook.

In something of a surprise, both North Carolina and Texas slid in off the bubble, while Indiana, West Virginia and Boise State did not. The 68-team bracket starts whittling down on Tuesday with preliminary games, and the main draw kicks off on Thursday and Friday, with 32 games at eight sites around the country.

A tribute, then a bracket with plenty to talk about. The selection show began with a heartfelt tribute to the late Greg Gumbel, the CBS stal-



**Auburn guard Miles Kelly (13) reacts to play against Tennessee during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in the semifinal round of the Southeastern Conference tournament, Saturday, March 15, 2025, in Nashville, Tenn.**

Associated Press

wart who oversaw the bracket unveiling for decades. Then, just as Gumbel would have preferred, it was about the basketball — and this time there was plenty to talk about. North Carolina looked all but out, a victim of a 1-12 record against so-called Quad 1 opponents and part of a conference (ACC) teetering on the verge of a historically bad season. But the Tar Heels were the last team in, thanks maybe to a strong nonconference slate, while Texas was also in — its seven wins against Quad 1 teams outweighing its overall 15 losses.

The Carolina inclusion was

certain to fuel some conspiracy theories. The chair of the selection committee was Tar Heels athletic director Bubba Cunningham, who said rules state he cannot be part of any debate about his own team.

"As vice-chair, I managed all the conversations we had about North Carolina, and we had quite a few," said Sun Belt Conference commissioner Keith Gill, who, in an unusual move, was brought onto the CBS bracket show to discuss Carolina.

The SEC's 14 teams were followed by the Big Ten with eight and Big 12 with seven. The

ACC, meanwhile, ended up with four teams, barely avoiding its worst showing since 2000, back when the conference was half the size it is now.

Even in a down cycle, the ACC has Duke, and Duke has arguably the best player in the country in freshman Cooper Flagg, a 19-point, 7.5-rebound-a-game freshman whose ankle injury, the school says, will not keep him out of March Madness.

Bracket gives Pitino and St. John's a long and interesting road

Elsewhere in the bracket, coach Rick Pitino leads his

unprecedented sixth program into the tournament, and what a road he would have to take to get to the Final Four.

First, he will travel to Providence, the same building where the coach led the Friars to a surprise Final Four trip back in 1987, to lead St. John's in a first-round game against Omaha. Pitino's second game could come against Arkansas and John Calipari in what would be a titanic matchup between two of the game's biggest coaching names.

Another coaching icon, Tom Izzo, leads Michigan State to its 27th straight tournament. The Spartans are seeded second and will face America East champion Bryant in its opener.

And Gonzaga is in for the 26th time, though extending its streak of making the second weekend to 10 years will be tough. The Bulldogs, after an "off" year in which they still won the West Coast Conference, are seeded eighth and could face Houston in the second round.

SEC regular season repeat in store?

The biggest quirks in this year's bracket all involved the SEC: --There are three potential second-round games between SEC teams — the sort of matchups the committee is asked to avoid, but that became inevitable with 14 of its teams in the bracket. □



**Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, holds an umbrella on the 11th green during the final round of The Players Championship golf tournament Sunday, March 16, 2025, in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.**

Associated Press

By **DOUG FERGUSON**  
AP Golf Writer  
PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla.

(AP) — Rory McIlroy built a three-shot lead on the back nine at The Players

## Rory McIlroy and J.J. Spaun tie at The Players Championship to set up Monday playoff

Championship and unheralded J.J. Spaun didn't blink. They wound up tied after a four-hour rain delay and had to return Monday for a playoff to decide who wins the richest tournament in golf.

McIlroy needed two putts from 75 feet on the par-4 18th for a 4-under 68. All he could do was wait in the scoring area on Spaun, who had caught up with a marvelous chip on the par-5 16th and stood over a 30-foot putt for the win.

It stopped inches short, giving Spaun a 72 to match

McIlroy at 12-under 276.

They did well to finish in regulation before sunset. The Players has a three-hole aggregate playoff on the most dynamic holes on the TPC Sawgrass — the par-5 16th, the island green on the par-3 17th and the daunting par-4 closing hole.

It will be the first Monday finish since Cameron Smith won in 2022 and the first playoff at The Players since Rickie Fowler won 10 years ago.

Tom Hoge had to wait out the four-hole delay with

a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th. He returned and missed, posting a 66 and wound up two shots behind. Lucas Glover rallied from a rough front nine for a 71 and joined Hoge and Akshay Bhatia (70).

Bud Cauley, whose thought his career was over from crushing injuries in a 2018 car crash in Ohio, fell back early and steadied himself for a 74. He tied for sixth, giving him more than enough points to fulfill his medical exemption for the rest of the year. □



# Teenager Mirra Andreeva beats No. 1-ranked Aryna Sabalenka to win the Indian Wells title

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. (AP) — Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva came back to beat No. 1-ranked Aryna Sabalenka 2-6, 6-4, 6-3 in the BNP Paribas Open on Sunday to make the 17-year-old the tournament's youngest champion since Serena Williams in 1999.

The 11th-ranked Andreeva improved to 19-3 this season — the most wins by a woman on tour — and collected her second Masters 1000 title of 2025. The other came at Dubai in February, which earned her a top-10 ranking for the first time. Andreeva will return to that upper tier in Monday's WTA rankings. Revisiting a theme from her Dubai victory speech that referred to something rapper Snoop Dogg said when he received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Andreeva told Sunday's crowd: "I would again like to thank myself for fighting until the end and for always believing in me and for never quitting." "I tried to run like a rabbit today," Andreeva continued, praising the way Sabalenka hit speedy shots. "It was really hard to just keep up, so I just tried my best and that's why I would thank myself, because I think I played a little part (in the win), also." In the men's final later Sunday, the 12th-seeded Holger Rune of Denmark faced 13th-seeded Jack Draper of Britain. Draper upset two-time defending champion Carlos Alcaraz in the semifinals on Saturday.

When she dropped the first set against three-time Grand Slam title winner Sabalenka, Andreeva put her body into the windup after grabbing a ball, then angrily smacked it toward the stands.

Andreeva — wearing training tape on her right shoulder — played much better in the second set, particularly on serve, while compiling a 17-7 edge in winners. Soon enough, that set belonged to her when she hit an ace to hold at love for the first time all day.

In the third set, the teenager got started in the best way possible, breaking the big-serving Sabalenka at love. Andreeva took a 1-0 lead

in the third with a too-strong passing shot that Sabalenka, a 26-year-old from Belarus, could barely even get her racket on. Andreeva ended the match with one last forehand winner, then dropped to her knees and covered her face with both hands. This was her fifth consecutive victory over a top-10 opponent, and Andreeva is now 9-5 against players ranked that high since the start of 2024. That includes two victories each over Sabalenka and No. 2 Iga Swiatek, the five-time major champion who lost to Andreeva in the semifinals at Indian Wells.

"Congrats on an incredible run," Sabalenka said during the trophy ceremony. "Great tournament. Great tennis." Andreeva is the first player

under age 18 to beat the women ranked No. 1 and No. 2 at the same WTA tournament since Williams defeated Lindsay Davenport and Martina Hingis at the 1999 U.S. Open.

She is also the youngest to win a WTA trophy by defeating the woman ranked No. 1 in a final since Maria Sharapova beat Davenport at Tokyo in 2005.

Afterward, Andreeva joked about her prematch behavior with her coach, 1994 Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez.

"I know I was, as you like to say, a little brat, a little bit, in the morning," Andreeva said. "That's because I was super nervous. I'm sorry for that." Sabalenka also lost the 2023 final in the California des-



Mirra Andreeva, of Russia, holds the winner's trophy at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament Sunday, March 16, 2025, in Indian Wells, Calif.

Associated Press

ert and made light of that on Sunday when she was handed her glass hardware for being the runner-up — a similar but much smaller version of what the champion

receives. "I have a love-hate relationship with this place," Sabalenka said. "I'll just put this trophy on top of another one and pretend it's the trophy for winning." □



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### Culinary Voyage

Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the mouthwatering creamy Garlic Tarragon Shrimp. You can also opt for a classic

French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.



### Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

### Live entertainment

Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

### Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.

### Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



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