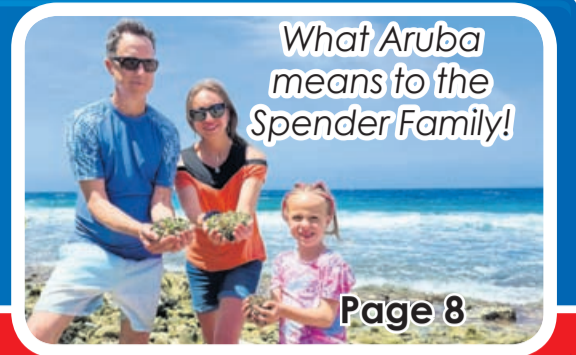


# ARUBA TODAY

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Aruba's ONLY English Vacation Newspaper

## Birds of Aruba



Page 7

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## FDA takes decisive steps toward phasing out animal testing

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is officially celebrating a monumental first-year milestone in its historic roadmap to phase out traditional animal testing requirements. By aggressively clearing bureaucratic pathways for cutting-edge, human-relevant science, the agency has successfully ushered in a new era of highly compassionate and scientifically superior medicine.

The sweeping regulatory evolution, which gained major velocity following the passage of the FDA Modernization Act 2.0, marks the formal dissolution of a rigid 1938 mandate that required pharmaceutical companies to test all new treatments on animals before launching human clinical trials. Today, American laboratory spaces are rapidly shifting away from default animal models and embracing an inspiring future built on advanced biotech innovation.

### A bold leap forward for humane science

The FDA officially achieved its first-year benchmarks for its structural Roadmap to Reducing Animal Testing in Preclinical Safety Studies. The detailed strategy prioritizes what scientists call New Approach Methodologies (NAMs)—a sophisti-



The seals of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are seen during a news conference on January 9, 2026, in Los Angeles, California.

cated toolkit of non-animal alternatives that includes microfluidic organ-chips, sophisticated artificial intelligence modeling, and lab-grown human cellular systems.

To smooth the transition, the FDA released detailed regulatory guidance establishing exact validation expectations for biotech companies. The new framework allows medical developers to integrate human-centric data into their trial applications confidently. It provides clear

rules on how non-animal testing can satisfy safety requirements.

"This advances our deep commitment to replace animal testing with human-relevant, scientifically rigorous methods," stated Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in an agency briefing. "Clear validation expectations will help these highly modern tools earn regulatory confidence and speed safer, more effective therapies straight to patients who need them."

Unlocking the power of human-on-a-chip technology For decades, scientists have recognized that animal biologies do not always mirror human biological systems accurately. A drug that appears safe in a laboratory animal might fail spectacularly or cause unexpected side effects when introduced to human biology. The FDA's structural shift addresses this challenge directly by encouraging the implementation of organ-on-a-chip technology.

These remarkable micro-

chips are about the size of a standard computer memory stick. They feature microfluidic channels lined with living human cells that replicate the precise physiological functions, blood flow, and complex cellular responses of real human organs, such as hearts, lungs, or livers.

By running new chemical formulations through these microchips, pharmaceutical researchers can watch exactly how a drug affects a simulated human body in real time. This approach offers a far more accurate window into true human toxicity than traditional animal models ever could.

Alongside these physical chips, massive jumps in computing power have allowed researchers to harness advanced AI-driven toxicity models. These computer simulations utilize vast historical datasets to predict instantly how a chemical compound will interact with human tissues. This digital pre-screening method lets researchers filter out toxic formulations long before any physical trials even take place.

### Good for animals, patients, and consumers

The societal benefits of this scientific transition extend far beyond lab walls. □

## Stuffed toys in U.S. capital symbolize displaced Ukrainian children

### Washington, United States

In the heart of the U.S. capital, a fence stands adorned with 20,000 teddy bears to

represent the Ukrainian children who, according to Kyiv, have been abducted by invading Russia, as war

rages on.

Activists held a gathering of U.S. lawmakers on Thursday at the somber display located a stone's throw from the Capitol, with a simple plea: "Bring Them Home."

"When you see the scale... you then start to understand how terrifying this is, and that all this time, while we are waiting for some kind of negotiations, there is children's life at stake," said Mariia Hlyten, a 24-year-old Ukrainian activist.

"They have to be returned immediately, as soon as possible."

Congressmen Richard Blumenthal, Jamie Raskin and

Michael McCaul took turns speaking about the plight of Ukraine's missing children at Thursday's event, coordinated by Razom for Ukraine in partnership with the American Coalition for Ukraine.

"What Vladimir Putin is doing here is not trying to take territory alone. He's not trying to defeat a nation alone," Blumenthal, a Senate Democrat, said.

The Russian leader is "trying to destroy the people, that is the purpose of abducting children, changing their names, re-education. Killing their identity, if not the children themselves making

sure that they never grow up speaking their own language, knowing their own religion and culture," Blumenthal added.

Democrat Jamie Raskin called Putin's actions "a blatant violation" of human rights, international humanitarian law and the laws of war.

"It's a war crime and if it's done intentionally... it is part of the proof of genocide," Raskin said.

Hlyten's relative, fellow Ukrainian Arkady Dolina, stood nearby with a large blue and yellow flag draped over his shoulders at the event. □



A fence featuring 20,000 stuffed teddy bears installed by Razom for Ukraine in partnership with the American Coalition for Ukraine, in which organizers say each represents a Ukrainian child abducted by Russia since the start of the war, is seen on the National Mall in Washington, DC, on April 23, 2026.

# Climate risks fuel insurance costs, squeezing U.S. households even inland

## Flat Rock, United States

After Tony Dunn lost his home in a California wild-fire, he moved to mountainous North Carolina to avoid more climate disasters. But his neighborhood was devastated in a hurricane six years later and insurance costs are climbing. He is among a growing number of US homeowners feeling the pinch from insurance as disasters linked to climate change reach them more frequently, even away from the coast. Dunn, 69, counts himself as lucky that his new home was not damaged in Hurricane Helene as his neighborhood was wrecked.

But that has not stopped his homeowners' insurance premiums from surging almost 30 percent to nearly \$4,400 a year since Helene in 2024.

"It was a bit of a shock when we got the insurance bill last year," Dunn told AFP.

He worries about further increases but said: "As much as it costs, you don't want to be without insurance."

After he and his wife lost their home in the 2018 California Camp Fire, which claimed 85 lives, insurance payouts helped them rebuild their lives.

While coastal states like Florida have tended to



Homes under construction in Marshall, North Carolina, on April 9, 2026.

face the worst of price hikes, inland areas have also seen costs rise in recent years following hail storms, wind damage and other disasters.

Climate change is enhancing conditions conducive to the most powerful hurricanes and it intensified Helene, a study by the World Weather Attribution scientists network found in 2024.

In Henderson County, where Dunn lives, homeowners paid an average of \$1,979 for insurance in 2024, an 86-percent surge from 2018.

Nationally, rates skyrocketed 58 percent over the

same period, according to researchers Benjamin Keys and Philip Mulder, who led a study released last year. The hit to premiums tend to be larger in areas facing growing climate risk.

Dunn worries about people who forgo insurance coverage as costs rise.

"They're going to have nothing," he said. "Something needs to be done."

### - 'A shock' -

Inland states like Iowa and Nebraska have also seen sharp cost hikes as climate risks mount.

Rates in Nebraska jumped 20 percent between 2023

and 2025, while those of hail-prone Iowa were up 54 percent, according to Insurify.

A 2025 working paper involving researchers from Columbia Business School, Harvard Business School and others found the average U.S. household "underinsured at mortgage origination, with only 70 percent of the rebuilding costs covered by the insurance contract."

"We are increasingly inching towards a situation where insurers would need to charge much higher prices because climate risk is going up," said Ishita Sen,

one of the researchers behind the paper.

But households' willingness are "not catching up," partly due to financial constraints.

Dee Dee Buckner in Marshall, North Carolina, told AFP she has considered doing away with homeowners' insurance.

"If they go up any higher, I can't," said the 60-year-old.

Buckner lost her home during Helene when the French Broad River swelled and flooded downtown Marshall with over 12 feet (3.7 meters) of water.

"There's been rain from hurricanes that's come in here before, but nothing of this magnitude ever. It was just a shock to everyone," she said.

### - 'Climate epiphany' -

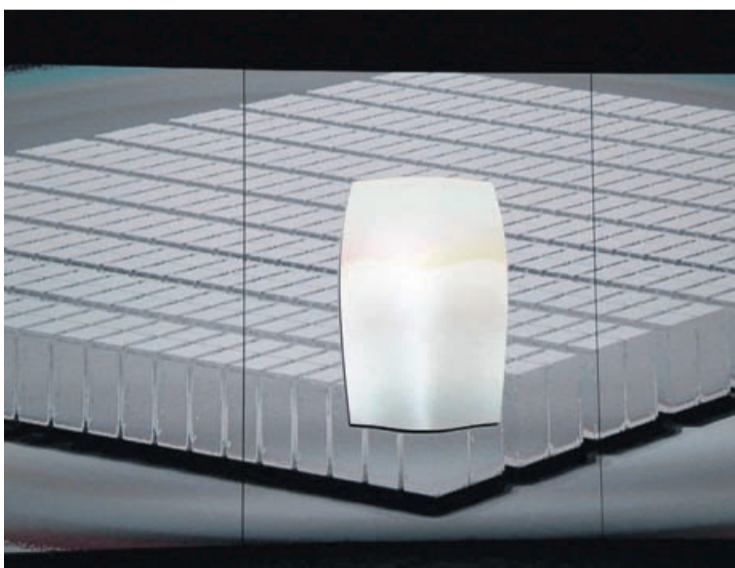
Since Helene, Buckner said she could only afford a "cheap little policy" for homeowners' insurance.

But she worries it will not cover much loss if disaster struck again.

Her flood insurance -- which is separate now costs \$600 more annually and is up to more than \$1,700.

Most U.S. homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage, meaning households end up buying a separate policy if they face flood risks. □

## United States leads global surge in grid battery capacity



A graphic showing new batteries is shown onstage as Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk unveils large utility scale home batteries at the Tesla Design Studio in Hawthorne, California, April 30, 2015

The United States is spearheading a monumental global energy shift, driving an unprecedented surge in large-scale grid battery capacity. Newly released international energy tracking data confirms that the installation of massive, utility-scale batteries grew by a staggering 48% over the past year, transforming how nations manage and distribute clean electricity.

At the center of this historic boom is the United States, which currently accounts for a commanding 16% of the world's total grid battery expansion. This rapid infrastructure growth represents a vital triumph for environmental sustainability, public infrastructure resilience, and the economic accessibility of renewable energy.

### A historic drop in production costs

The primary driver behind this rapid infrastructure buildout is a dramatic shift in

market economics. Industry analysts report that the cost of lithium-ion grid batteries has plummeted by 90% over the last decade, with a substantial portion of that drop occurring over the past few years.

What was once considered an expensive, niche technology reserved for localized pilot programs has rapidly evolved into the most cost-effective solution for modernizing the national power grid.

This drastic reduction in manufacturing costs has allowed American energy providers, municipalities, and private developers to invest heavily in massive energy storage farms. These sprawling facilities, often featuring hundreds of shipping-container-sized battery packs, are quietly revolutionizing the American landscape from California to Texas and across the East Coast. □

## On key: Leo Woodall finds right notes in 'Tuner'

**Los Angeles, United States**

When Leo Woodall first read the script for "Tuner" the dramatic debut from Oscar-winning documentary director Daniel Roher he couldn't wait to start filming.

The movie, which debuted this week in the United States, is a blend of romance, drama, and thriller that gave the 29-year-old rising star a dream role.

"I just thought it was a gift of a part for an actor, and I just immediately wanted to start work on it," he told AFP.

"Tuner" follows Niki (Woodall), a former piano prodigy forced to abandon music after developing hyperacusis an auditory condition that leaves him incredibly sensitive to sound.

His life now follows a monotonous routine as an apprentice to piano tuner Harry, a father figure and charismatic chatterbox played by Dustin Hoffman. Alone on a tuning job one evening in a wealthy house, Nikki meets a gang of thieves who discover his incredible hearing means he can crack safes.



Leo Woodall attends the "Tuner" New York Premiere at AMC Lincoln Square 13 on May 20, 2026 in New York City.

What starts out as a side-earner quickly degenerates, and Niki is thrust into dangerous situations that jeopardise his burgeoning relationship with a gifted composition student, played by Havana Rose Liu.

"I just knew it was a film that I would really enjoy," Woodall said. "It's the kind of film that I love, and there's so

much variety."

To get under Niki's skin, Woodall practised the piano for months an endeavor that not only taught him discipline but also brought him closer to an instrument he had always felt drawn to.

"It was challenging and stressful, but it was also a beautiful opportunity," said "The White Lotus" star.

"One of the privileges of

doing what actors do, is you learn skills that you wouldn't otherwise."

Under the direction of Roher who won an Academy Award for "Navalny" about the late Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny Woodall and Hoffman move from piano to piano with an undeniable chemistry.

"We just both understood

our characters, and understood our dynamic, and understood how they would communicate with each other," he said.

"I think ultimately Daniel just kind of wanted to roll the camera, and Dustin and me would just hang out," added the young actor, who praised the lightness of spirit of the 88-year-old Hoffman.

"He makes everything feel even more alive."

### — Sound —

Part of what makes "Tuner" work is Woodall's ability to get the audience to understand Niki's struggles with his hypersensitive hearing. He was aided in no small part by Johnnie Burn, the film's sound designer, who himself suffered from the condition for months following a domestic accident at the age of 19.

Burn who won an Oscar for his work on the war drama "The Zone of Interest" approached the film as if it were a musical composition.

"When they (Woodall and Hoffman) walk down the street in Manhattan, the birds sing a little melody," he said, adding that he wanted the viewer to be

## 'Bohemian Rhapsody' star Malek says has Freddie Mercury 'in soul'

**Cannes, France**

Egyptian-American actor Rami Malek, who starred as Freddie Mercury in the blockbuster biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody", said

Wednesday he had the Queen star "in my soul" as he prepared to hit screens in a new musical role.

The 45-year-old is the lead in "The Man I Love" by U.S.

director Ira Sachs about a fictional gay artist with AIDS in New York, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival on Wednesday.

"I think Freddie Mercury will help me for the rest of my life," Malek told AFP and a small group of journalists.

"Freddie is someone I never want to get rid of. He resides somewhere in my soul, and I hope he keeps advising me throughout my life," he added of the late rocker he played in the 2018 film, who died of complications of AIDS in 1991.

He wondered about the career risks of accepting another musical role in

"The Man I Love", which is competing for the best picture prize in Cannes.

"When I first read the script, I wondered if it was too similar. But it's a different world, a different energy, so I took the plunge," he said.

The film follows performer Jimmy George as he moves through the underground New York music scene of the late 1980s at the height of the AIDS epidemic.

Sachs, 60, a key figure in American independent cinema, delved into his own memories to recreate the New York that was both hit hard by AIDS and driven by sexual and celebratory energy. □

able to understand that without consciously noticing it.

To make the audience perceive the world as Niki does, the sound designer played with volume to demonstrate how his hearing fluctuates.

The advantage of working on a story of this kind, Burn noted, is that sound elicits a quicker reaction than visuals.

"You believe sound more," he said. "If you have pictures say one thing, sounds say another, then the sound is the thing that you trust."

"So it can be enormously powerful to have a film that relies heavily on sound for its story, because you believe it." □



U.S. director Ira Sachs (L) and US actor Rami Malek attend a press conference for the film "The Man I Love" at the 79th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France

## The Asian workers keeping Greenland in business

### Ilulissat, Denmark

Marinel Garciano dislikes winter, and that's tough when it lasts nine months in Ilulissat, Greenland. But she has no regrets about leaving the Philippines to give her children opportunities. Her family is among the roughly 1,200 Filipinos living on the vast Arctic island of 57,000 inhabitants, the largest foreign diaspora in the Danish autonomous territory.

"We're just looking for a greener pasture," smiled the 38-year-old, her eyes stealing a glance outside the window.

But behind the glass there was no greenery -- just the pristine white of a blizzard enveloping the streets of Ilulissat, north of the Arctic Circle, in the icy month of April.

### - 'Teleported' -

Marinel was taking a break at the Nuka cafe where her husband works, flashing a contagious smile despite being tired from work, her long dark hair falling down her back.

In 2012, Owie Garciano left the lush landscapes of the Visayas and headed to Greenland for a job as a cook.

Marinel and their three children joined him in 2021, amid a tourism boom in the



Workers from Asia work in the kitchen of a prestigious restaurant in Ilulissat, Greenland, on March 19, 2026.

town known for its icebergs. "It was like I had teleported," Marinel recalled. "From the tropical forest to here."

At first she worked in a warehouse, eventually landing a job as a receptionist.

Her 15-year-old daughter sometimes helps her, while her eldest son, 18, works as a kitchen hand in a restaurant.

The Garcianos are often tired from working so much, but it's for their future: Marinel invests "every penny" in

real estate back home to give her children a better life.

"I want my kids to not grow up like me. You want to offer them what you didn't have," she said.

In between orders, Owie bounced out of the kitchen, gave her a quick kiss, then disappeared again, leaving behind an odour of fried food.

Since they never know how long their visas will be renewed for, they don't want to waste any time in Green-

land.

Marinel keeps meticulous accounts, watching the children's spending closely, even going so far as to confiscate their money "for their future".

"In any case, it's too cold to go out and have fun," she said. "And if you drink, you just end up hungover and broke."

She squirmed on the red vinyl seat.

"I don't know... maybe I'm crazy," she laughed.

The next morning, she helped some Filipino friends

clean the town's new airport, which is set to open in October.

### - Labour shortage -

At dawn, life at the Best Western hotel begins to stir. A Thai chambermaid disappears behind a flurry of sheets, a Filipino cook behind a burst of flame.

Here, a quarter of the staff is foreign.

"We want to hire locals, but it's hard," admitted manager Arnarissoq Moller.

"I don't know how we could maintain our high-quality service" without the guest workers, he said.

A town of 5,000 inhabitants, Ilulissat has about 50,000 visitors annually.

Tourism is growing rapidly but Greenland, whose population is in decline, has a labour shortage.

According to Greenland's employers' association, five to six percent of workers on the island are Asian, drawn by the tourism sector.

Their presence is needed, but sometimes misunderstood.

Marinel said she senses it sometimes, in lingering looks and harsh words: "Go home! Go home!"

"Like in any country," she said. "We have to learn the language, and adapt to the culture... but it's not that easy." □

## Sweden hits smoke-free goal of under 5% daily smokers: report

### Stockholm, Sweden

Sweden met its target of becoming smoke-free in 2025 with less than five percent of the population smoking cigarettes daily, though a quarter of the population still used nicotine daily in some form, such as vapes and snus, a report showed Monday.

The number of daily smokers fell from 16 to 4.8 percent between 2003 and 2025, according to the report published by the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs (CAN).

A country is considered smoke-free when less than five percent of its population are daily smokers.

A report by Sweden's Pub-

lic Health Agency in 2024 put the number at 5.4 percent. Its next survey was to be conducted sometime in 2026.

According to the CAN report, women aged 50-84 were the largest group of daily cigarette smokers, at six percent.

Sweden's success in reducing cigarette smoking has largely been attributed to the widespread use of snus, or moist snuff, which is placed under the upper lip either in pouches or loose. It can be made with tobacco or without, with the latter known as white snus which is often made with sweet flavourings that appeal to younger consumers.

Tobacco snus has been banned in the European Union since 1992, though Sweden negotiated an exemption when it joined the bloc three years later.

In 2025, 24 percent of Swedes used nicotine daily, via cigarettes, snus or vapes, the CAN report showed, with around 19 percent using some form of snus daily, up from 12 percent in 2007.

The largest increase of snus use has been among women, rising from four percent in 2007 to 14 percent in 2025.

"While the health effects of cigarette smoking are well known, we know far less about snus and the new

nicotine products," the CAN report said.

"Studies that have shown that vaping can, among other things, increase the risk of certain lung diseases. Even less is known

about white snus, but there is information indicating that the nicotine content may be higher in white snus than in corresponding tobacco products," it added. □



This picture taken on October 31, 2023 shows a man as he smokes a cigarette in Sundbyberg, near Stockholm.



This photograph taken on May 14, 2026 shows commuters waiting to cross a road amid traffic in Dhaka.

## Bangladesh puts AI in driving seat to tackle terrible traffic

### Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladesh's densely populated capital, infamous for grinding gridlock, has launched its first AI-powered traffic enforcement system in a bid to bring order to one of the world's most congested cities.

Across Dhaka, buses, cars, motorcycles and pedal rickshaws jostle for space seeming to treat signals, pedestrian crossings and even traffic police as obstacles to overcome. On-the-spot police fines often spark arguments, confrontations are common, and officers are sometimes struck by vehicles refusing to obey commands.

"Those who violate the rules turn against us," traffic sergeant SM Nazim Uddin told AFP. "But since AI was introduced, people behind the wheel have started obeying the law and we have been spared the everyday quarrels." Despite repeated attempts to modernise traffic management, the city of more than 22 million people had remained reliant on manual control, with officers stretching ropes across roads before traffic lights turned green.

But in April, Dhaka police linked traffic cameras to artificial intelligence software designed to automatically detect violations.

Motorist Hannan Rahman Jibon, 28, was among the first drivers caught.

"I ran a red light and the owner of my car, who was sitting at home, received a text message saying that the vehicle had violated traffic rules," said Jibon, who was hit with an automatic 2,000 taka (\$16) fine. "I am more careful now, with cameras installed in many different parts."

### - 'Getting results' -

One study, by the US National Bureau of Economic Research, ranked Dhaka as the "slowest city" in the world.

With an average speed of just 4.8 kilometres (3 miles) per hour, according to a World Bank and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology study, it is quicker to walk.

City police spokesman N.M. Nasiruddin said the AI system used existing traffic-monitoring camera feeds with the software identifying offences ranging from signal and lane violations to illegal parking.

Coverage does not stretch across all the city, and manual traffic enforcement will be phased out over time, but police say it is changing behaviour.

"We have started getting results," Nasiruddin said. "We have prosecuted at least 300 vehicles."

Inside a control room at police headquarters, analyst Sharmin Afroze, 52, moni-

tored a bank of live traffic feeds, plugged into the AI system, where violations it flags are checked by humans.

"Before, police used to stop vehicles, check papers and determine fines," Afroze told AFP, noting that in a single day, the system had recorded nearly 800 traffic violations.

For now, police are only fining the worst offenders while giving the others a warning.

### - 'Do not follow rules' -

Still, officials admit the technology faces hurdles.

"We are facing some challenges too," Afroze said. "For example, some number plates are blurred or too small to identify."

Police are working with the road transport authority to address the issue, while additional features such as vehicles driving on footpaths will be added soon. The system also currently targets motor vehicles, and police are still considering how to regulate Dhaka's vast fleet of pedal rickshaws, a defining feature of the city's traffic.

Hasib Mohammed Ahsan, a professor at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, said the long-term success of the system would depend less on technology and more on whether authorities consistently enforce the rules. □



People line up to buy eggs in La Paz on May 23, 2026.

## Fighting over a chicken in protest-hit La Paz

### La Paz, Bolivia

In Bolivia's administrative capital La Paz, a line of shoppers surge to get their hands on one of the chickens that have just been delivered to a poultry store.

Hellen Condori, a 32-year-old shopkeeper with a baby in her arms, is number 132 in the queue.

An employee from the store has written the number on her arm.

"We have almost nothing left, it's impossible to even find an egg," Sheyla Caya, a 43-year-old housewife, said.

"Neighbors end up fighting over a chicken," she rued. Anti-government protesters have for weeks been blocking roads leading to the city to show their dissatisfaction with center-right President Rodrigo Paz.

The protests have triggered shortages of fuel, food and medicine in the city and caused prices to rocket.

As the demonstrators toughen their demands, the standoff with the government has escalated.

On Monday, riot police fought running battles for hours with protesters who threw stones and small sticks of dynamite.

Around 130 people were arrested over the unrest, during which a government agency was looted and a police vehicle torched.

By Wednesday, a degree of calm had returned to the city.

A march by hundreds of Indigenous farmers and transport workers in La Paz passed off peacefully.

Paz struck a conciliatory tone, saying he would reshuffle his cabinet to make it more inclusive and set up a body to give the protesters more of a say in government policy. But in a sign that the crisis is far from over, authorities counted 44 roadblocks across the country, 12 more than at the start of the week.

### - Double the price -

Indigenous groups, teachers, farmers, miners and other workers began demonstrating and blocking roads a recurring protest tactic in Bolivia - three weeks ago to demand salary increases, stable fuel supplies and measures to soften the worst economic crisis in 40 years.

The protests have since snowballed into a full-blown revolt, marked by calls for Paz's resignation, just six months after he took office.

Jaime Quiroga, a 75-year-old retiree, combed La Paz's main market for food on Tuesday but many stalls were closed.

"The traders have nothing to sell because the lorries are blocked on the road," he remarked.

On Saturday, the police and military battled demonstrators for 12 hours to get a few convoys of trucks through, but the roadblocks were promptly re-erected. □

# Origin of Papiamentu- Aruba's native language

ORANJESTAD — Papiamentu, Creole language of ABC (Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao) is from the Cape Verdean Creole family (Cape Verdean language) and was taken to the Caribbean in the 9th century by the Cape Verdeans of that time (linings and slaves), experts in cane culture and sugar production, and who were hired by Jewish entrepreneurs who went to invest in this business in the Caribbean. Cape Verdeans taught this pre-industrial revolution technology (planting cane and producing sugar, which they had learned from Madeirans) to slaves from other African regions, and did so in their language, Cape Verde Creole (Cape Verdean language), hence the language implanted in Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao.

Unlike many interesting stories, wanting to link Papiamentu directly to Portuguese, Galician or Castilian (see Papiamentu, on Wikipedia – Portuguese version and Spanish version, where the Portuguese and Spanish, each claim the direct origin of Papiamentu), in fact, this



is not true. Papiamentu is not direct from Portuguese, Galician or Castilian, it is from the Cape Verde Creole family (Cape Verdean language). You can see this best when it's saying obscene words and offending someone, precisely as they say today in both ABC and Cape Verde islands. The obscene words kept the original, had no lexical influence either from Castilian or Dutch. Also the

Papi Cristang of Malacca, the Patuá of Macau, and several creoles from the east (from Daman, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Philippines, Indonesia) and Africa (Casança, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, these last two releases to the English), all originated in the Creole of Cabo Verde (Cape Verdean language), which was the French language spoken in Portuguese feitories on the

coast of Africa (from Senegal to Sierra Leone), and which was taken east by the thousands of cable – Verdeans (linings and slaves, already Christianized and speaking Creole) who served as sailors and "slaves of arms" in Portuguese caravels, demanding the east. I don't know why the official history of Portugal usually omits this fact, which is in the chronicles of the quinrentist chroniclers,

but which we never saw in the history of Portugal that we study from primary education to higher education. However, it has always been tried to deceive us, in colonial time, that we were descendants of Viriato (Iberian hero in the fight against the Romans) and the pastors of the Hermini Mountains, but not much speaking of our black-African ancestry.

We Cape Verdeans understand each other very well with these Antillans and Easterns, whose language is from the same Creole family of Cape Verde (Cape Verdean language), speaking their Creole and we ours. Therefore, Papiamentu, Papi Cristang, Patuá Macaense and the creoles, said of Portuguese origin, Daman, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, some locations in the Philippines and some places in Indonesia, are creoles of the language family Cape Verde Creole (Cape Verdean language) and indirectly the Galaico-Duriense or Galaico-Portuguese, a language that the people spoke in Portugal in the 6th and 7th century. □

Source: Dushi Aruba

## Birds of Aruba



ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundations



Facebook page.

### The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

### Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs



rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

### Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory. English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □

Picture credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation.



## Po-Ké Ono Brings Bold Asian Fusion to Aruba's Dining Scene Innovative eatery blends island culture with modern Asian cuisine



In a culinary landscape known for its diversity and creativity, Po-Ké Ono stands out as a vibrant and contemporary addition to Aruba's restaurant scene. With locations at Azure in Palm Beach and the Renaissance Marketplace in Oranjestad, the concept introduces a refreshing take on Asian fusion dining—casual in style, yet refined in execution.

Established in 2020, Po-Ké Ono was envisioned as a space where flavor, culture, and creativity intersect. The menu features an array of signature dishes including poke bowls, steamed bao, and sushi, crafted with precision and a focus on freshness. Drawing on Asian influences, the restaurant delivers bold flavors in an approachable format, appealing to a broad audience of locals and visitors alike.

The ambiance is designed to be welcoming and relaxed, with a philosophy centered

around accessibility and enjoyment. Whether dining indoors or grabbing a quick bowl on the go, guests can expect a consistently high standard in both service and cuisine. With extensive menu options, including selections for vegan diners, Po-Ké Ono caters to a wide range of tastes and dietary preferences.

While the concept leans into fast-casual dining, the quality of ingredients and thoughtful



preparation reflect fine-dining roots. Many of the restaurant's core ingredients are sourced locally, emphasizing sustainability and support for Aruba's agricultural community. The result is a dining experience that honors both the island's spirit and the culinary traditions it draws inspiration from.

Open daily from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Po-Ké Ono continues to gain recognition as one of the island's premier destinations for sushi, poke, and

bao. Its growing popularity is a testament to Aruba's evolving food culture—one that embraces global influence while staying rooted in community and craft.

For those seeking a modern taste of Asia in the heart of the Caribbean, Po-Ké Ono offers a flavorful and memorable experience worth exploring. □



## What Aruba means to the Spender Family!



**ORANJESTAD — You are back and 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](mailto: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

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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Frank, Olga and Audrey Spender.

They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is always something new to explore. This is a picture of us collecting sea glass."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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YOU COULD BE HERE

Casago  
Aruba



## Nights of Culture, Music, and Entertainment at Paseo Herencia



**(ORANJESTAD)**—As the sun sets, Paseo Herencia comes alive with entertainment that celebrates Aruba's culture, music, and vibrant energy. The open-air plaza transforms into a lively hub where locals and visitors gather to experience the island's rhythm, sights, and flavors. Evenings at Paseo Herencia invite guests to slow down, connect, and enjoy a mix of music, dance, and immersive experiences in a relaxed, welcoming setting.

This month, we proudly celebrate Dia di Betico, a day honoring the life and legacy of Betico Croes, a key figure in Aruba's journey toward autonomy. A beloved traditional Aruban band will perform live on January 25th from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Known for their authentic rhythms and lively performances, Grupo di Betico brings a strong sense of cultural pride to the plaza, offering both visitors and residents a memorable evening filled with local heritage and island sounds.

Weekly programming ensures that every night offers something new. Cultural Wednesdays celebrate Aruba's musical heritage, starting with steelpan music at 7:00 pm and followed by a cultural dance show at 8:00 pm that

highlights traditional movements and storytelling. Saturdays in January are dedicated to Carnival Nights beginning at 8:00 pm, filling Paseo Herencia with dazzling costumes, lively music, and spirited performances that immerse guests in one of Aruba's most beloved celebrations. The plaza's entertainment continues with themed nightly water show at 7:30 pm, 8:30 pm, and 9:30 pm, creating a natural transition from live performances into the evening's activities.

For younger visitors, the carousel and kids' train provide joyful, memorable experiences that bring a touch of magic to the plaza. Thrill seekers can also enjoy the Airsoft attraction located behind The Lazy Turtle, ensuring that there is entertainment for all ages.

For those continuing the night, Paseo Herencia offers a variety of vibrant nightlife



experiences. Gusto Nightclub is known for high-energy DJ sets, VIP bottle service, and a daily happy hour from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The club brings together locals and visitors for a lively, unforgettable party atmosphere. Frenchie's Karaoke Bar provides a relaxed outdoor setting where guests can take the stage, sing, and perform while enjoying the support of friendly staff and fellow patrons. Flamingoes Bar offers a social all-ages experience with inventive cocktails, delicious snacks, and a spacious terrace ideal for groups, making it a top choice for music, conversation, and a lively bar vibe.

With stores open daily from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm, visitors can combine shopping, dining, and entertainment into one seamless visit. Parking at Paseo Herencia is complimentary for up to two hours when shopping, dining, or enjoying a movie, simply by presenting a purchase receipt to the parking cashier. Whether visiting for an evening show or staying late into the night, Paseo Herencia offers a complete island experience where music, culture, and entertainment come together to create memorable moments for all ages. □

## Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!



**(Oranjestad)**—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach

# National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation



**The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the bright blue Cododo or mighty Warawara.**

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the seven species of sea tur-

tle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: A majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heading back to the ocean after laying her eggs during breeding season. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

### Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of

the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

### The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most impor-



tant natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, or 4x4 vehicle. As of 2020, ATV's and UTVs are not allowed in the park due to its significant impact on nature.

### Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

### Park Management

The Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), formerly known as Aruba National Park Foundation, manages the national park. This foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine

organisms. With this addition, the areas under management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of ACF. In 2019, preliminary management plan for marine were introduced for Parke Marino to conserve reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests and in 2020 ACF was given additional management areas such as the Saliñas (Druid, Malmok, Cerca, Palm Beach, Bubali etc.) and also additional areas such as Rooi Manonchi, Ser'I Teishi etc. Managed areas can be seen here: <https://acf.aw/>.

Visit the National Park Arikok to see the wonder of Aruba's nature. The visitor center in San Fuego and entrance in Vader Piet (San Nicolas) is open daily from 8:00 AM to 16:00 PM. Contact the ACF via e-mail, [info@acf.aw](mailto:info@acf.aw) or call +297 585 1234 for more information. □



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**All beneficiary will receive a Teddy Bear!**

## Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the same, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life)*, "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the sub existence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and



cultural manifestations were mostly experiences by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

### Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began

to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba

began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness in the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

### The 21st century

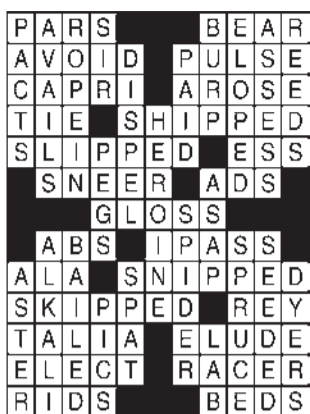
Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/Dera Gay (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas

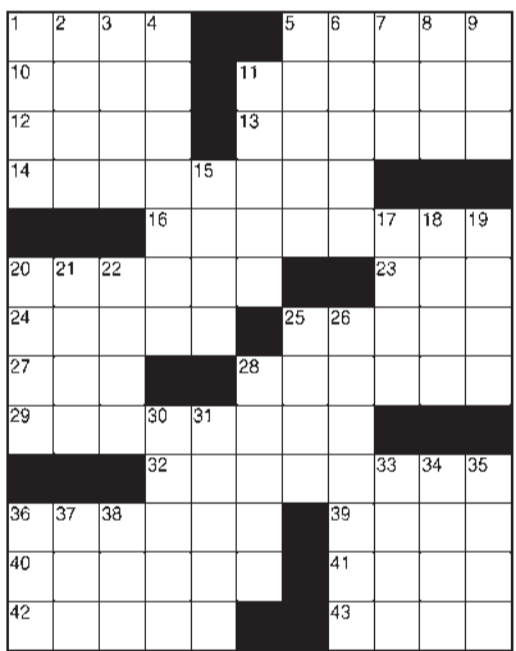


### CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH



- ACROSS**
- 1 Running pros
  - 5 Low card
  - 10 Overlook
  - 11 Sanity
  - 12 Doll cry
  - 13 Brought in
  - 14 "Please explain"
  - 16 Subtle pitch
  - 20 Shows pride
  - 23 Homer's bartending pal
  - 24 Pens for hens
  - 25 Relinquish
  - 27 In the past
  - 28 Horse restraint
  - 29 Libertine
  - 32 Battery
  - 36 Second drink
  - 39 District
  - 40 Ring islands
  - 41 Alley targets
  - 42 Price additions
  - 43 "Get lost!"
- DOWN**
- 1 Splendor
  - 2 General Bradley
  - 3 Peru's capital
  - 4 Doesn't go to bed
  - 5 Inflicted
  - 6 Some nobles
  - 7 SEALS org.
  - 8 Runner Sebastian
  - 9 Cut off
  - 11 Sailing hazards
  - 15 Nursery group
  - 17 Give off
  - 18 Valentine word
  - 19 Lewd look
  - 20 Surgery memento
  - 21 Forum wear
  - 22 Corner piece
  - 25 Mural spot
  - 26 WHAT THIS CLUE IS IN
  - 28 Shoe parts after
  - 30 Submit zeta
  - 38 Sly one
  - 31 Ship bodies
  - 33 Rocker Clapton
  - 34 Dunham of "Girls"
  - 35 Final
  - 36 Informer
  - 37 Letter



A XYDLBAAXR  
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.

5-4 CRYPTOQUOTE  
QZMMJN EZM E OPNS USEU

FINU NIYUSMZJMZN RIYXO REXL

E FPXM WIZ. — MOJE XMRPN  
Cryptoquote: REMEMBER THAT INDIAN FOOD IS AS GREAT AS IT IS BECAUSE OF ITS MAGICAL USE OF SPICES. — MADHUR JAFFREY

## 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 occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

## CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

02 SAT	CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 22:00   Berth: C
05 TUE	CELEBRITY SILHOUTTE CARNIVAL MAGIC	Arrival: 08:00   Departure: 17:00   Berth: B Arrival: 9:00   Departure: 22:00   Berth: C
06 WED	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	Arrival: 11:59   Departure: 23:00   Berth: C
12 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 22:00   Berth: B Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 23:00   Berth: C
19 TUE	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	Arrival: 7:00   Departure: 23:00   Berth: B Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 23:00   Berth: C
20 WED	ALLURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	Arrival: 7:00   Departure: 16:00   Berth: I Arrival: 7:00   Departure: 16:00   Berth: C
21 THU	CARNIVAL VENEZIA	Arrival: 9:00   Departure: 22:00   Berth: C
26 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 22:00   Berth: B Arrival: 8:00   Departure: 23:00   Berth: C

## SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

### King Classic Sudoku

4	6	7						
		5		1	6			
		8	2			4	6	5
			5		4	1		6
		3			9			4
5	2	4	1	6	3	9		8
9								
3				8	2	6		9
	8	6				2	4	

Difficulty: ★★

5/26

### Answer to previous puzzle

2	7	8	1	5	6	9	3	4
5	1	4	7	9	3	2	6	8
3	9	6	2	8	4	1	7	5
4	2	1	6	7	5	8	9	3
6	5	3	9	4	8	7	2	1
9	8	7	3	2	1	4	5	6
8	6	2	5	1	9	3	4	7
7	4	5	8	3	2	6	1	9
1	3	9	4	6	7	5	8	2

Difficulty: ★

5/25

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# 'He's tiny! It's blue!': Scientists find new deep-sea octopus

## Paris, France

On the ocean floor near the Galapagos Islands, a submersible controlled by scientists came across a mysterious octopus as blue as the ocean and no bigger than a golf ball.

"He's tiny! It's blue!" one excited scientist was recorded as saying when she first caught sight of the cerulean cephalopod on footage transmitted from the sub.

The team from the Charles Darwin Foundation had just discovered a new species of octopus nearly 1,800 metres (5,900 feet) below the water's surface, according to research published on Monday.

"Right away, I knew it was something really special," said octopus expert Janet Voight, who was asked to identify the strange species.

At first the curator at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago had to make do with photos of the animal.

Then she received its preserved body in the mail.

"When it arrived, I was like 'Oh! My goodness! It's beautiful,'" Voight told AFP.

She was immediately interested because the closest known octopus of that shape lives off the coast of Uruguay -- in a different ocean on the other side of South America.

Normally to describe a new octopus species, a specimen needs to be cut open



An undated handout picture released on May 22, 2026 by the Charles Darwin Foundation shows a newly discovered blue pygmy octopus off the Galapagos Islands.

so that its mouth, beak, teeth and other parts can be examined.

"We only had the one specimen, so I didn't want to take it apart," Voight said.

Instead, the team at the Field Museum used CT scans to take thousands of X-ray images, then compiled them to make a 3D model of the octopus, revealing its insides.

"There's nothing like spending the day looking at something no other human has ever seen," the Field Museum's X-ray lab head Stephanie Smith said in a statement.

### - 'Deep purple' -

The new species, named

Microeledone galapagensis, stands out for reasons other than its blue hue, which is believed to be the rarest colour in nature.

The octopus appears to be the runt of the Megaleledonidae family, whose members are normally much larger and live in the Southern Ocean surrounding Antarctica.

"Its stubby little arms with only one row of suckers set it apart from most octopus we are familiar with," Voight said.

Even among "other species with short little arms and a single sucker row, its colouration and smooth skin on the back surface separate it", she added.

While the octopus is light

blue on its back, underneath it is a "very deep purple", Voight said.

"We think this colour pattern helps keep it safe. If the octopus grabs a prey item that emits light, that light may attract predators that might then eat the octopus," she explained.



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 220352

## HEALTH



### DOCTOR ON DUTY

<b>Oranjestad Hospital</b> 7:00 pm/10:00pm Tel. 527 4000	<b>San Nicolas IMSAN</b> 24 HOURS Tel. 524 8833
--	---

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

**Oranjestad: Oduber**  
Tel. 582 1780

**San Nicolas: Aloe**  
Tel. 584 4606

### OTHER

Dental Clinic	587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba	587 0002
Urgent Care	586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic	588 0539

### EMERGENCY

Police	100
Police Oranjestad	527 3140
Police Noord	527 3200
Police Sta. Cruz	527 2900
Police San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulance	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

### TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

### AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous Tel. 583 8989
Against Domestic Violence(FCVR) Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

### GENERAL INFO

Phone Directory Tel. 118

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

# Hotels strive to be found as AI models conduct travel search

## Paris, France

With people increasingly adopting AI to help plan their vacations, hotels are working to make sure that you check them out -- and check in.

Whether using ChatGPT or AI-enabled travel sites like Layla.ai, it is already possible to pose search questions like: "Calm hotel with west-facing balcony" or "Charming hotel with spa that accepts dogs".

This simple switch to plain speech searches belies major technical changes that mean hotels have to learn to become visible to AI models.

"We're in complete upheaval: last year 35 percent of French people used artificial intelligence to find a hotel, a cafe or a restaurant," said Nicolas Marette, founder of Custplace, a French company that helps firms optimize their digital presence.

According to a recent study by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), around 37 percent of travelers are already using AI-enabled online travel sites to plan and book trips.

Hospitality industry players have taken notice.

A quarter of hospitality firms "have an AI strategy that is starting to produce real returns across multiple or organizational activities", ac-



This photograph shows screens displaying the logo of Mercure hotels owned by the company Accor, listed on the CAC 40, the main stock market index of the Paris Stock Exchange, in Toulouse on March 31, 2026.

ording to the BCG report. "What a hotel needs to do to get well referenced by search engines is not the same thing that they need to do to get referenced by artificial intelligence," said Johanna Benesty at BCG. Moreover, not all AI models "work in the same way," she added.

### - Plain speech, elaborate task -

At French hospitality group Accor, which owns dozens of chains including Pullman, Sofitel, Mercure and Ibis, "we've been try-

ing for a year already to understand how to make ourselves more relevant... and be more visible," the group's AI and data science chief Nicolas Maynard told a recent industry conference.

But that can be a challenge as AI users see fewer options, meaning securing a top ranking becomes even more critical.

"It's a big change: with Google a search gives you 50 results... while if you ask ChatGPT it will give you five" and that is it, Maynard added.

The switch to plain speech means big changes for hotels.

"The biggest challenge is to understand vague requests like 'I want a romantic hotel in the south'," Maynard said.

Because Accor's systems do not currently classify properties by such attributes, the group has its work cut out.

"We need to adapt our systems to take semantics into account," Maynard said.

### - Hyper detailed -

But beyond semantics, AI

will allow hotels to provide customers with a wealth of information.

Best Western France's director Olivier Cohn said he believed "what will make the difference is our ability to answer client questions more thoroughly".

Hotels could respond to even the most detailed client questions such as "knowing if there is a power socket on the left side of the bed because they are used to sleeping on that side of the bed and charging their devices", he said.

While such questions are simple in and of themselves, current systems and staff can struggle to answer in such detail, said Cohn, whose chain counts more than 4,000 hotels throughout the world.

Some hotels are already deploying AI chatbots to help answer simple guest questions, allowing staff to provide higher-value services.

But winning the referencing game isn't only up to the hotels themselves.

BCG notes that "algorithms elevate properties with comprehensive, high-trust, multisource information over those with sparse or inconsistent digital footprints", meaning that client descriptions and reviews will also be important. □

# Esports World Cup 2026 moved from Riyadh to Paris

## Paris, France

The world's largest video game tournament will be held in Paris this summer

instead of Saudi Arabia, partly due to disruptions caused by the Middle East war, organisers said.

The 2026 edition of the Esports World Cup to be held from July 6 to August 23 will see players compete in 24 titles for a prize pool exceeding \$75 million. Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund supports the event, which was created in 2024.

The first two annual editions were held in the Gulf state, which has ambitions to lead the global esports industry, and Riyadh had been set to host again this year.

"But the regional conflict raised serious doubts about our ability to ensure that players could travel to the region within the required timeframe," Ralf Reichert,

head of the Saudi-based Esports Foundation, told AFP.

The geopolitical situation "has accelerated the internationalisation of the competition", he said.

Reichert also cited Paris's appeal and French esports fans as reasons for bringing the event to the country, a change announced by the federation on Wednesday.

French President Emmanuel Macron called the move "a historic first and an honour".

"Thank you to Saudi Arabia for their trust. We are ready to host the Esports World Cup 2026. Very proud to welcome the world once

again," Macron wrote on X.

The event is expected to draw more than 2,000 players from 200 clubs worldwide to compete in popular titles such as League of Legends, Dota 2, Counter-Strike 2 and Valorant.

William Elman, a sport, voluntary sector and youth advisor for the French government, said the event was expected to have a "major impact on tourism in the Paris region".

The Esports Foundation said its long-term vision was to "bring the event to major cities around the world over time", though the plan is for it to return to Riyadh in 2027, according to its website. □



Team Spacestation Gaming players fist bump ahead of the esports Rocket League Championship Series 2026 Nanterre Major playoffs lower bracket round 1 match between MIBR and Spacestation Gaming, at La Defense Arena in Nanterre on May 22, 2026.

## Wemby stars as Spurs rip Thunder to level NBA playoff series

### Houston, United States

Victor Wembanyama scored 33 points to lead the San Antonio Spurs in a 103-82 rout of Oklahoma City on Sunday and level the NBA Western Conference finals at two games each.

The 22-year-old French 7-foot-4 (2.24m) center shot 11-of-22 from the floor, 3-of-7 from three-point range, and added eight rebounds, five assists, three blocked shots and two steals in 31 minutes for the Spurs.

"I need to find ways to impact the game in many areas," said Wembanyama. "I have a lot of responsibilities but I'm here for it. All of us, we're going to have to do things we didn't sign up for."

Host San Antonio pulled level 2-2 in the best-of-seven playoff series with game five on Tuesday in Oklahoma City and game six back in San Antonio on Thursday. "This was our first deficit in the playoff series. We just responded," Wembanyama said. "It was nothing amazing. It wasn't magic.



Victor Wembanyama #1 of the San Antonio Spurs drives over Jaylin Williams #6 of the Oklahoma City Thunder in the first half of Game Three of the Western Conference Finals NBA Playoffs at Frost Bank Center on May 22, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.

We just did what we needed to do. The series is far from over."

Wembanyama knows what the Spurs must do to win the NBA title.

"We've got six more wins before we can rest," he said.

The Spurs seek their first trip to the NBA Finals since winning the crown in 2014 while the Thunder hope

to become the NBA's first back-to-back champions since Golden State in 2017-2018.

Spurs coach Mitch Johnson said Wembanyama was aggressive to try and keep

San Antonio from falling into a 3-1 series hole.

"Our competitive response all year has been pretty good and he has been at the forefront of that," Johnson said.

"Tonight he felt an obligation to set a tone for us in a variety of ways. The aggressiveness was a reflection of that... I think he wants that responsibility. He's built for it."

The Thunder had been unbeaten on the road in this year's playoffs but were foiled in a bid to reach 6-0 by a strong Spurs defensive effort.

"Any time we can turn defense into offense, turnovers and rebounding, that's when we're at our best," Johnson said.

"We can get out and run and play and get out in pace. Our activity was great tonight and we're going to need to get better at it as the series moves on."

The Spurs stretched their lead as large as 25 points while the Thunder were only ahead by a single point. □

## Giro leader Vingegaard eyes remaining career goals

### Milan, Italy

Giro d'Italia leader Jonas Vingegaard is closing in on one of his major career goals but he does not expect to keep chasing others for many more years, the Dane said on Monday. The 29-year-old is bidding to become just the eighth man to complete the clean sweep of three Grand Tours in Italy this month.

Having won the Tour de France in 2022 and 2023, and triumphed at the Vuelta a Espana last year, he is now well-placed in the Giro pink jersey holding a lead of almost two-and-a-half minutes on his nearest challenger, with a week of racing left.

"I just go from year to year. And if I still enjoy it, then I will keep riding," the Visma-Lease a Bike leader said during the Giro's final rest day before a punishing final week which includes

three summit finishes.

"This year is my eighth year (as a) pro. I also don't see myself riding until I'm 35. I'm turning 30 (on December 10), so that's actually not in so many years."

First, though, he wants to tick off a few more boxes. Like his arch rival Tadej Pogacar, Vingegaard targeted some week-long stage races earlier this year that he had not yet won.

His victories at Paris-Nice and the Tour of Catalonia added to previous successes at Tirreno-Adriatico, the Tour of the Basque Country and the Criterium du Dauphine.

But he is yet to win either the Tour de Romandie or the Tour of Switzerland.

"Obviously, this would be a big goal for me winning here in the Giro," said Vingegaard during a video press conference.

"But I also haven't won all the one-week stage races,

which also would be nice to win."

Pogacar likewise has targeted Romandie and Switzerland for the first time this year, winning the former three weeks ago and tackling the latter next month. He has never won the Vuelta, though, meaning that Vingegaard could beat him to the Grand Tour clean sweep.

### - 'I focus on myself' -

The Dane will also be aiming to dethrone Pogacar at the Tour in July, and he believes his Giro participation is helping him in that goal.

"I think it can help me in the way that I can get myself to a higher level," said Vingegaard.

"I've seen in the last years that once I've done one Grand Tour, that actually in the second Grand Tour my level has been higher than it actually has in the first one.

"So that's also what we hope for in the Tour.

" Pogacar and Vingegaard have finished as the top two at the Tour in each of the previous five editions. Pogacar won three of those, adding to his first success in 2020, while Vingegaard has come out on top twice.

In the meantime, Vingegaard wants to win at least one more Giro stage he has three already but this time in the leader's pink jersey.

"Obviously, there's also a lot of chances in the third week," he said.

"I also want to try to win a stage in the pink jersey. So for sure, we will go for at least one more stage." □



Team Visma Lease a Bike Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard celebrates the overall leader's pink jersey on the podium of the 15th stage of the Giro d'Italia 2026 - Tour of Italy cycling race between Voghera and Milan, Italy, on May 24, 2026.

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Ukraine's Elina Svitolina plays a forehand return to Hungary's Anna Bondar during their women's singles match on day 2 of the French Open tennis tournament on Court Suzanne-Lenglen at the Roland-Garros Complex in Paris on May 25, 2026.

## Swiatek, Rybakina cruise through Roland Garros openers

### Paris, France

Four-time French Open champion Iga Swiatek and second seed Elena Rybakina both eased into the second round with comfortable wins at a sweltering Roland Garros on Monday, as Stan Wawrinka bade an emotional farewell to the tournament.

Swiatek, playing at a Grand Slam event for the first time since linking up with Rafael Nadal's former coach Francisco Roig, made short work of seeing off Australian teenager Emerson Jones 6-1, 6-2 in just 60 minutes. The Pole is looking to regain the trophy she won at Roland Garros in three successive years from 2022-24 before losing to Aryna Sabalenka in the semi-finals 12 months ago.

Swiatek will take on Czech Sara Bejlek for a place in the last 32 on Wednesday. The third seed is among the favourites for the title after finding some form by reaching the Italian Open semi-finals earlier this

month. "I'm really happy with the way I played. It was a solid match from the beginning to the end. I technically knew how to play," said Swiatek.

Rybakina also wasted little time in swatting aside Slovenian Veronika Erjavec 6-2, 6-2 on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Like Swiatek, the Kazakh was pleased to not spend too much time on court in the 32C heat.

"It's tough conditions but I'm happy things worked, and I'm looking forward to the next match," she said.

Rybakina, who won the Australian Open earlier this year, plays Ukraine's Yuliia Starodubtseva next.

Elina Svitolina survived a scare against Hungary's Anna Bondar on Court Suzanne Lenglen, fighting back from 3-1 down in a deciding set to win 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 (10/3).

The Ukrainian, who ended an eight-year wait for a fifth WTA 1000 title in Rome ear-

lier this month, has still never lost in the French Open first round in 13 appearances.

Former runner-up Jasmine Paolini was a 7-5, 6-3 winner over Dayana Yastremska of Ukraine.

China's Zheng Qinwen, who won Olympic gold at Roland Garros two years ago, crashed out in the first round for the first time with a 6-4, 6-0 loss to Poland's Maja Chwalinska.

Sixth seed Amanda Anisimova, last year's Wimbledon and US Open runner-up, beat French wildcard Tiantsoa Rakotomanga Rajaonah 6-3, 6-1.

### - Wawrinka waves goodbye to Roland Garros -

Former champion Wawrinka's final Roland Garros ended in disappointment as the 41-year-old was beaten 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 by Dutch lucky loser Jesper de Jong.

Wawrinka, who beat Novak Djokovic in the 2015 final, is retiring at the end of the season. □

## Delighted Hamilton rolls back years with vintage runner-up effort



Ferrari's British driver Lewis Hamilton holds his second place trophy as he celebrates on the podium at the conclusion of the 2026 Formula 1 Grand Prix du Canada at Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve in Montreal, Canada, on May 24, 2026.

### Montreal, Canada

Delighted Lewis Hamilton rolled back the years on Sunday to finish second for Ferrari in the Canadian Grand Prix then declared Circuit Gilles Villeneuve his favourite track in the world.

The seven-time champion claimed his best result since joining Ferrari last year, his second podium of the season and the 104th podium of his career.

"I am so happy," he said. "I have to say a huge thank you to my team here. These guys have welcomed me with open arms.

"It has been really tough over the past year and a bit, so to finally find our sweet spot and have a good weekend... it's an amazing feeling.

"We've got an amazing crowd here. I love this track and I can't wait to come back."

Hamilton, 41, claimed his maiden F1 victory in the 2007 Canadian Grand Prix and shares the record of seven wins at the circuit with Ferrari great Michael Schumacher.

Buoyed by his strong drive and result, he was optimistic for the future and encouraged Ferrari to believe they can chase down the pace-setting Mercedes team.

In Sunday's race, Italian teen Kimi Antonelli won for Mercedes to extend his lead ahead over team-mate George Russell to 43 points in the drivers' title race.

"It's definitely encouraging, given that this weekend, Mercedes brought a big upgrade here," said Hamilton. "A lot of people brought them here we brought our big one in Miami and the team are working really hard back at the factory so hopefully we've got some things on the way.

"Considering this is a really straight circuit and we just managed to hold on and get this result, it definitely gives me high hopes for what's ahead, but we've got to keep pushing and keep trying to extract more." □