



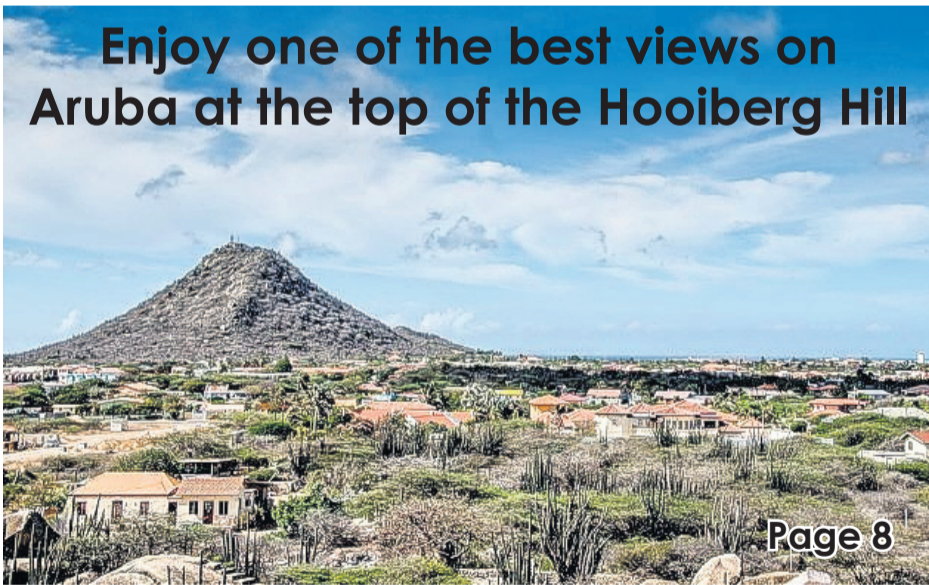
Aruba's ONLY English Vacation Newspaper

Traditional Aruban house at Alto Vista 12 now a protected monument



Page 9

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Trump clashes with Republicans in testy Capitol visit

Washington, United States

President Donald Trump jolted Republicans during a fiery appearance at the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, scrapping a housing bill signing ceremony and clashing behind closed doors with a party rebel who challenged him over the Iran war.

Trump had been expected to sign the bipartisan housing affordability package at a high-profile event, giving Republicans a chance to tout action on one of voters' biggest economic concerns ahead of November's midterm elections.

But the president abruptly cancelled the ceremony two hours beforehand, saying he would not sign the bill until Congress passed the SAVE America Act, his long-sought package of voting restrictions.

"Today's Housing News Conference and Signing is hereby cancelled until such time as we pass the desperately needed SAVE AMERICA ACT, which I consider to be a National Emergency," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform.

The election measure would require proof of citizenship to register to vote and photo identification to cast a ballot. Demo-



U.S. President Donald Trump meets with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on June 24, 2026.

crats denounce it as an assault on voting rights, while Trump claims it is needed to protect elections.

The bill has already stalled in the Senate, where Republican leaders have warned Trump that it lacks the support needed to overcome the chamber's rules.

Trump, who still regularly repeats the false claim that he won the 2020 election, nevertheless kept pressing the issue as he went ahead with a lunch meeting with Senate Republicans.

The gathering turned combative when Trump chal-

lenged senators who had voted the previous day to rebuke him over the Iran war, according to U.S. media reports.

Four Republicans joined Democrats in adopting a largely symbolic resolution directing Trump to end hostilities with Iran or seek congressional authorization to continue them.

Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana later told reporters that Trump asked why any Republican would support the measure.

"I stood and said, 'You

have not told the American people what's going on. It was supposed to last four weeks; it's lasted four months. Our original objectives have not been achieved and I want to know what's going on,'" Cassidy said, according to The Hill and CNN.

Cassidy lost a primary election in Louisiana in May to a Trump-backed Republican, meaning he is ineligible for re-election in November.

After leaving the meeting, Trump still appeared irritated, telling reporters: "I don't like a few people,

but that's okay -- I think you know who they are."

The war powers vote came as Trump tries to turn a preliminary agreement with Iran into a final settlement after months of conflict that rattled global energy markets and exposed rifts within his own party.

- 'Minor importance' -

As he walked into the lunch with Senate Majority Leader John Thune, Trump ignored questions about whether he would sign the housing bill and instead volunteered that the Middle East "war is going very well" and that "Iran is making very big concessions."

The housing bill passed Congress with broad bipartisan support and had been promoted by Republicans as a rare achievement on affordability.

It is aimed at boosting housing supply, easing construction rules and expanding access to home ownership as high rents, elevated mortgage costs and a shortage of homes weigh on Americans.

Trump had previously backed the package, which offered him a chance to highlight efforts to lower living costs against a backdrop of persistent inflation driven partly by the Iran war. □

Judge asks why Kennedy Center covering facade after Trump's name removed

Washington, United States

A U.S. federal judge asked on Wednesday for an explanation for why a tar-

paulin continues to cover the facade of the Kennedy Center where President Donald Trump's name was

recently removed.

District Judge Christopher Cooper gave the board of trustees of the performing arts venue until the end of July to explain "the purpose for and status of the tarp and scaffolding that Defendants have erected on the front portico of the Center."

Trump's name was removed from the Kennedy Center on the orders of Cooper earlier this month but the area where it was taken down remains covered by a white tarpaulin and scaffolding.

After returning to the White House last year, Trump named himself chairman of the Kennedy Center

and stacked the governing board with loyalists.

The board voted in December to rename the venue "The Donald J. Trump and John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts" and the Republican president's name was added to the facade in large letters above that of Kennedy. A number of artists canceled scheduled performances following the move.

Cooper ordered Trump's name taken off the iconic building in Washington, saying that only Congress has the right to change its name.

A furious Trump responded

by saying he was giving up control of the venue.

Cooper has also issued a temporary block on Trump's demand to close the Kennedy Center for two years of renovations, which were due to start in July. Elsewhere in Washington, the now-defunct US Institute of Peace was renamed after Trump, and his face stares down from huge banners outside the Department of Justice and Department of Agriculture. The Trump administration is also seeking to have his image printed on a \$250 bill to celebrate the country's 250th anniversary of the declaration of independence from Britain. □



A tarp covers the facade of the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on June 14, 2026.



The slope of enlightenment: How 2026 became the year we outsmarted heart disease

BOSTON, MA –

For decades, the fight against cardiovascular disease has been described in terms of a battlefield. But today, standing in the bustling heart of Boston's medical district, the conversation has shifted. Experts are no longer just talking about fighting disease; they are talking about outsmarting it. According to leading researchers at the American Heart Association's latest summit, 2026 has officially entered the "Slope of Enlightenment" a period where cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence (AI) and precision gene-silencing therapies have finally converged to transform preventive cardiology from a dream into a daily reality.

The silent risk: Cracking the genetic code

For years, doctors have warned patients about the "usual suspects" of heart health: high blood pressure, smoking, and LDL cholesterol (the "bad" kind). However, many patients followed every rule eating greens, running marathons, and taking statins only to suffer unexpected heart attacks. The culprit was often a shadowy genetic factor known as Lipoprotein(a), or Lp(a). Unlike lifestyle-driven cholesterol, Lp(a) is determined entirely by your DNA. Until recently, there was no effective way to lower it. But today, the medical community is buzzing with

the success of Pelacarsen, a revolutionary "antisense" therapy. By essentially "turning off" the messenger RNA that tells the body to produce Lp(a), Pelacarsen has shown the potential to reduce these dangerous levels by up to 80%.

"We are moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach," says Dr. Julian Thorne, a lead investigator in the Phase 3 clinical trials. "We can now look a patient in the eye and tell them that their genetic history is no longer their destiny. We are rewriting the script of their health before the first symptoms even appear."

AI: The Guardian in Your Pocket

While gene-silencing therapies tackle the internal blueprint, Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing how we monitor the heart in real-time. In 2026, the stethoscope is being supplemented by sophisticated algorithms that can detect "silent" heart conditions through a simple smartphone interface or a wearable watch.

New AI software, recently cleared by the FDA, can now analyze the subtle electrical patterns of a person's heartbeat to predict the onset of atrial fibrillation or heart failure weeks before a patient feels a single palpitation. These "digital twins" virtual models of a patient's heart allow doc-

tors to simulate the effects of different medications or lifestyle changes in a digital environment before ever prescribing a pill.

"The AI doesn't just see what is happening now; it sees what is coming," explains Sarah Chen, a biomedical engineer. "It's like having a world-class cardiologist sitting on your wrist 24/7. This technology is saving lives by turning 'ER visits' into 'pharmacy pickups.'"

The Power of "Positive Prevention"

Perhaps the most inspiring shift in 2026 is the move toward Positive Prevention. Hospitals and community centers across the U.S. are moving away from the "fear-based" model of medicine. Instead of focusing on the dangers of heart disease, new initiatives are celebrating the "Joy of Vitality."

In cities like Boston and San Francisco, "Heart Cafés" and "Movement Hubs" are popping up, where residents can get free, non-invasive heart screenings in a relaxed, social atmosphere. These centers focus on the "four pillars of the vibrant heart": restorative sleep, social connection, nutrient-dense joy, and consistent movement.

Data from the first quarter of 2026 shows that these community-led programs have increased screening rates by 40% among young adults. □



British actor Michael Caine poses on the red carpet for the world premiere of King of Thieves in central London on September 12, 2018.

AI name is Michael Caine: 'The Odyssey' gets digital narrator

Los Angeles, United States

A new audio book of Homer's epic "The Odyssey" read by an AI-generated Michael Caine was released Tuesday, just weeks ahead of the premiere of Christopher Nolan's film adaptation.

The 13-hour recording features the voice of the 93-year-old British actor star of "The Italian Job" and "Get Carter" along with a cast of other voices from a library accumulated by ElevenLabs, who pay performers every time their voice is used.

"The Odyssey is one of the greatest stories ever told. For nearly three millennia, its themes of perseverance, loyalty, temptation, and the enduring call of home have resonated across cultures and generations," Caine said in a statement.

"By bridging classical storytelling with digital innovation, this timeless epic is reimagined for modern audiences, brought vividly to life through ElevenReader's cutting-edge technology," he said, referring to the company's audiobook app, which counts American actor Matthew McConaughey among its investors.

The use of AI is controversial in Hollywood, where actors and creators fear being replaced by technology. In a statement, ElevenLabs said their offering was about enhancing audience experiences. □

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Sails, sunsets, and solidarity: The weekly heartbeat of Annapolis

Every Wednesday evening, as the workday winds down in Maryland's capital, a transformation takes place. The narrow, brick-lined streets of Annapolis begin to hum with a specific kind of energy. Residents in boat shoes and sun-bleached caps move with purpose toward the water, while visitors line the railings of Ego Alley. Out on the Chesapeake Bay, the horizon begins to bristle with hundreds of white masts. This is the Wednesday Night Race series, a tradition that has turned the local waters into a symphony of sails and a masterclass in community spirit.

The Chesapeake Bay has long been the lifeblood of this historic city, but during these mid-week races, it becomes something more: a shared living room. The event, hosted by the Annapolis Yacht Club, features over 130 boats across various classes. Yet, despite the competitive nature of sailing, the atmosphere is overwhelmingly one of joy and connection. From sleek, high-tech racing machines to sturdy family cruisers, the



From left, U.S. entry Chessie Racing, Monaco's Merit Cup and U.S. entry Toshiba lead the Whitbread Round the World Race fleet as they pass under the Chesapeake Bay Bridge at the restart of the race 03 May near Annapolis, Maryland.

fleet represents a cross-section of the city itself.

As the starting horn echoes across the harbor, the "symphony" begins. It is a dance of physics and intuition. Sailors work in rhythmic unison, winches grinding and sails snapping as they catch the breeze. To an observer on the shore, the sight of the boats tacking in tight formation against the backdrop of the Maryland State House dome is a breathtaking reminder of the city's

timeless relationship with the wind and the waves. However, the true magic of the Annapolis sailing scene isn't found in the trophies or the standings; it is found in the "afterglow." Once the sun begins its descent, casting a golden, honeyed light over the Severn River, the fleet returns to the docks. The intensity of the race dissolves into laughter and camaraderie. It is a common sight to see rival crews sharing a drink on the pier, dissecting the day's ma-

neuvers with good-natured ribbing. For the landlubbers watching from the docks, the spectacle is equally nourishing. Families gather with picnic blankets and ice cream cones, children pointing out their favorite boat colors. Strangers strike up conversations about the tide or the peculiar shift in the evening breeze. In these moments, the bay acts as a Great Equalizer, stripping away the stresses of the week and replacing them with a

shared sense of wonder. The sailing culture in Annapolis also serves as a vital steward for the environment. The sailors are often the first to notice changes in the water quality or the health of the local crab populations. This deep-seated love for the bay fosters a community of conservation, where protecting the "playground" is just as important as winning the race. The Wednesday night tradition serves as a weekly reminder of why the Chesapeake is a national treasure worth preserving.

As the last of the light fades and the boats are tucked away in their slips, a quiet peace settles over the harbor. The sailors head home with salt-crusted skin and fired muscles, but with spirits that are undeniably recharged. Annapolis reminds us that even in a fast-paced world, there is immense value in slowing down to follow the wind. It is a city that doesn't just live by the water; it breathes with it, proving every Wednesday that the best way to move forward is often to set sail together. □

Dream job: U.S. soccer fans paid to watch every World Cup game



Austin Franklin (right) and Kevin Akoto watch a 2026 World Cup match between Portugal and Uzbekistan from their transparent cube in Times Square in New York, on June 23, 2026.

New York, United States

It might just be the greatest job in the world. But for the two American men being paid \$50,000 to watch every one of the 104 games of the World Cup over 39 days, it is a labor of love. Austin Franklin, 29, and Kevin Akoto, 26, perform their dream task in a temporary

fishbowl studio with glass walls on three sides in the heart of Manhattan's Times Square. Enthusiastic fans crowd around the cube to watch the games on two 85-inch TVs as Franklin and Akoto lounge on sofas inside. Akoto quit his job and broke up with his partner to take up the "chief World

Cup watcher" role, meant to generate excitement around the once-every-four-years event being hosted by the US, Canada and Mexico.

"The employer took it well, the individual not so well, but that's okay," Akoto said on Tuesday.

"There's obviously some games that are duds -- that's gonna happen, obviously, but you have your exciting games as well," said Akoto, who hails from Florida.

The pair are paid by Fox, one of the tournament's broadcasters, which selected them from a field of thousands of fans who submitted video applications. The rectangular studio also has a foosball table, a small table and stools, an astro-turf rug and walls adorned with the colorful scarves of national teams. The high-profile gig has

thrown up memorable moments for the pair, including a crowd of hundreds of Brazil fans crowding the plaza in front of their box. One woman threw a shoe at their enclosure.

"The Brazil fans were just incredible, happy, good vibes -- a good time," Franklin said. "That's just a memory I'll have with me for the rest of my life."

Akoto, who sported a Portugal cap for the side's clash against Uzbekistan on Tuesday, had built a "CR7" Cristiano Ronaldo Lego set.

"Finally on the board -- what a strike!" he exclaimed as the Portuguese forward scored the first of two goals in a 5-0 win.

Despite their grueling viewing schedule, the pair insist they are not tired of spending time together.

"I'm a pretty negative person," Akoto said. "It's nice to have someone positive,

someone who's like a little bit different from you, who can bring that energy," said Akoto of his new colleague.

Should the hydration breaks, video reviews or half-time shows lag, the cube has been equipped with distractions including an Ultimate Football Quiz and a deck of Uno cards. □

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Slimy beans: Japanese natto disgusts and delights the world



This photo taken on May 14, 2026 shows Kenji Suzuki, second-generation owner of Suehiro Japanese Restaurant in Los Angeles, California, lifting natto from a bowl with chopsticks.

Kamakura, Japan

Sticky, translucent strings dangle from Wesley Smith's chopsticks as the American tourist relishes his natto, the loved-and-hated Japanese fermented soybean superfood going global one slimy mouthful at a time.

The latest trade statistics show Japan's exports of the highly nutritious gooey beans tripled from 2017 to 5,248 tons in 2025, with China and the United States topping the list of destinations.

The delicacy infused with beneficial bacteria remains a traditional Japanese breakfast staple, but their pungent aroma, viscous texture and yeasty taste divide even in their homeland.

"I thought it was a little funky at first," Smith told AFP during his recent lunch at Sendaiya, a Tokyo restaurant that serves all-you-can-eat natto menus an idea of hell for some people, though heaven for others.

But over the years, the mushy yellow-brown legumes "became an acquired taste like a strong cheese can, because you know how cheese can smell like dirty socks," the 47-year-old Arizonan said. Recent years have seen natto join a series of fer-

mented foods, from kimchi to kombucha, that have surged in popularity worldwide as Americans in particular seek better digestive health following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Regular consumption of the high-fibre, protein-packed snack is often linked to stronger immune systems, improved digestion and greater bone density.

In China too the "trend toward health-consciousness especially among the middle and upper-income classes" is igniting interest in Japanese foods, the Japan External Trade Organisation said in a recent report.

- Curious in California -

In Los Angeles at Japanese restaurant Suehiro, owner Kenji Suzuki has noticed more non-Japanese clients taking the plunge.

"When social media started talking about natto and that it's a superfood, I think then more and more people wanted to see what it is, wanted to taste it 'Is it as bad as people say it is?'" Suzuki told AFP.

"Some people maybe don't like it, but other people, you know, they love it," the second-generation owner said.

During her lunch in Tokyo, tourist Smith's wife Maya Bourdeau, 46, likened natto to "natural wine" with "that

slightly different taste".

While she vigorously stirred her bowl of bibimbap topped with natto, Smith knew that this would only make it even stringier.

"Subconsciously, I didn't want to have natto just dripping from my beard," he said, laughing.

Whisking, he said, also "really maximises the sliminess", which he believes is so off-putting for many Americans. He doubts natto for all its recent hype will ever go mainstream.

"I can't think of anything in American cooking that's common with that slimy texture."

- Proud -

But Daisuke Tsujimoto is all for it, having travelled hundreds of kilometres from Osaka to Tokyo to fill his boots at Sendaiya.

"It really is a food culture Japan can be proud of," the 31-year-old told AFP.

"I truly hope people around the world will continue to eat it."

Aside from its supposed health benefits, natto dubbed the "star student of pricing" has long been loved in Japan for its stunning affordability.

A pack of three natto cups each 40 to 50 grams typically sells for around 100 yen (\$0.60) or even less at supermarkets. □



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer addresses the press at the end of the meeting of state leaders of the European Group of Five (E5) and the NATO Secretary General, on June 24, 2026 at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany.

After calling it quits, UK's Starmer gets European thanks for warming ties

Berlin, Germany

European leaders offered Britain's outgoing Prime Minister Keir Starmer kind words at a Berlin meeting on Wednesday, days after he announced his resignation following months of pressure and miserable poll numbers.

Starmer appeared tense while representing his country in Berlin for a meeting with the leaders of Germany, France, Italy and Poland, just two days after he quit.

"You have done a great deal to strengthen NATO and foster a united Europe," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz told Starmer at a joint press conference.

"I say this with a sense of regret that you are stepping down from office, but I am all the more grateful for the excellent cooperation we have enjoyed over the past few months."

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk credited Starmer with patching up relations between the United Kingdom and the European Union after the bruising Brexit process. "Europe, Poland and, I believe, also the United Kingdom we all felt safer thanks to your engagement," Tusk said.

"In many dimensions we once again became a united whole. Thanks to your work, one could forget about Brexit for a moment. I will remember this for a very long time." □

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Florence's Giotto frescoes restored to glory after renovation

Florence, Italy

Giotto's Santa Croce frescoes are receiving the final touches of a four-year restoration in Florence, with scaffolding poised to be removed ahead of an official reveal in September.

On Friday, journalists were invited onto the scaffolding that has obscured the view of the famous 14th-century frescoes adorning the walls of the Basilica of Santa Croce's Bardi Chapel depicting the life of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of Italy.

Estimated by art historians to have been begun sometime after 1317, the frescoes are considered to be one of Giotto di Bondone's masterpieces.

The painter and architect, hailed as the father of the Italian Renaissance, is believed to have been born around 1267 in Vicchio, just north of Florence.

Renata Pintus, who heads the masonry department at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence's famous restoration workshop, told AFP it had been a "privilege" to work on Giotto's famous fresco cycle.

"Perhaps the greatest emotion is feeling a bit as if you were up on the scaffolding with Giotto... retracing the creative phases in the making of a masterpiece



Head of the masonry department at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, Florence's famous restoration workshop, Renata Pintus shows a fresco during a press visit of the end of the restoration work of the 14th century frescoes of Giotto in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence on June 12, 2026.

like this," she said. Once virtually lost to memory after being painted over with whitewash, the frescoes began to be uncovered in the mid-19th century but the work left scratches and pockets of white on the frescoed walls. The last restoration work was carried out from 1957 to 1958.

- Revelations -

From the scaffolding, restorers have been meticulously filling in damaged portions

of the frescoes and conservatively layering paint over bare sections with delicate brushes, their hands protected by gloves.

The team decided to remove filling from previous restoration work, replacing it by mixtures of lime and sand that more closely resembled the original material used by Giotto.

"We tried to resolve the conservation issues affecting these wall paintings, caused by their long and rather troubled conserva-

tion history over the centuries," Pintus said.

But the partially destroyed frescoes have offered up a bright side, she said.

In some cases, the lost paint layers revealed "preparatory stages" where Giotto laid out his figures or architectural elements before the final layer, said Pintus.

After addressing structural problems such as loss of adhesion and exfoliated paint, the restorers then used reversible techniques including watercolour

paint to "stitch" everything back together, she said.

Stefano Filipponi, head of the Opera di Santa Croce, which manages the church and oversees its conservation, told AFP that visitors will notice the difference when the frescoes are officially unveiled to the public in September following the renovation, which has cost more than one million euros (\$1.16 million).

"They will certainly be able to appreciate Giotto's painting with greater clarity because the work carried out today, using the technologies we now have, has made it possible to free the original painting completely from any kind of glaze or covering," he said.

"It is something extremely direct, narrative and engaging," he said of Giotto's work.

- 'Best painter in world' -

Renaissance author Giovanni Boccaccio named Giotto, who died in 1337, "the best painter in the world".

He was celebrated during his lifetime for introducing a new way of painting -- depicting weighty, massive figures in three-dimensional space, while imparting his characters with a human expressiveness not seen before. □

London police to extend use of live facial recognition, drones

London, United Kingdom

London's Metropolitan Police force said Wednesday it will expand the use of drones, artificial intelligence and live facial recognition technology,

which has been criticized by rights campaigners.

The scale-up plan involves rolling out static facial recognition across central London and having drone coverage in every London

borough in a year's time, the Met said in a press release.

"Policing today will fail if it is not allowed to keep pace with criminals through technology," Met Commissioner Mark Rowley said.

In a speech, Rowley called for the force to be allowed to deploy new technology without being bogged down by legislation and bureaucracy.

Earlier this month, the police chief criticized London Mayor Sadiq Khan's decision to block a multi-million-pound contract with Palantir for the Met to use the AI giant's technology. According to Rowley, a Palantir pilot had helped the UK's biggest police force consolidate its data.

"We must now bring the same technologies to bear in how we tackle crime more broadly," he said.

The mayor's office previously said it was not satisfied the Met had demonstrated the value for money of Palantir's technology. Rowley also called live facial recognition "the clearest example of what new technology can do", citing that the tech has "contributed to more than 2,000 arrests" since 2024.

The Met scans the faces of passers-by and compares their biometrics with thousands on a watch list, under its usage policy. The UK is the only European country to deploy the technol-

ogy on a large scale.

The adoption has faced criticism from human rights organizations, citing fears of mass surveillance and risks of misidentification.

In April, the High Court in London ruled that the Met had "adequate safeguards against abuse" after the force was taken to court by a man falsely identified as a suspect.

Such legal hurdles "risks slowing progress to the point where policing cannot keep pace with the threats we face," Rowley said.

Civil liberties campaigning group Big Brother Watch slammed the live facial recognition expansion as an "alarming escalation of an intrusive technology". □



A police van using facial-recognition cameras is pictured as revellers attend the Notting Hill Carnival in west London on August 25, 2025.

Surf's Up: Favorite places to catch waves in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Whether you are a salt-seasoned surfer looking for a thrill, or just looking to wet your toes in a little ocean adventure, Aruba has amazing places to learn and practice surfing! Although more known for the calmer waters of Palm Beach, Eagle Beach and Mangel Halto, Aruba also has some special places to thrill your senses. Because of strong winds and breezes, Aruba is perfect for wind and kite surfing. You will surely notice kites in the air as you drive around the wilder, rougher areas on Aruba's east side.

There are plenty of surf shop rentals to help you with your gear, and there are also a lot of tutors if you're looking to try for the first time and need a little help. These can be found around the island, and will surely come in hand if you want to try a new experience!

With that said, here are Aruba's favorite surf spots!

Andicuri

Andicuri is recognized as the best place for body boarding. Because of the rough waves, this beach is better suited for those with more experience in surfing. However, the beach with two bluffs one on each side is worth a visit, if only



to watch the exciting show presented by the surfers.

To go to Andicuri, you will need a 4x4 vehicle and drive from the ex-Natural Bridge Center. Alternatively, you can make it an adventure by going on a hike! The scenery is unique and beautiful on its own.

Reaching Andicuri Beach can be an adventure in itself, as it can be difficult to find and is only accessible by 4x4 vehicle or walking from the ex-Natural Bridge center, but the impressive scenery makes it all worthwhile!



Arashi

Arashi, a beach located close to the California Lighthouse, is a good spot for learning and having fun if you're lucky! The waves at

Arashi are usually calm, but with just the right weather, a swell forms attracting all the local surfers to the area.

Boca Grandi

Boca Grandi is at the most southern spot in Aruba, and is a popular spot with experienced surfers. Close to the famous Red Anchor and our beloved Sunrise City – San Nicolas, a trip to Boca Grandi can easily turn into an all-day trip to this area of the island. With a beautiful beach (although it is not allowed to swim here, because of strong currents), you can enjoy a relaxing time combing the beach for driftwood, coral, and little crabs and snails.

Hadicurari

Here is where you will find most of the action for surfers in Aruba. With a variety of surf shops and schools in this area, you will find it easy to get in on the action. Hadicurari is also the site of the Aruba Hi Winds World Challenge, which takes place usually in June/July, and it is the largest windsurfing competition in the Caribbean!

Malmok

If you're a beginner, this is your spot. There are also various shops to rent gear and receive lessons, facilitating learning and just trying out a new experience. The beach is also popular for paddleboarding and other watersport activities. □

Dining in? Try making some local favorites!

How to make "funchi"



(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's

how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for lo-

cal dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling

water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let

this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

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Don't miss out on L'Avenue's Early Bird Special!



(Oranjestad)—Up to grab an early dinner after a day of shopping or cruising? Take advantage of L'Avenue's Early Bird Special, and experience their innovative twist of traditional Belgian cuisine!

Located in a cozy nook at The Cove Mall—a short walking distance from the Holiday Inn and Paseo Herencia, this Belgian and French bistro offers a delicious and rich menu available through lunch and dinner from 11am to 10pm. Enjoy your lunch and/or dinner in a cool, air-conditioned interior area of the restaurant, accompanied by the warm lights and chic design that emphasizes the restaurant's laid-back, yet sophisticated ambience.

Lunch includes a variety of sandwiches—with a healthy selection of bread options—if you're going for a light meal, but just like their dinner selection, also includes



steak, chicken, fish, and even mussels and rabbit if you're craving a bit more of L'Avenue's exquisite menu. And let's not forget their wide selection of Belgian beer and European wine to complete the tasty experience!

But that's not all! L'Avenue is offering their guests their Early Bird Special, available every day from 4pm to 7pm. Enjoy this affordable and delectable 3-course meal

special at a comfortable price of \$32 per guest, including a glass of house wine.

L'Avenue honors and takes pride in serving the traditional Belgian and French flavors, but does not shy away from offering a flexible menu for their guests' needs. That's right, L'Avenue also offers to cater for their guests' dietary restrictions, making sure that each guest gets well taken care of!

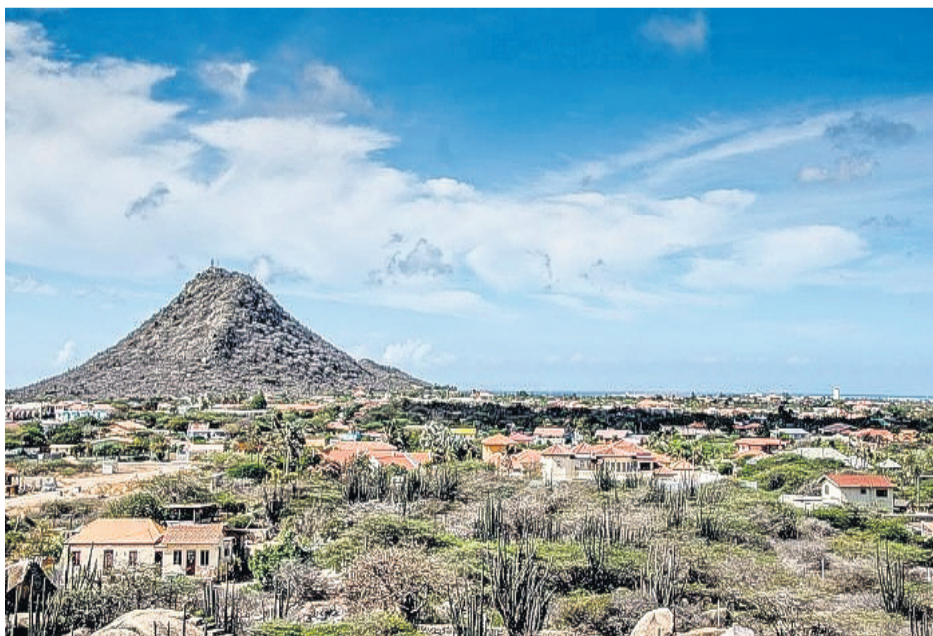


More information

L'Avenue is situated at The Cove Mall in Palm Beach and is open every day from 11am to 10pm for lunch and dinner. To book a reservation or ask for more information, please contact their phone line at +297 6996400, send an e-mail info@lavenuearuba.com, or visit their website at lavenuearuba.com □

Enjoy one of the best views on Aruba at the top of the Hooiberg Hill

(Oranjestad)—If you are a regular hiker, or maybe want to spice up your morning work out session, then you might enjoy one of the



most popular climbing sites on the island: The Hooiberg Hill. Accompanied with a 600-step staircase, this hill overlooks a great part of the island, the Caribbean sea, and sometimes even the Santa Anna mountain located in the coastal state of Falcon in Venezuela, providing one of the best views you can get on Aruba.

located at the center district of the island, Santa Cruz, the Hooiberg Hill is the second highest point on the island at 165 meters above sea level (or about 540 feet above sea level). The highest point is Jamanta Hill at 189 meters (620 feet), located in the Arikok National Park.

The staircase that run on the side of

the hill was first built in 1951, when Mr. Eduardo Tromp constructed it. At that time, the staircase consisted of 900 steps. Over time, as the steps faced erosion, the government decided to renovate these stairs in 1991. This new project delivered the newer staircase with only 587 steps. However, don't be fooled—it may still be a work out to get on top. In addition, there is now a gazebo placed halfway up the stair for a little rest. The view at this resting stop is also a sight to see.

The best time to climb the hill would be early in the morning or right before sunset, as it may not be as hot. However, the hill is of course open all day, every day. □

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Traditional Aruban house at Alto Vista 12 now a protected monument

(Oranjestad)—On Tuesday afternoon, Prime Minister Mike Eman officially placed the protected monument plaque on a traditional Aruban house at Alto Vista 12. With this act, the house officially becomes part of Aruba's historic heritage and will be preserved for future generations.

The ceremony brought together various members of the Werleman family, representing several generations who grew up, lived, and played a role in the history of the house. During his speech, Prime Minister Eman emphasized that the recognition is not only for the building itself, but also for the human, cultural, and community legacy that the house represents.

More than a house

The house at Alto Vista 12 symbolizes important values such as perseverance, determination, family spirit, and commitment to the community.

Eman stressed that, along with the house, Aruba is also preserving the story of a family that left a deep mark on the community. Special attention was also given to Antonio "Toni" Werleman and his wife, who throughout their lives made significant contributions to Aruba's culture, music, and social development.

According to the Prime Minister, Toni Werleman was known as someone who was always willing to help others, with a positive attitude and a

constant dedication to making Aruba a better place. His love for his family, his community, and his country has led many people to still remember him today with appreciation and respect.

Legacy in culture and community

During the ceremony, Toni Werleman's important role in promoting Aruban music and preserving cultural identity was also highlighted. His leadership, commitment, and love for his community left an impact that is still felt today.

For the Prime Minister, the story of the Werleman family is an example of how, through effort, hard work, and dedication, a humble family can make a significant contribution to the progress of both the community and the country. The legacy passed down from generation to generation forms part of the history of Alto Vista and of Aruba itself.

Shared responsibility

With the placement of the official plaque, the house receives special recognition as a protected monument. This recognition comes with a shared responsibility to preserve, care for, and protect this heritage for the future.

The government expressed its gratitude to Monumentenbureau Aruba, the Werleman family, and everyone who contributed to making the house's official protection possible. □



Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.



either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started

his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem. Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this,

and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving. As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. Made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the

Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more. Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

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 points 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. 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

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. hue.□

Create museum memories with the entire family!

Museums are an integral part of conserving and honoring cultures, and Aruba is no exception. Our Island has a wide selection of various museums for our locals and visitors to see. Take this opportunity to learn about our island and experience a different day beyond the beach. Let us introduce to you to these locations.

Museum of Industry Aruba
The Museum of Industry is located in San Nicolas. This museum presents the history of gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and tourism through elaborated displays and multimedia installations.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. The Water Tower was built in 1939 and consists of three sections: the substructure, the high-rising vertical shaft, and the tank at the top. The Water Tower was purchased by the Monuments fund in 2003 so it could be restored and preserved as one of Aruba's monuments. The Museum of Industry is part of Aruban Museum Foundation (FMA), which is a foundation that maintains, preserves, and protects



the Aruban cultural sector, history, and nature. The museum of Industry is open daily from 9 am till 6 pm.

For more information check out their Facebook page: Museum of Industry Aruba.

Archaeological Museum of Aruba

The Archaeological Museum of Aruba is located at Schelpstraat 42 in downtown Oranjestad. The renovated historic Ecury complex in downtown Oranjestad has been transformed from a family home to a modern museum that preserves Aruba's Amerindian cultural heritage.

This 21st century museum is especially designed to preserve valuable artifacts dating back to the Pre-Ceramic period of 2500 BC.

In the late 1980's AMA identified its need for an adequate housing for its collection and activities. After studying various options, a project proposal was drawn up, including the acquisition and restoration of historical buildings in downtown Oranjestad.

These historical buildings were formerly the property of the Ecury family. The "Ecury Complex", is a cluster of single and two-story historic buildings, mainly



Dutch colonial architecture from the late 19th and 20th century on a plot of approximately 1,700 m2.

In 1997 the Aruban Government bought the complex for the National Archaeological Museum project. In 2004 a financial agreement was signed with the European Development Fund and in 2006 restoration and construction work began on the monumental buildings and the new to build exhibition space. In December 2007 the key to the complex was delivered and the museum's employees moved to the new location. The final design for the exhibit was completed in November 2007 and the permanent exhibit, financed by the Aruban Government and the Union of Cultural Organizations (UNOCA), opened in July 2009.

At the new location the National Archaeological

Museum Aruba uses approximately 500 m2 for its permanent exhibit. This exhibit showcases archaeological objects and conveys modern exhibition techniques information on the origin and culture of the first inhabitants of the island. The new permanent exhibit gives the visitor an insight into the cultures that inhabited the island in Pre-Historical and Early Historical times. The museum regularly hosts public seminars, special exhibitions and workshop for visitors to enjoy.

The museum is open daily from 9 am till 5 pm.

For more information check out the Facebook page National Archaeological Museum Aruba or website: www.manaruba.org

Editor's note: Pictures are property of the respective museums.

The Aruban Cunukero: From past to present

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's culture consists of rich historical traditions that make up the Aruban identity and lifestyle. However, the life of the cunukero (farmer) is perhaps the most important aspect of our culture, in a sense representing to locals the true essence of the Aruban.

Historically, cunucus (farms) played a huge role in the early social and economic development of Aruba, and its relevance dates back to the early days of the colonization era. Upon being discovered by Spanish conquistadors in the late 15th century, Aruba was used primarily as a ranch, housing horses and cattle brought from Europe. During the Dutch colonization era where the West Indian Company (WIC) dominated the economic sphere on the island, using the land to set up cattle farms and ranches remained popular.

Anthropologist Sidney Mintz divided Caribbean farmers back in four categories:

- The "squatters", who were mostly comprised of illegal and poor colonists, runaway slaves and deserters who took advantage of the Spanish's weak supervision on Caribbean islands like Cuba and the DR;
- Then you have "Early Yeomen", who were legal farmers who came to the west under contract. Once their contract expired, they were given a plot of land for independent use;
- Proto-Peasants were plantation slaves who were allowed to have a small piece of land to grow food for their own consumption. This was to curb the cost of living on the plantations;
- Lastly you have the "Runaway Peasant-ries", usually comprised of runaway slaves who acquired farming tools and cattle through stealing or through secret exchanges with other slaves from different plantations.



However, the Aruban cunukeros back then are hard to place, and their history may explain why.

From 1636 (beginning of Dutch colonization era) to before the oil industry in 1924, Aruba's population consisted of mostly farmers. These farmers were mostly indigenous and were characterized as peasants. They weren't allowed to participate in trading, but instead were granted a piece of land to live off of. However, in exchange for this grant, these indigenous farmers were obligated to work for the WIC, doing daily tasks such as taking care of or hunting cattle large majority of which were destined

for Curacao, clean water tanks and chop wood, among other things.

As much as these farmers were given to opportunity to live "free" with a plot of land, their exclusion from the trading and business world, as well as being deprived the chance to become real property and cattle owners, made them a unique group among Caribbean farmers at the time.

The WIC placed a lot of restrictions on these indigenous farmers a method to safeguard their cattle deposit on the island. The indigenous farmers were mostly granted less than 7 acres of land. Those who

owned bigger land were either once affiliated with the WIC or were colonists who settled on the island to try their luck at farming. In 1767, there were about 120 houses/cunucus on the island.

These Aruban farmers were also limited to the amount of cattle they could keep. Most kept goats as cattle, as only those who were affiliated with the WIC could keep (more) sheep. Of the 76 goat herders on the island, about 45 of them had less than 30 goats, and only 7 of them had more than 60 goats.

It wasn't until the WIC was defunct in late 18th century that these farmers

were able to obtain more freedom as cunukeros. After 1824, the government gave these farmers official permission to keep livestock, and the obligations once placed on them were officially discarded.

Because of the dry climate in Aruba, growing food for commercial purposes was not popular. The focus was mainly on cattle herding and taking care of livestock. However, livestock need food to survive, and when Aruba experienced its duper dry climate, many farmers would see a big loss in their livestock, and hence profit.

Although the WIC at one point did try to come up with an initiative to get more people to have land on the island, the climate never really allowed real profit from farming. Because of the climate, Aruban farmers in general could not keep large quantities of livestock. At a certain point toward the end of the 18th century, the climate got so bad that many farmers decided to leave the island for a while.

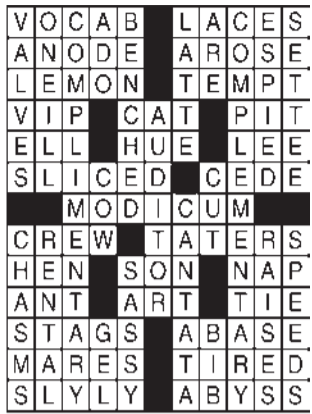
For this reason, the farming economy on the island remained small. As the years went by and people noticed that these farms could not really produce any sustainable profit, farmers kept their small piece of land just to live off of. This is why the Aruban cunukeros only played a very tiny role into the plantation economy.

In modern Aruba, cunucus and cunukeros still exist on the island, fortunately with more freedom and more opportunity to tap into the agricultural market. These farmers usually sell their produce on a smaller scale, like during farmers' market events and other types of (holiday) events. □

Source: "Arubaans Akkoord: Opstellen over Aruba van voor de komst van de olieindustrie (Aruban Accord: Essays on Aruba Before the Arrival of the Oil Industry)" by Alofs, Luc; Rutgers, Wim; Coomans, Henry E. red.

CROSSWORD

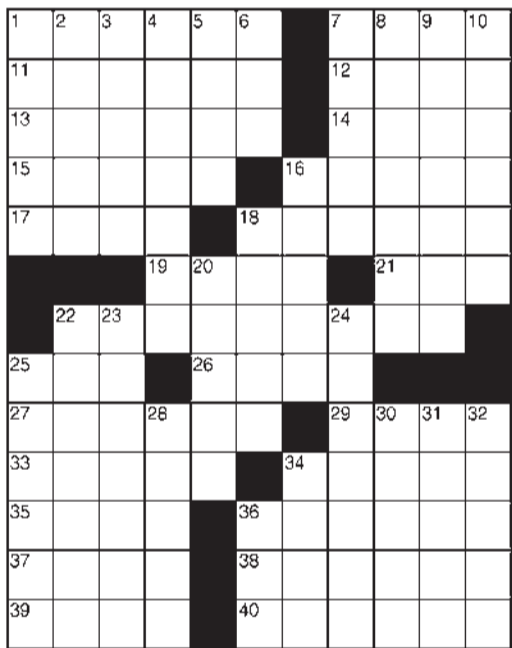
By **THOMAS JOSEPH**



ACROSS 40 Over-charges
1 Set up, perhaps

DOWN
7 Wise one
11 Feel empathy
12 Trolley's kin
13 Patch type
14 Jason's ship
15 Body of law
16 Wading bird
17 Was aware
18 Wonder of music
19 Regarding
21 Stop
22 Greenish-blue color
25 Light metal
26 Edit menu choice
27 Suspects' stories
29 Surfer's ride
33 Gave a score to
34 Lukewarm
35 Mayberry kid
36 Trifling
37 Shading
38 Right away
39 Hangs low

10 Hammed it up
16 Got up
18 Amazes
20 Ten-armed swimmer
22 Mild-flavored fish
23 Joining forces
24 Grateful reply
25 Foretelling cards
28 Edible roots
30 Imitative
31 Singer Gill
32 Periphery
34 Visitor to Oz
36 Price setting



2-25

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.

2-25 CRYPTOQUOTE

YS YA ZEGX SH JEYC, UTS YS
YA LHGAI MIKIG SH ZEKI
S G Y I X S H A T B B I I X .

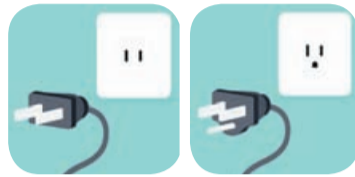
— SZIH XHGI GHHA IKICS

Cryptoquote: CHANGE WILL NOT COME IF WE WAIT FOR SOME OTHER PERSON OR IF WE WAIT FOR SOME OTHER TIME. — BARACK OBAMA

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.

JUNE CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

02 TUE	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C
09 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
16 TUE	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C SEVEN SEAS MARINER Arrival: 10:00 Departure: 21:00 Berth: I
17 WED	CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
23 THU	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
30 TUE	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 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

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

Difficulty: ★★★

6/25

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

6/24

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'Fingerprints' of black hole's event horizon detected for first time

Paris, France

Scientists have detected the "fingerprints" of a black hole's event horizon the boundary from which nothing can escape for the first time, according to research published on Wednesday.

The discovery was made by studying ripples in space-time called gravitational waves that were created when two black holes violently smashed into each other.

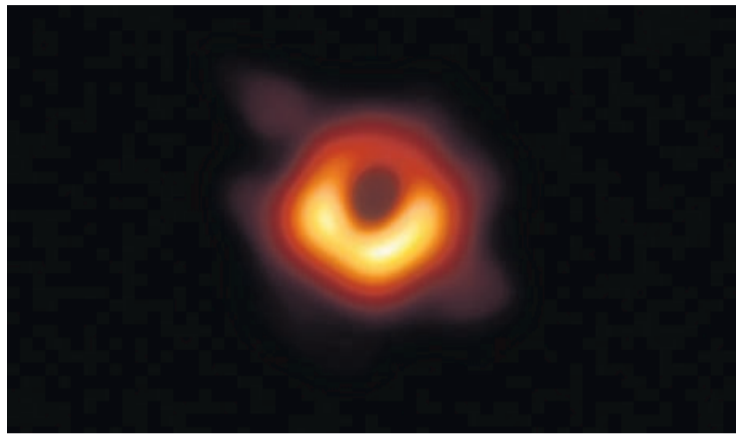
A black hole's event horizon is known as the "point of no return" because not even light can avoid being swallowed into its darkness. This has made them incredibly difficult to learn anything about.

However there is one event of such cataclysmic violence that it could offer a chance to glimpse this extreme phenomenon when two black holes merge into one. When this cosmic death spiral occurs, it shoots gravitational waves across the universe which scientists have been detecting for the last decade. For the new research published in Nature, an international team of researchers analyzed data from the strongest gravitational wave ever recorded, known as GW250114, detected by the LIGO observatory in January 2025. By isolating the last burst of waves known as "direct waves" from this black hole merger, the scientists said they were able to extract information from closer to an event horizon than ever before. "This black hole horizon concept normally appears in science fiction," lead study author Sizheng Ma of the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics in Canada told AFP.

"But now we are really able to touch the region around the horizon with gravitational data," he added. "Sometimes I cannot believe this is really happening."

- Causing a stir -

The last stage of two black holes merging is like a spoon stirring a glass of wa-



A handout photo provided by the European Southern Observatory on April 10, 2019 shows the first photograph of a black hole and its fiery halo, released by Event Horizon Telescope astronomers (EHT), which is the "most direct proof of their existence," one of the project's lead scientists told AFP.

ter, Sizheng Ma explained. The resulting swirl in space creates the ripple of gravitational waves that travel at the speed of light in all directions.

If the metaphorical spoon is stirring close enough to the black hole's event horizon, "this offers us a chance to decode the physics around that region", Sizheng Ma said. By supporting the theory of general relativity, the results "proved that Einstein was correct again," he added. The scientists emphasized that more research was needed to decipher what can be gleaned about event horizons using this method.

But they did detect information about how black holes twist space around themselves as they rotate a phenomenon known as "frame dragging".

"This is similar to pushing a glass into a table and twisting it, so that the tablecloth winds up around it," Maximiliano Isi, a gravitational wave astrophysicist at Columbia University, told AFP. In the future, the team of scientists hope to find signs of tiny changes known as quantum fluctuation.

"In this way, we can really probe this near horizon region to look for a new physics," including searching for a deviation from general relativity, Sizheng Ma said.

- Reaction mixed -

Experts not involved in the study urged caution.

Francesco Sannino, an Italian theoretical physicist who studies black holes, told AFP it was "compelling analysis" but needed to be checked by other researchers. □

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

First global rules adopted for self-driving cars: U.N.

Geneva, Switzerland

The first global regulations for fully autonomous vehicles were adopted Wednesday, a UN agency said, establishing uniform international safety requirements that could pave the way for larger-scale rollouts of self-driving cars.

Safety concerns and the cost of developing next-level systems have long slowed progress on autonomous vehicles.

As self-driving cars have begun to hit the road in a growing number of cities, the fragmented national approaches to regulation have spurred manufacturer fears that vehicles developed for one market could be blocked from others.

In a bid to address that issue, a meeting of the World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations at the United Nations in Geneva decided to introduce a global regulatory framework for vehicles equipped with fully autonomous driving systems (ADS).

The forum brings together



A car from U.S. self-driving car company Waymo is pictured in the streets of London on February 4, 2026.

dozens of countries, car-makers and technology giants.

"The global regulatory landscape has reached a decisive milestone," said the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the forum's umbrella organisation that counts 56 member states in Europe, North America and Asia.

- 'Really big step' -

The new regulatory framework, which does not cover

assisted systems, comes at a time when the market is heating up especially for so-called "robotaxis" driverless cars loaded with sensors.

In China and the United States combined, private robotaxi fleets more than doubled in 2025 to reach 8,000 vehicles across more than two dozen major cities, according to a May report by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

By 2035, the IEA forecasts

there will be between 700,000 and three million robotaxis in 40 to 80 major cities. The global regulations aim to "strengthen trust among governments, industry and the public by ensuring that automated systems everywhere meet rigorous ... safety standards", UNECE said.

"This is a really big step," said Richard Damm, chair of the UNECE Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Ve-

hicles (GRVA) behind the proposal.

"It's very important, as automation will be one of the future technologies we will see on the road," he told AFP. The new framework will require manufacturers to ensure testing meets strict credibility criteria, and also to implement audited safety governance and processes throughout the ADS lifecycle.

They would also need to provide evidence their system "poses no unreasonable risk", UNECE said, and would be required to provide continuous performance monitoring.

The vehicles must also record and store safety-relevant ADS data.

- January 2027 target -

The move was backed by all the major auto markets, including the United States, China, the European Union, Japan and Britain, the organisation said, voicing confidence that the worldwide deployment would be speedy.

"We expect it to enter into force in January 2027," GRVA secretary Francois Guichard told AFP, adding that a few manufacturers "are already in the starting blocks".



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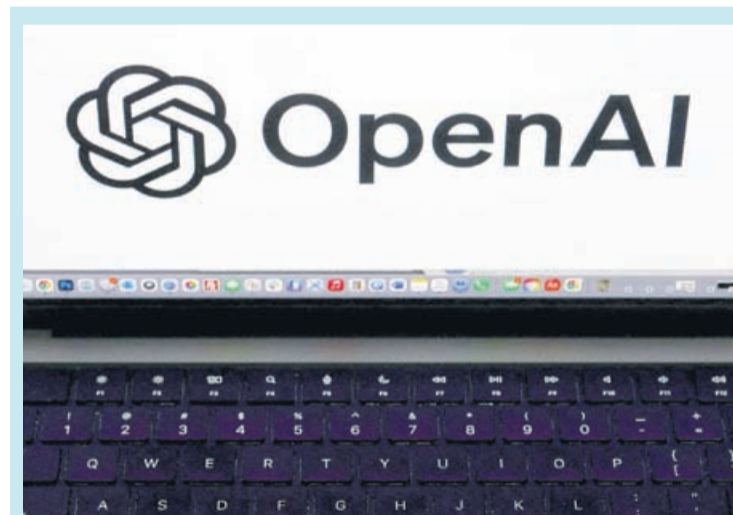
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In this photo illustration, the OpenAI logo is displayed on a laptop screen on May 20, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

San Francisco, United States

OpenAI on Wednesday unveiled its first custom-designed computer chip, called Jalapeno, built to run ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence products faster and more cheaply.

The chip, co-developed with semiconductor company Broadcom, is de-

signed specifically for AI inference the process of running an AI model to generate answers for users, as opposed to the lengthy and expensive process of training a model from scratch.

"While OpenAI is still measuring final performance, early testing shows that Ja-

OpenAI unveils AI chip Jalapeno

lapeno will deliver performance per watt substantially better than current state-of-the-art," the company said in a blog post.

The company said its own AI models helped design the chip, tightening the timeline to develop high-performance semiconductors.

The chip is designed to work with a broad range of AI models, not just OpenAI's own products, and will be deployed at data centers operated by Microsoft and other partners beginning in 2026.

By controlling its own chip design, OpenAI aims to reduce its dependence on outside suppliers such as Nvidia.

Broadcom chief executive Hock Tan called the chip "just the beginning," with the two companies planning successive generations of products.

The companies last year announced their partnership to design and build their own specialized computer processors for artificial intelligence in an effort to break a dependency on Nvidia's technology.

The chip was the latest in a series of announcements by OpenAI as it looked to strengthen its position as the preeminent company in generative AI against increasing competition from rivals Anthropic and Google.



(From L) International Olympic Committee (IOC) spokesperson's Mark Adams, chair of the Olympic program working group Karl Stoss, IOC President Kirsty Coventry and chair of the athletes' commission Pau Gasol attend a press conference during an IOC session, in Lausanne, on June 24, 2026.

Olympics to offer all Games competitors \$10,000 grants

Lausanne, Switzerland

The International Olympic Committee, which has been under growing pressure to introduce prize money to the Olympics, on Wednesday announced it was setting up a grant for every athlete who takes part in the Games.

The program was adopted on the opening day of the IOC annual session in Lausanne, where the body also approved amendments to its Olympic Charter, as well as changes to its process for evaluating potential hosts.

While the Olympics have long since dropped the requirement that athletes are amateurs, the IOC had, until Wednesday, been reluctant to pay competitors. "Every athlete at the Olympic Games will be eligible for a new \$10,000 (8,800 euros) 'Fit for the Future Olympian Grant'," said the IOC on its website, adding that the total fund would be worth \$140mn for each four-year Olympic cycle.

"All Olympians, no matter where they're from doesn't matter where they finish," would be entitled to the grant, said the chair of the Athletes' Commission Pau Gasol, during a press con-

ference at the IOC Session in Lausanne.

Gasol, a former Spanish basketball star, added that the payment would be "acknowledging the importance and relevance of being an Olympian, participating and representing your sport and to your country in the Games."

"It's not prize money," he stressed. He also said Paralympians would not be eligible.

The IOC said athletes who competed at the Milan-Cortina Winter Games this year would be eligible to apply once the application process had been set up.

- 'Seed money' -

President Kirsty Coventry has consistently opposed such a suggestion.

On Wednesday, she said that the money for the grants would not cut into the shares of IOC revenue that go to National Olympic Committees or international sports federations.

She said the IOC had decided the \$10,000 figure "was an acceptable amount everywhere that would allow for someone to start something or have it as a little bit of seed money."

Gasol, a former National Basketball Association star, said NBA players, National Hockey League players and tennis stars would be eligible for the grants.

Coventry's opposition to prize money has drawn a hostile response from some former athletes.

South African Roland Schoeman, like Coventry a former swimmer, launched a petition calling for the resignation of the president and the entire executive board. "The IOC generates billions. That value comes from the athletes. It is time to demand accountability," he wrote.

World Athletics broke with tradition and introduced prize money at the 2024 Paris Games each gold medal winner in the 48 track and field events receiving \$50,000 relay runners sharing the prize pot.

"Does this undermine the amateur ethic?" said World Athletics president Sebastian Coe at the time of the announcement.

"We're now operating in a completely different planet from when I was competing, so it is very important that the sport recognizes that change in landscape. □"



Britain's Jack Draper returns to U.S. player Marcos Giron during their men's singles round of 32 tennis match on day one of the Lexus Eastbourne Open at Devonshire Park, Eastbourne, on the south coast of England on June 22, 2026.

Britain's Draper continues promising start under Andy Murray

London, United Kingdom

Britain's Jack Draper continued his promising start under the guidance of three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray with a straight sets victory over compatriot Jack Pinnington Jones in the ATP Eastbourne tournament on Wednesday.

Draper overcame the unusually sweltering conditions on England's south coast to secure a place in the quarter-finals of the Wimbledon warm-up event with a 7-5 6-4 victory as he continued his comeback from longstanding arm and knee injuries.

The former world number four will face Canada's Gabriel Diallo on Thursday for a place in the semi-finals.

"My confidence levels were below the floor a couple of weeks ago; I hadn't played for a long time, wasn't match fit," Draper said on court following only his second match in more than two months.

"I didn't play Queen's (the London grass-court warm-up tournament for Wimbledon) because I just wasn't ready, so to come here and be on court and to be competing and playing at a high level very quickly, I'm very grateful," he added.

Draper, who again had two-time Wimbledon champion Murray offering support in his role as coach, made a confident start following Monday's straight-sets victory over Marcos Giron of the United States.

Wearing a protective sleeve on his troublesome racket arm, the 24-year-old broke his opponent in just game three but later squandered a set point at 5-4 up with a stray forehand which flew into the stands.

Pinnington Jones cashed in by taking advantage of his third break point courtesy of a fortunate, net-cord winner.

However, the 23-year-old then failed to hold as Draper regained the initiative before clinching the opening set with successive aces.

Pinnington Jones, who reached the second round his Wimbledon debut last year, again dropped serve at the start of the second set.

The world number 145 remained in touching distance without truly threatening Draper.

"Jack's a great friend so it's tough playing against a good friend," said Pinnington Jones.

"He's still young and he's been building his way up the rankings, he's nearly in the top hundred. He's going to be someone who's going to be a top, top player, and I think he showed that today." □

Golden Boot battle steals the show at World Cup

Kansas City, United States

Usually a subplot, the race for the World Cup Golden Boot is one of the main talking points at the 2026 tournament as the top marksmen set a blistering pace.

The overall record has already been broken by Argentine superstar Lionel Messi, who now has 18 goals over six World Cups after adding five in two games in the United States. But he is being chased hard by Kylian Mbappe and Erling Haaland who have four goals apiece with Cristiano Ronaldo and Harry Kane also in the mix. The long-standing single-tournament record of 13 goals set in 1958 by France's Just Fontaine appears vulnerable.



This combination of file pictures created on June 24, 2026 shows Norway's forward Erling Haaland (L) in Foxborough, Massachusetts on June 16, 2026 and France's forward Kylian Mbappe (R) in Philadelphia on June 22, 2026.

German great Gerd Muller was the last man to hit double figures, at the 1970 tournament in Mexico, when he scored 10 goals. Since then, at all but three tournaments, the leading scorer has hit six goals or fewer.

Messi, who turns 39 on Wednesday, has been the standout performer so far at the tournament in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

He struck a memorable hat-trick against Algeria before scoring twice in a 2-0 victory over Austria, accounting for all five of the defending champions' goals so far.

Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni said it was "hard to explain" the genius of the veteran forward after their opening match in Kansas City.

"We are amazed with him still, although we get to see him on a daily basis and he's been the best for 20 years," he said. "He still pulls it off every single match."

Messi's most likely challenger, based on the prospect of a deep run in the tournament, is Mbappe, who scored eight goals four years ago in Qatar to win the Golden Boot.

The 27-year-old, now France's record goalscorer, is just two goals behind Messi's career total.

The Real Madrid star said, perhaps unconvincingly, that chasing Messi was not top of his mind after his team's 3-0 stroll against Iraq in their second game. "Leo always scores goals and always will," he said. "So I am not looking at what he is doing, I'm just focusing on helping my team."

- Haaland streak -

Level with Mbappe on four goals is Manchester City forward Haaland, who has scored in his past 12 competitive appearances for Norway.

The giant forward, 25, played down his extraordinary talent after taking his international tally to a remarkable 59 goals in 52 games. □



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