

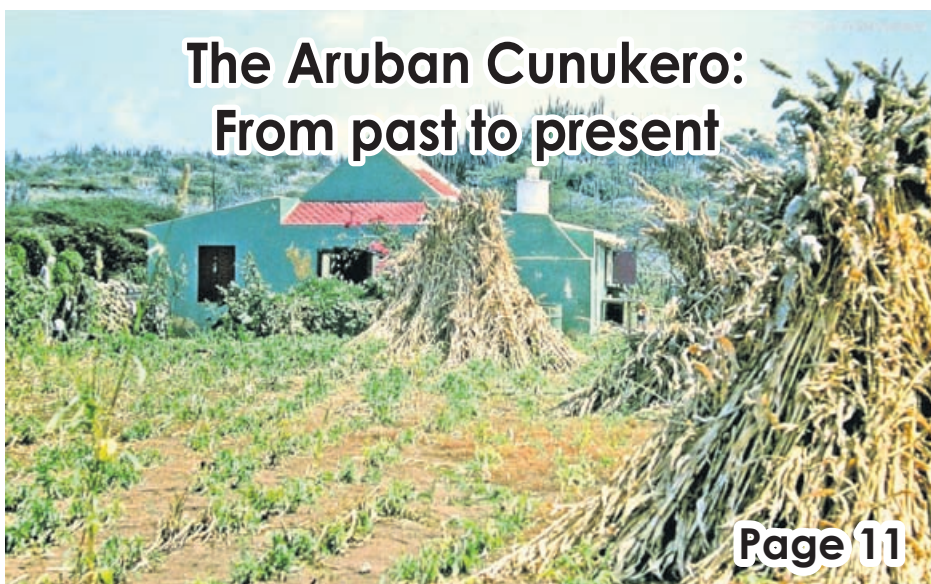


Nature Calls: Take a cruise through the Arikok National Park!



Page 9

The Aruban Cunukero: From past to present



Page 11

Another treasure of Aruba's beaches: Sea Glass!



Page 8

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Trump says will meet North Korea's Kim later this year

Washington, United States

U.S. President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he would meet Kim Jong Un later this year, seeking to revive the bond he claims to have struck with the leader of nuclear-armed North Korea in his first term.

Trump told reporters at the White House it was important to "get along" with Kim, adding in an unusually precise assessment that Pyongyang now had 57 "very powerful" nuclear weapons.

But Trump's sudden focus on Kim and his scaling back of joint US-South Korean military drills have alarmed Asian allies while sparking speculation that he is seeking a foreign policy win as his Iran war stalls.

"Yeah, I will be," Trump said during a tour of a new helipad at the White House, when asked if he planned to meet Kim later in 2026.

Trump defended planning to meet the North Korean leader even as he wages a war with Iran that he has justified on the grounds of preventing Tehran from getting a nuclear bomb.

"He has 57 very powerful nuclear weapons. Should have never allowed it to happen... If I were president, I wouldn't have allowed it," Trump said, referring to Kim.

"But he's got them. I get along with him very well. I can't let Iran have a nucle-



North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump cross south of the Military Demarcation Line that divides North and South Korea, after Trump briefly stepped over to the northern side, in the Joint Security Area (JSA) of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized zone (DMZ) on June 30, 2019.

ar weapon. And I know Kim Jong Un very well, and he's going to be fine."

Trump gave no details, but the Wall Street Journal reported that he was eying a meeting when he travels to Shenzhen, China for an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in November.

- 'Fire and fury' -

While acknowledging Pyongyang possesses nuclear weapons, the US does not officially recognize North Korea as a nuclear state and it is unusual for a president to publicly offer such a specific assess-

ment of its stockpiles. But Trump's mention of North Korea having 57 nuclear weapons is in line with previous assessments by the U.S. government and think tanks that Pyongyang had an arsenal of 50 to 60. After initially mocking Kim as "rocket man" and threatening "fire and fury" against North Korea, Trump met the North Korean leader three times during his first spell in the White House from 2017 to 2021.

Trump said they "fell in love" after exchanging "beautiful letters" but the headline-grabbing summits

produced few tangible developments on the nuclear issue and they haven't yet met in Trump's second term.

Yet Trump has now pushed the issue back up the agenda since suddenly announcing on Sunday that he had ordered Washington to scale back "hostile" military drills with Seoul, citing his relationship with Kim. He has also dropped growing hints about communications with Kim, although he wouldn't confirm on Wednesday that the pair were exchanging letters.

- 'Completely unaware' -

The powerful sister of Kim Jong Un said Wednesday she didn't know about the reported communication between her brother and Trump.

"Regarding the recent news from Washington about communication between the leaders of North Korea and the United States, I am completely unaware of it," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement.

Kim Yo Jong nevertheless said her brother still had "good memories and feelings" about Trump and that the relationship between the two leaders remains "excellent."

Her statement came hours after Seoul announced the annual Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises with the United States would end about a week earlier than planned "at the suggestion of the US side."

The Pentagon said the reduced drills would cause "no degradation to US training objectives".

The exercises are designed to prepare for a possible attack by North Korea.

Kim Yo Jong, however, dismissed the reduction, saying: "we do not consider it worth commenting on and find it completely uninteresting."

Nuclear-armed North Korea has long voiced outrage at the exercises, considering them dress rehearsals for an invasion. □

U.S. national debt exceeds \$40 trillion: govt data



U.S. Secretary of Treasury Scott Bessent looks on during a Cabinet meeting at Camp David in Maryland, on July 31, 2026.

Washington, United States

The U.S. gross national debt has surged past \$40 trillion, government data showed Wednesday, outstripping earlier forecasts at a pace fuelled in part by President Donald Trump's invalidated tariffs.

The uptick in borrowing comes as longer term US obligations linked to social security and health care have been growing, while interest payments have climbed as well.

Total public debt outstanding stood at \$40.05 trillion at the close of business Tuesday, according to data released by the Treasury Department on Wednesday.

This stands in contrast to an earlier forecast by the Congressional Budget Office that overall borrowing would hit \$39.4 trillion by the end of fiscal year 2026.

Rising U.S. debt comes at a concerning moment as borrowing costs have swelled.

Yields on long-term Treasury bonds rose Tuesday to the highest level since 2007, reflecting growing price pressures due to war in the Middle East and anxiety over US deficit spending.

The increase forces the U.S. government to refinance debt at the highest rates since before the 2008 global financial crisis.

The U.S. Treasury Department moved to steady the long-term bond market early Wednesday, sending yields lower.

The federal government operates at a deficit and borrows money to cover the gap.

But "it's been well known for a while that the United States government was on a pretty unsustainable path with deficits," said Jessica Riedl, a budget and tax fellow at the Brookings Institution. □



Democratic U.S. Senate candidate, Florida state Rep. Angie Nixon waves as she is introduced to the congregation at the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church on August 17, 2026 in Hallandale Beach, Florida.

U.S. socialists score shock Florida win as Trump picks stumble

Washington, United States

The Democratic Party's left wing on Wednesday celebrated its latest stunning upset in a US Senate primary in Florida, extending its winning streak into President Donald Trump's home state as voters rejected several of his preferred Republican candidates in other races.

State lawmaker Angie Nixon defeated heavily favored former national security official Alexander Vindman for the nomination to challenge for the Republican-held seat in November.

The result was one of the biggest surprises of the primary season, with Nixon overcoming a vast fundraising disadvantage against Vindman, who became a national figure after testifying against Trump during his first impeachment proceedings.

Nixon is a member of the Democratic Socialists of America and was backed by prominent left-wing lawmakers, though the national organization did not formally endorse her.

"Look, we can argue all day about people's labels, but at the end of the day, I care about the needs of

people," Nixon told NBC News during the campaign, describing her politics as "people-centered."

Trump has been impeached twice -- the first time in 2019, after Vindman blew the whistle on his attempts to recruit Ukraine into his efforts to smear his 2020 election opponent Joe Biden. The president was acquitted in a Senate trial.

He celebrated Vindman's primary defeat in a social media post calling the decorated combat veteran a "treasonous creep" and predicted "certain defeat" for Nixon against her Republican opponent in November.

Her victory revived momentum for the Democratic left wing after it narrowly lost a closely watched Wisconsin gubernatorial primary last week. But it could also make an already difficult Florida Senate race much tougher for Democrats.

The once-pivotal swing state has shifted sharply Republican in recent years, and election analysts immediately downgraded Democratic chances of flipping the seat.

Vindman quickly endorsed Nixon, and some strategists

even suggested his defeat was a boon for mainstream Democrats, who would now avoid throwing millions of dollars at a race many believe they would likely have lost anyway.

- Mainstream successes -

Mainstream Democrats had better results elsewhere in Florida.

Congressman Jared Moskowitz easily defeated a democratic socialist challenger in a newly redrawn district that Republicans hope to capture in November. His House colleague Debbie Wasserman Schultz survived a crowded primary in a heavily Democratic seat.

She had faced criticism from party activists over her decision to move into the predominantly Black district after a new Republican electoral map made her old base less favorable. Those victories offered a counterweight to Nixon's triumph, underscoring the mixed verdict Democratic voters have delivered this year as the party debates whether a confrontational left-wing message or a centrist approach offers the best route back to power. Republicans had an unsettled night of their own. □



This combination of pictures created on August 19, 2026 shows the Moderna logo at their headquarters on May 8, 2020 in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the Merck logo at their headquarters on February 5, 2024 in Rahway, New Jersey.

'Breakthrough' mRNA cancer drug curbs melanoma in large trial

Washington, United States

U.S. drugmakers Merck and Moderna said Wednesday a personalized cancer treatment had shown success in reducing the recurrence of melanoma tumors in a late-stage trial hailed by experts as a "breakthrough."

The news sent shares in Moderna soaring 145 percent to \$154 while Merck's stock was up more than 12 percent to \$152.

The drug, called "intismeran autogene," is based on the same messenger RNA (mRNA) technology behind Covid-19 vaccines.

Researchers have for years been trying to apply mRNA treatments against cancer, but this was the first time such a drug showed positive results in a large, late-stage clinical trial.

"Today marks an extraordinary milestone for Moderna, for mRNA science and, most importantly, for patients with cancer," Moderna CEO Stephane Bancel said in a statement.

The trial lasted approximately a year and involved 1,137 patients who, following surgical removal of their cancers, were randomized into groups, with two-thirds receiving the new treatment plus pembrolizumab -- the current standard-of-care drug while the rest received pembrolizumab alone.

The companies said they would present their data at an upcoming international conference and begin filings with regulators for approval.

- 'Proof of principle' -

Lennard Lee, an oncologist and assistant professor at the University of Oxford who was not involved in the trial, called the results "very encouraging," adding: "We should now look forward to seeing the complete data." Oncologist Marco Gerlinger, a professor at London's Barts Cancer Institute, added that beyond being good news for patients with melanoma, it was "proof of principle that personalised cancer vaccines work."

"I think it is fair to call it a breakthrough in the development of new cancer immunotherapies," he added, while also noting the press release was short on details.

The treatment works by taking a sample of the patient's tumor and identifying its unique mutational signature, or "fingerprint," then using mRNA technology to fight it. □

New 'Insidious' reflects anxiety of being a new parent: director

Los Angeles, United States

When he sat down to write "Insidious: Out of the Further," the sixth installement of the blockbuster horror franchise, director Jacob Chase channeled his fears over a major life event: becoming a parent.

"I became a dad for the first time, and I was terrified of being a dad," he told AFP.

"I was really nervous I would raise my child in the wrong way, and I was thinking about parenting almost in opposition of how I was raised."

The resulting movie, which opens in U.S. theaters on Friday, promises to take audiences into the Further and bring back the demons who live there.

The main character is a woman who longs to be a good mother and protect her daughter from the terrible things that happened to her, but ends up becoming the worst version of herself in the process.

"I wanted to create a character who was haunted by her past...the experience with the Insidious...a char-



(L-R) Lin Shaye, Island Austin, Amelia Eve and Brandon Perea attend the Los Angeles special screening of Sony's "Insidious: Out Of The Further" at AMC The Grove 14 on August 18, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

acter who already had this trauma from her past and was trying desperately to outrun her own sins of her mom."

The result is an atmospheric film that gradually draws the viewer to the other

side, revealing the terror that seeks to infiltrate the characters' world.

Starring Amelia Eve, Lin Shaye, Brandon Perea, and Sam Spruell, "Insidious: Out of the Further" introduces new directions and char-

acters to a franchise that has grossed over \$740 million at the global box office.

- 'Completely evolving' -

This chapter follows Gemma (Amelia Eve), a young

single mother raising her daughter in the same home where she grew up a house that holds traumatic memories.

It is there that Gemma discovers she can not only enter the afterlife but also bring its shadowy inhabitants into the world of the living, a power that makes her a target for terrifying entities and puts her daughter in danger.

For the 34-year-old British actress, it was an exciting opportunity.

"It's one thing to be welcomed into this franchise, and it's a whole other blessing to then get to introduce a new aspect to this incredible world," Eve told AFP.

To build that protective bond with her on-screen daughter, the actress drew inspiration from her relationship with her own sisters: "The people you'd do anything for," she described.

Eve shares the screen with Lin Shaye, who returns once again to play Elise Rainier, a character who fans consider the heart of the franchise.

Spain's Granada closes iconic Alhambra as new quake hits

Granada, Spain

Granada's treasured Alhambra palace shut with minor damage on Tuesday after a second major earthquake in days sent debris falling and injured three people in the Spanish city, authorities said.

The 4.8-magnitude earth-

quake took place at around 10:38 am (0838 GMT) with its epicentre in the town of Alhendin, 10 kilometres (six miles) south of Granada, according to the National Geographical Institute.

It was the strongest in a

series of earthquakes to hit the southern region on Tuesday morning, sending residents rushing out of buildings and into the streets.

The Alhambra complex, a UNESCO-listed jewel of medieval Islamic architecture which welcomed 2.7 million visitors last year, closed for the rest of the day as a precaution. A first inspection found no "significant structural damage" or a "risk of collapse", said Antonio Sanz, the Andalusia region's top emergencies official.

But there were "very localised situations" of minor damage to "non-structural elements", including battlements, plasterwork and decorative elements, he told an evening press briefing.

"That must be taken into

account in terms of visitor safety, but not from the point of view of risk to our incredibly rich heritage," said Sanz.

Emergency services said they received more than 500 calls in Granada reporting cracks, falling debris and other earthquake-related incidents, including a dozen requests for medical assistance, mostly for anxiety attacks.

Three people were lightly injured, including a girl who was taken to hospital, said Sanz, who ruled out "very serious structural damage" to homes which "held up well".

Videos posted on social media showed debris strewn on the street, including in the historic centre near the Alhambra, and some damage to cars in the popular tourist city. □

In this new installment, Rainier represents a beacon of light for Gemma, a role that taught her a lot, Shaye says.

"It's still completely evolving, which is very exciting to me," said the 82-year-old actress.

"You'd think it's the same old, same old every time (but) I feel that Elise is learning something new about herself."

The women and their allies in the world of the living will face Cyrus, a new diabolical entity played by Sam Spruell ("Fargo"), who commands the forces of evil. "I wanted a villain that was different," said director Chase, who was looking to create a charismatic demon.

"I wanted someone that was a bit more human and someone that had a real goal in the film.

"To me, a charming villain is so much scarier because I could see myself wanting to follow them." □



A picture taken on August 18, 2026 shows a view of the Alhambra from Saint Nicholas square after earthquake in Granada.

U.K. PM launches bid to help homeless, donating part of his wages

London, United Kingdom

New U.K. Prime Minister Andy Burnham unveiled plans Wednesday to offer those sleeping rough a way off the streets by Christmas, and vowed to donate part of his wages to help curb homelessness.

"No one should have to bed down in a doorway or outside a station," Burnham said in a statement announcing the new plans. It comes a month after Burnham replaced Keir Starmer as prime minister, and builds on his promise on his first day in office to end rough sleeping.

His government is now setting out the next steps to achieve that aim, with emergency accommodation and long-term housing support to be put in place across England this winter. Under the program, areas facing the highest levels of homelessness and housing pressure will receive the largest share of a boosted £442 million (\$666 million) in funding.

And Burnham told the Big Issue magazine, which works to fight poverty, that he would donate 15 percent of his salary to homelessness causes.

The publication says the PM is paid about £180,000 a year.

"I wouldn't want to ask



Britain's Prime Minister Andy Burnham speaks with staff and residents as pays a visit to the homelessness charity Changing Lives in Newcastle, north-east England on August 19, 2026.

anybody to do anything that I'm not prepared to do. I want to lead from the front," he told the magazine.

"This issue matters massively to me. I don't want to live in a country where walking past people sleeping rough just becomes commonplace."

The number of rough sleepers in England reached a record 4,793 in 2025, according to government figures.

Rough sleepers those sleeping outdoors are a minority of England's total homeless, estimated at

382,000 in 2025 by leading charity Shelter.

This larger figure includes those who manage to stay off the streets but lack a permanent residence or security of tenure, and includes families and children.

The figures show little sign of budging, with the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) think tank warning earlier this year that the numbers could increase by 25 percent by 2030.

Burnham cited efforts to move rough sleepers into temporary accommodation during the Covid-19

pandemic, saying in his statement that "we can do it again".

He also vowed to end rough sleeping during his almost-decade long stint as mayor of the northern city of Manchester, but ultimately failed despite some initial success.

- Helping 'thousands' -

He pledged on Monday that the government would convene the first national summit dedicated to tackling rough sleeping later in the year.

Burnham also stressed it will be up to local leaders in-

cluding mayors to drive the action before Christmas.

He said during a visit to a homeless charity in northern Newcastle that the program would be funded from the existing housing ministry budget.

But he acknowledged: "The government money may not fully get us there."

"I'm saying to wider society, faith organizations, let's see if we can do this together. Let's see if Britain can do this."

The government said the funding package would not only provide immediate accommodation, but also support the creation of more than 1,000 permanent homes over the next three years.

Housing Secretary Angela Rayner said the government was moving "urgently" following Burnham's pledge.

"This funding will help thousands of people leave the streets behind, move into secure homes and get the support they need to rebuild their lives," she said.

Charities broadly welcomed the announcement, but there was skepticism from other political parties.

The opposition Conservatives housing spokesman James Cleverly said it had been presented "without any plan for delivery". □

Indian marble waste dump becomes unlikely tourist attraction

Kishangarh, India

A sprawling expanse of white marble waste in India is drawing tourists, filmmakers and social media enthusiasts to a landscape that looks more like a snow-covered valley than a dumping ground.

The site in Kishangarh, a major marble-processing hub in the northwestern state of Rajasthan, is blanketed in white slurry and discarded stone generated when marble and granite blocks are cut and polished.

Spread across 82 acres (33 hectares), it receives more than 5,500 tonnes of slurry every day from over 1,200 processing units, making it one of Asia's largest such

disposal sites.

But the industrial wasteland has evolved into an unlikely attraction.

Couples pose among the chalk-white mounds for pre-wedding photographs, while filmmakers and music-video crews use the terrain as a backdrop. Visitors ride horses across the undulating landscape, drawn by its unusual appearance.

Social media has fuelled the site's popularity, with visitors comparing its gleaming surface to snowy alpine scenery.

After rainfall, water collects in depressions between the waste piles, forming vivid blue pools that ac-

centuate the illusion of a mountain vista.

Authorities have repeatedly warned about the environmental impacts of marble waste disposal in the region, citing risks ranging from airborne dust to groundwater contamination.

Studies have detected elevated levels of salinity, hardness and some heavy metals in water from the surrounding area.

India's top environmental court ordered a series of corrective measures in January, including guidelines aimed at promoting the reuse of slurry instead of uncontrolled dumping.

"There is no engineered liner system, no decanting

wells, no dust suppression mechanisms, no monitoring of air or groundwater, and no protective green belt," the tribunal said in its order.

But those dangers have not yet deterred crowds of visitors from soaking in the striking, otherworldly scenery. □



Tourists visit the marble-waste dumping yard in Rajasthan's Kishangarh city on August 16, 2026.

Italian scientists bet on octopus to fight crab invasion

Cesenatico, Italy

From a fishing trawler in the Adriatic, Italian scientists gently release thousands of tiny octopuses in the hope of fighting an invasive crab species that has devastated local fisheries.

A team from University of Bologna is betting that the common octopus can help contain the burgeoning population of blue crab a voracious crustacean that has ravaged shellfish production in the Adriatic.

"We chose the octopus because, in the wild, it is a formidable predator of crustaceans," Antonio Casalini, one of the researchers, told AFP.

Native to the North American Atlantic coast, blue crabs arrived in the Mediterranean decades ago, likely transported via ballast water from ships.

But their numbers have ballooned in recent years, with the government and fishing groups linking the boom to warming waters and climate change.

With sharp, blue-tinted claws that are particularly apt at prying open shells, they have wreaked havoc in Italy's northeast one of Europe's top clam producing regions.

Authorities in Bologna's Emilia-Romagna region said last year the species



A fisherman cleans an octopus in the harbour of Naples, 04 November 2006.

has caused almost 17 million euros (\$20 million) in damages there since 2022. Farming and fishing group Coldiretti has put the figure at about 200 million for the whole of Italy, with the northern Veneto region also badly affected.

"It eats everything including young clams lying on the seabed," said Davide Sanulli a fishermen and mussels farmer with thick eyebrows and grizzled hair, said of the crab.

In lagoon-like areas off the Po River delta "it has caused a massacre", added the 64-year-old, who is helping the university project.

Excellent swimmers and weighing up to one kilogramme (2.2 pounds), the crabs have few natural predators something the researchers are hoping to change.

- Crab-eaters -

Launched last year and funded by the Emilia-Romagna region, the "Octo-Blu" project seeks to increase octopus numbers as a counterweight to the hard-shelled invaders.

The team breeds octopus hatchlings in white water tanks at a lab in the port town of Cesenatico.

When ready, the tiny invertebrates are scooped out

by the thousands into a large plastic bag and taken out to sea, sometimes using Sanulli's rugged blue fishing boat.

The hatchlings are then released near underwater reefs where the group has laid cement-and-clay artificial dens to help the octopuses thrive.

Some 80,000 have been let out since June, an amount the research team is seeking to double by the end of August, hoping to see a few grow into fully developed octopuses.

"The idea is to establish a small community close to shore so that it can better combat the spread of the

blue crab," said Casalini, an aquaculture technician. The project has some clear drawbacks.

The common octopus is not prone to live in the sandy, warm waters typical of the lagoon areas where the blue crab is making the most damage, making its potential impact there negligible something the researchers are well aware of.

Other experts have suggested that seabass could be more effective at crab-fighting and the Bologna University team is also looking at eels, which are avid eaters of crustacean eggs, to complement the octopus's efforts.

Yet, if replicated, the pilot could still help limit blue crab numbers and the related impact on the Adriatic coast's marine environment, Casalini said.

"Blue crabs have an incredible reproductive potential and fertility rate," said Pietro Emmanuele, another University of Bologna researcher, noting a single crab lays millions of eggs, most of which hatch.

Although only some hatchlings reach adulthood, were an octopus to catch even a single female, it would make a difference, he said. □

Rafts on Rome's Tiber River cool down overheated tourists

Rome, Italy

Forget the long lines at Roman ruins and overpriced gelato -- sweating tourists are enjoying a break from

the scorching heat by rafting on the Eternal City's Tiber River. A welcome change from the beaten tourist track, river rafting on

the Tiber long the lifeblood of the ancient city is a unique, and relatively new option for tourists seeking to discover Italy's capital.

Starting at the water's edge near the historic Piazza del Popolo, the inflatable rafts float by some of the city's most photographed landmarks, from the Castel Sant'Angelo the burial place of Emperor Hadrian to St Peter's Basilica, the dome of which can be seen from the water.

After approximately two hours, tours end at an ancient Roman port in the neighborhood of Trastevere, whose name literally means "Across the Tiber".

"It's really nice to get a different view of Rome. It's

something special compared with what you can see on foot," said Manuel Frank, 19, a visitor from Germany on a recent "Roma Rafting" tour.

His guide, Giuseppe Battaglia, said the 40-euro tour allows tourists a different perspective on the city, one that follows "much the same route that the Romans used to take before setting off on their conquests".

In Ancient Rome and centuries beyond, Italy's third-longest river provided water and food, while acting as a key trade route for the city's inhabitants.

"We're always used to thinking about roads, cars

and motorbikes, but Rome also gives us the chance to take a tour along the river," said the 37-year-old guide. As the rafts reach the picturesque Tiber Island, the current picks up and creates light rapids, splashing the rafters as they pass beneath some of Rome's oldest stone bridges.

Belgian tourist Sabine Maisano, 50, said she had sought out something different for her visit to Rome with her family.

"After a day of walking for kilometers, being able to sit down in a boat... even though you have to paddle a little, that allows us to relax, stay cool and discover the city at a more relaxed pace." □



People raft in a rubber dinghy on the Tiber River past Tiberina Island, in a stretch of the river that runs entirely within the urban area of central Rome, on August 14, 2026.

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin



(Oranjestad)—Aruba To-day loves to share parts of the Aruban culture with our readers, diving into (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this article, we'll look at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamentu we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is 'placa'. Cents are called 'cen' (pronounced: seng), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the

coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called 'Dos Placa'; 10-cent coins were called 'Debchi'; 25-cent coins were called 'Diez Placa' and the 50-cent coin was once called 'Yotin' (pronounced: jo-teen). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called placa too. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it



is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that

were the first to set foot on the island.

Current design and symbolism

10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a Tortuga blanco (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, a coral motif, and the symbols of Cas Floria (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called Shoshoro. The birds Trupiaal, Shoco, rock drawings, and the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also a Purun di ceramica (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the Cododo (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), Cangreu di tera (land crab), Willem III Tower, and again the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called Banana di rif. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the Yuwana (Iguana), Aloe, Toteki (lizard), the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the Baile di cinta (folkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the Dornasol and the Warawara—both local birds, along with the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, the Tuna cactus plant, and the Caha di orgel (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

The word "florin" is supposedly named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word "florino", both explanations related to historical Italian currencies.

Source: Placa, placa, placa by the National Library of Aruba (BNA).



Best spots to view the sunset

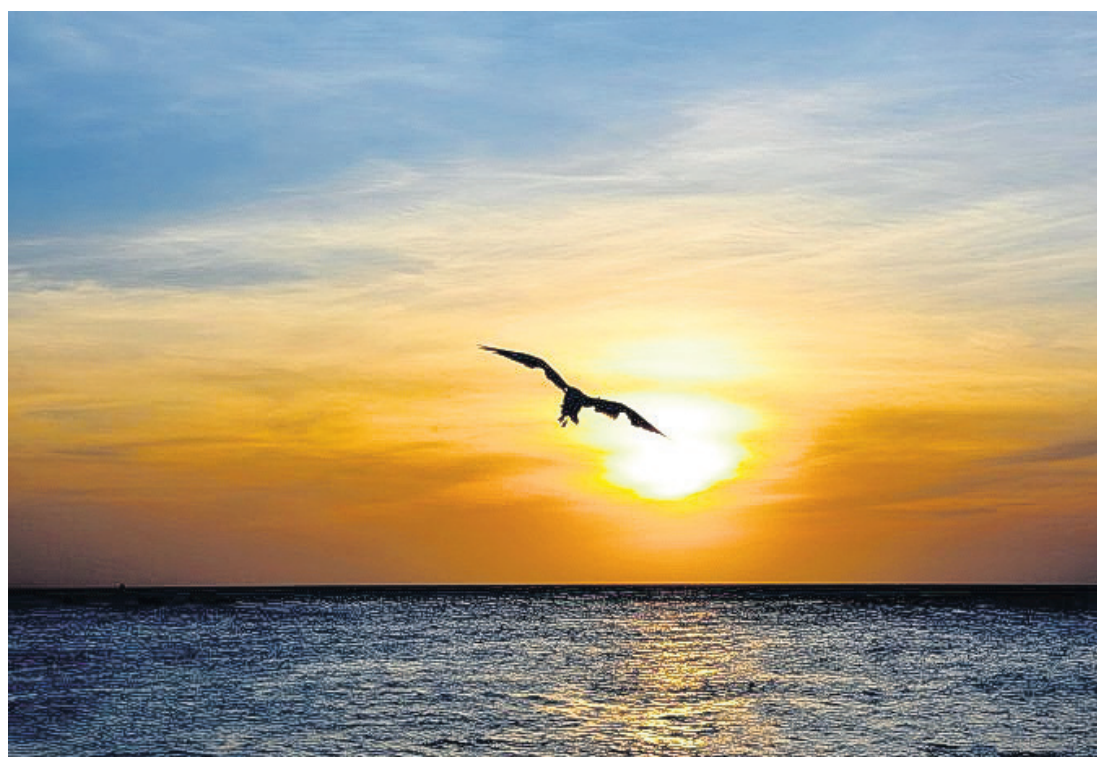
(Oranjestad)—What can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset? Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

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.□

Another treasure of Aruba's beaches: Sea Glass!



(Oranjestad)—It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and

down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white sand between the famous Natural Bridge"

and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process.

It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass.

The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass.

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handcrafts and jewelry!

Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges.

Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain

inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass.

Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and

the easiest to find are the brown, green and clear glass.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day!

Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation!□

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Today is going to be a good day



(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles

across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whip-tail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle

snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center.

For more information, visit the website www.acf.aw

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in



1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light.

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a

beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout as it might get a little windy and rough you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. It's fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. □

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!

Packed with natural electrolytes, coconuts are a fantastic choice for hydrating yourself under the blazing Aruban sun. Coconuts also contain antioxidants that can help reduce stress and protect your cells. So while you're having fun exploring the island, know you are well-protected with a fresh-cut coconut in your hand. □



Aruba's kite flying tradition



(Oranjestad)—Every year for King's Day, Arubans gather with friends and family to fly kites. Big or small, paper or plastic, blue skies fill up with these colorful flying contraptions, brightening our yearly celebration

of the Dutch Monarch.

The tradition of flying kites starts at home in the weeks leading up to King's Day. These kites were traditionally made with things found in the nearby mondi* and in

the kitchen at home. Using dried up cactus sticks for the frame, old news papers, and glue made from flour, water and salt to dry faster (some people even use cornstarch slurry as glue), kids usually make their own



kites with their friends, parents or other close family members. Tails are made from old bed sheets, ripped and tied together to create a long string of fabric trailing behind the back end of the kite. To finish off the process, people used fish lines or thin rope to tie three corners of the kite together. Another long string of rope is tied in the knotted center and bundled up, used to steer the kite as it flies in the air. Decorating the kite was especially important, and children would use paint to create their own designs—

the more colorful, the better!

People usually fly their kites in big open fields, like empty soccer and baseball fields found all around the island around noon, when the sun is at its brightest. In the past few years, kite flying has become a sport in which groups of people would battle against each other to see whose kite is the biggest, the prettiest, and whose could fly flawlessly and longer in the air.

*Mondi: Aruban woods. □

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use

(Oranjestad)— Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2

to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes

need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence,



if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes. □

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris



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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 Peasantries", 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 his-

tory 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, Henny E. red.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 40 Flower girl, often
1 Coffee additive
6 Banquet
11 Reddish dye
12 Un-occupied

- 13 Use, as advice
14 Car count
15 Eye part
17 Summer sign
18 Leave quickly
19 Signing, for short
22 Pub staple
23 Small drum
24 Like some online videos
25 Draw closer to
27 Hotel feature
30 Central American capital
31 Clumsy one
32 Tick off
33 Soviet tyrant
35 Border
38 Key
39 Wild

- DOWN**
- 1 Rhythmic dance
2 React with horror
3 Main dish
4 Erelong
5 Like ogres, in folklore
6 Nourished
7 Moody music
8 Twin of Artemis
9 Flow
10 Holyfield rival
16 Ready for romance
20 Issuing from a source
21 Cardinal cap letters
24 Through
25 Top story
26 Turkey's capital
27 Pavlova's field
28 For each
29 Leased
30 Ticks off
34 Nepal setting
36 Ruin
37 Moose's kin

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

4-29 CRYPTOQUOTE

WIR BMK MOVWVG QUDC M EMU

LMFQ. WIR BMK'C QUDC M

EOMKZ LMFQ. — HIUD

LDBIROC

Cryptoquote: YOU CAN NEVER GET A CUP OF TEA LARGE ENOUGH OR A BOOK LONG ENOUGH TO SUIT ME. — C.S. LEWIS

ALPHA CAPER
GOREY ALAMO
EXILE WARMS
MESH STAY
THAN ANKA
ION CLEANUP
NADER ANDRE
EXPLOIT PIE
RAPT MASK
STOP SPAR
COPIE UNCAP
AREEL NIECE
NERDS YALTA

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power

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

Drinking water



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

store.

Supermarket hours

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

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as



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

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE	
AUGUST	
16 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
18 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
19 WED	FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E
23 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E
25 TUE	CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
26 WED	FREEWINDS Arrival: 6:00 Departure: Berth: E
30 SUN	FREEWINDS DEPT. Arrival: Departure: 24:00 Berth: E

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

Difficulty: ★★★

8/20

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★

8/19

Oldest human brain cells grown in lab 'recorded passage of time'

Paris, France

Peppercorn-sized clumps of human brain cells grown in a lab for a record seven years aged similarly to those inside our heads, suggesting they "recorded the passage of time," scientists said Wednesday. These tiny clumps called organoids are grown from stem cells by scientists around the world in the hopes of uncovering the mysteries of our brain and to test new medicine without having to use animals such as mice.

Normally these organoids live for a few months, meaning they can only offer a window into the earliest stages of human brains, which take nearly 20 years to fully develop.

So a US-led team of researchers grew some for around seven years, making them the "oldest ever", Paola Arlotta, the senior author of a new study describing the experiment, told AFP.

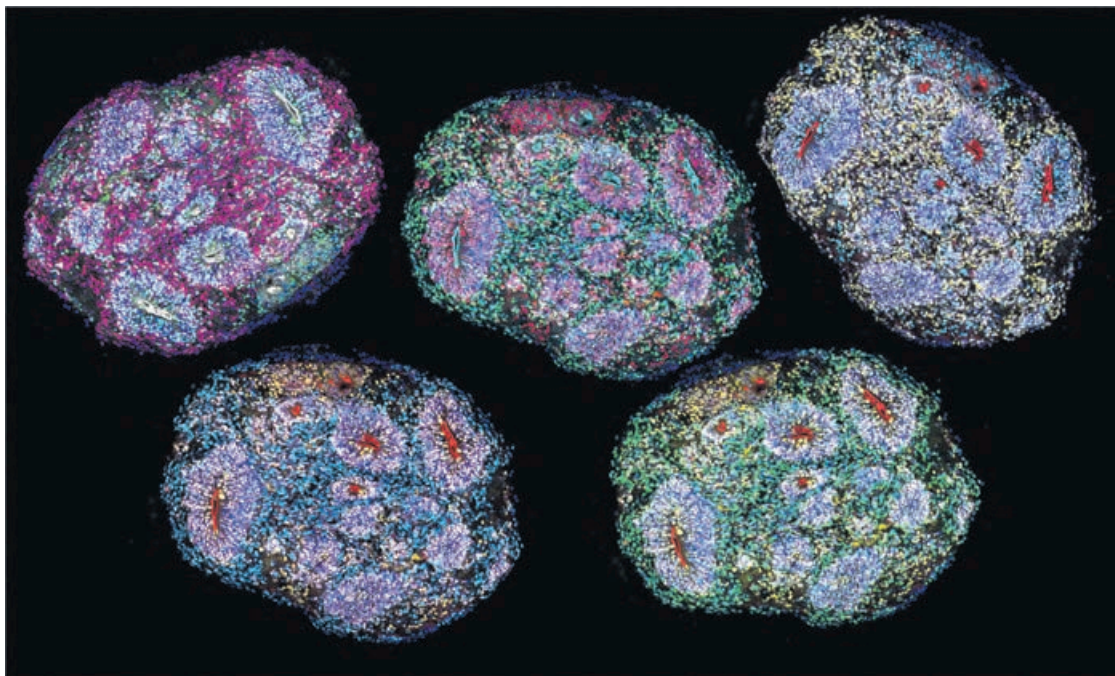
They discovered that the brain organoids continued to change and mature over the years, despite never having been inside an embryo, let alone a body.

"The brain can continue to develop outside the context of a person for this unprecedented amount of time," explained Arlotta, a Harvard University professor.

The scientists hope this will help shed light on how a range of disorders such as autism and schizophrenia first emerge and then progress later in life.

The study, published in the journal Nature, said the organoids "recorded the passage of time and retain a memory of the developmental steps already performed".

This does not mean organ-



This handout image obtained from the press service of Springer Nature Publishing Group on August 19, 2026 shows a view taken in March 2023 in the Arlotta Lab, Department of Stem Cell and Regenerative Biology of Harvard University of brain organoids, human brain cells grown in a lab by Harvard researchers.

oids have memories like we tend to think of them such as recalling something from childhood but simply that their past is "engraved" on a cellular level, Arlotta emphasized.

Organoids are "biological models" or "avatars" for human brain cells that are far less complex and do not receive sensory input, she added.

Scientists widely agree that organoids are not capable of consciousness or other higher-order brain functions.

Experiment 'warped time'

The researchers analyzed their ageing organoids with three different kinds of re-

cently developed genetic "clocks" that can roughly determine the biological age of cells.

They all showed that the organoids changed over time in similar ways to normal brain cells.

To further confirm their theory, the scientists carried out what Arlotta described as a "crazy experiment". They mixed cells that had been developing for a year together with others that were only two weeks old, creating a "chimera". The young cells behaved as normal.

But the older cells "jumped ahead a whole chunk of development" and started making neurons that

normally take around four months, Arlotta said.

This effectively "warped time" for brain development, which was "super cool", she added. □



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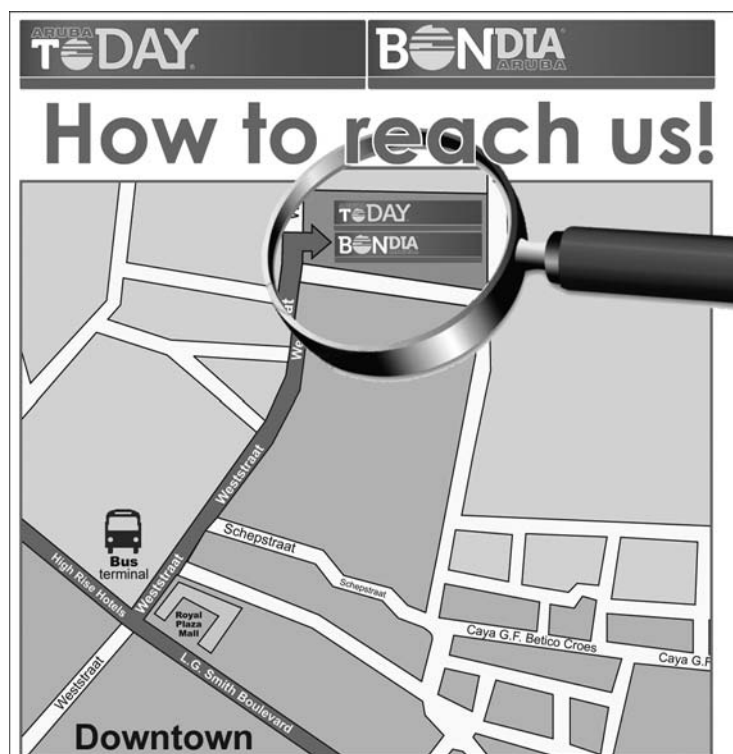
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Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic 588 0539

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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
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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

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Robots sort packages and serve fast food at Beijing showcase

Beijing, China

Robots sorting parcels and serving fried chicken enthralled visitors at a robotics expo in Beijing on Wednesday, where hundreds of companies set out their pitches for a future labour market transformed by artificial intelligence.

The Chinese government has embraced robotics as a strategic industry, and local firms have ploughed resources into the development of embodied AI.

The results of that investment were very much in evidence on the first day of the World Robot Conference, as thousands of Chinese and foreign visitors weaved through demonstrations of robots in houses, shops and factories.

"Our greatest focus is on when robots will make their way into thousands of industries and thousands of homes," said Kang Yu, a Beijing-based investor attending the expo for a third straight year. "This requires them to possess a certain level of intelligence."

At one booth, visitors pointed their phones at a hu-



A humanoid robot produced by China Mobile serves tea during the 2026 World Robot conference in Beijing on August 19, 2026.

manoid wearing an apron as it gingerly reached for a toy chicken drumstick before clamping down and lifting the fake meat into a bucket.

Nearby, dozens of guests craned their necks at a towering humanoid as the limbs on the five-metre (16-foot) model slowly manoeuvred up and down.

"Is it a 'machine', or a 'hu-

man'?" posited a sign next to the enormous machine. "That is a distinction for the future."

Hundreds of robotics startups, some just a couple years old, peppered the sprawling convention centre hoping to dazzle.

"You can see the improvements every year," said Soumodip Sarkar, the executive president of a sci-

ence park in Portugal who was visiting the expo on a tour of factories in China.

"This is a space I see that China is already dominating and is going to dominate."

- Challenges ahead -

Particularly impressive were improvements in robotic hands, Sarkar said, wiggling his fingers.

For instance, robots that last year could not pick up fruit now do so -- an important breakthrough as "we have a big need for agricultural applications", he said.

While Chinese visitors made up an overwhelming majority of the attendees, there were more people from abroad than before, said investor Kang.

Her company was one of the first to invest in Chinese robotics darling Unitree, whose share price soared over 600 percent on its debut in Shanghai on Wednesday.

At the Unitree booth, a robot made a sandwich with two slices of bread and a single piece of lettuce, pinching the leaf to assemble it. Kang said the applications of embodied AI have become more obvious, pointing to robots making noodles or acting as emotional companions. But the industry is still "full of challenges", Kang said.

For example, "when there's poor internet connection, response time will be very slow". Nearby, a table-tennis-playing humanoid the height of a 10-year-old

child was wired to the internet as it returned a ball to its human opponent.

Elsewhere, a staff member lunged towards a toddler-sized robot in a T-shirt that threatened to knock into a human child.

- 'ChatGPT moment'

There are geopolitical obstacles too.

Washington has blacklisted Unitree and dozens of other Chinese tech firms it says are aiding the military.

Some fears of illicit data transfers also exist in Europe, said Sarkar, the visitor from Portugal.

But change is in the air, said Yang Qian, the COO of X Square Robot, which produces robots for use in homes and logistics.

Many foreign customers, including from the United States, "often come to our company for research", she told AFP as robotic arms pushed packages along a conveyor belt in the booth behind her. □

Europe can't afford to miss AI revolution: ECB chief

Frankfurt, Germany

European Central Bank chief Christine Lagarde said Wednesday that the continent could not afford to miss out on the artificial intelligence revolution as the continent's growth model comes under increasing pressure.

The United States and Chi-

na are seen leading the AI race, with their companies producing the most advanced large language models and rapidly building vast new data centres. "Europe largely missed out on the first digital revolution, as the commercial gains from the spread of information and communi-

cation technologies were captured disproportionately elsewhere," Lagarde said at a World Economic Forum event in Geneva.

"We cannot afford to repeat that experience with artificial intelligence, the second digital revolution," she said.

While European companies are investing heavily in AI, barriers in the eurozone are hindering them from scaling up their operations, she said.

The "fragmentation" of EU markets means firms are not competing enough across the whole eurozone and also struggled to raise funds, particular when compared to U.S. peers, Lagarde said.

"The result is fewer firms growing to global size and slower diffusion of new technologies across the economy."

She added that scale is particularly important for Europe to be able to compete in AI and other new technologies at a time when Europe's post-war growth model faces major challenges.

She noted that Europe had long benefitted from "three pillars" -- a rules-based global order underpinned by US security guarantees, cheap energy and expanding global trade.

"All three are weakening as the international environment changes," she said.

"These shifts suggest that Europe's post-war growth model is eroding. And it is unlikely to return to the form we once knew."

The return of US President Donald Trump to the White House, in particular, has shaken relations between the United States and Europe. □



23 July 2026, Hesse, Frankfurt am Main: Christine Lagarde, President of the European Central Bank (ECB), answers a journalist's question at the press conference.



Aryna Sabalenka celebrates her win against Xinyu Wang of China during day eight of the Cincinnati Open at the Lindner Family Tennis Center on August 18, 2026 in Mason, Ohio.

No.1 Sabalenka slams Wang to advance at Cincinnati

Cincinnati, United States

Aryna Sabalenka unleashed her big game with devastating effect on Tuesday, hammering China's Wang Xinyu 6-1, 6-3 to reach the fourth round of the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Masters.

The world number one took only 20 minutes to blow through the first set against her 36th-ranked opponent and began the second set with a break of serve.

Sabalenka kept up the pressure in the second set with Wang double-faulting on the top seed's first match point after 54 minutes. The victory marked the 45th in a row for Sabalenka at the Masters 1000 level.

"I cannot complain. She's a tough opponent," Sabalenka said. "To win in straight sets like this in under an hour is insane."

"I'm super happy to be through. I really trusted myself and went for my shots. I wasn't over-thinking. I was able to stay focused and be in every point."

Sabalenka next plays Czech Sara Bejlek, a 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 winner over Ekaterina Alexandrova.

Fourth seed Coco Gauff needed to battle following a sizzling first set in a 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) victory over fellow American Ann Li.

The 2023 champion had

it all her own way in the opening set against her 29th-ranked foe, winning in 30 minutes. The pair exchanged early breaks in the second on the way to a tie-breaker, in which Gauff seized a 4-1 lead and won on her third match point.

"She played better in the second set and I missed a couple of break opportunities," Gauff said. "I tried to forget about those."

"It was hard to control the ball for both of us and it was my first time playing a day match on this center court so I had to adjust to that." Mirra Andrejeva's French Open reigning champion status counted for little as the fifth seed struggled to close out a 6-1, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Janice Tjen.

The Indonesian challenger ranked 37 was bowled over in the first set but made Andrejeva work to finally advance.

"In the first I was in command and she had unforced errors here and there, but in the second after a couple of games I started getting nervous, she made fewer mistakes it turned into a match of mentality and physicality," Andrejeva said.

Eighth seed Elina Svitolina was forced to withdraw before her match against Wang Xiyu with an ankle

injury.

"I've been advised by the doctors to take a little bit of time to rest and recover completely," the Ukrainian said in a statement.

Canada's second-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime eliminated Argentina's Juan Manuel Cerundolo 7-5, 6-1 in 90 minutes.

"It was a tricky start, finding my rhythm," the Canadian said. "Lefties are tricky, you don't play them so often. You can prepare all you want but until you step onto the court you can't find your right adjustments. Then you feel comfortable."

Washington winner and fifth seed Taylor Fritz fired eight aces in defeating Daniel Merida 6-3 6-4 in 83 minutes. The Spaniard made 25 unforced errors as Fritz booked a fourth-round match against Australian Chris O'Connell, who is 0-3 against the American.

- 'I played amazing' -

Last week's Montreal finalist Brandon Nakashima came from the brink to upset fourth seed Daniil Medvedev 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/4), 6-1. Nakashima led 5-2 in the first set before falling in the tie-breaker, then saved three match points in the 10th game of the second set on the way to forcing a third, which he dominated. □



Australia's Nick Kyrgios reacts after a point against France's Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard during their men's singles match at the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane on December 31, 2024.

Kyrgios admits 'huge mistake' after failing test for cocaine

London, United Kingdom

Australian tennis star Nick Kyrgios said on Wednesday he had made "a huge mistake" after he was provisionally suspended for testing positive for cocaine.

The 31-year-old, who reached the final at Wimbledon in 2022, failed a doping test during an ATP event in Mallorca on June 22.

"On 17 July 2026, a World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accredited laboratory confirmed the presence of benzoylecgonine, a metabolite of cocaine," the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) said.

Kyrgios, whose undoubted talent has been overshadowed by a suspect temperament and injuries, wrote on Instagram that he took "full responsibility".

"I made a huge mistake," he wrote.

"I'm sorry to my fans, my family, my sponsors and everyone close to me. Above all, I'm sorry to the kids who follow me."

"I know the example this sets and I'm deeply disappointed in myself."

Boasting a big serve and booming ground strokes, Kyrgios has won seven singles titles on the ATP Tour and rose to a high of 13 in the world in 2016.

His finest performance was on the grass at Wimbledon in 2022, when he reached the championship match, losing in four sets to Novak Djokovic.

Despite his natural talents that is as good as it got, with a series of injuries taking their toll.

He is now ranked 919 and has barely played in singles tennis in recent years. His most recent high-profile on-court appearance was his 'Battle of the Sexes' exhibition match against women's world number one Aryna Sabalenka late last year.

In January, he admitted he would never be the player that he once was.

Kyrgios is one of the few players to have recorded tour-level wins over the "Big Four" of Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Djokovic and Andy Murray.

But the success on court came with huge problems off it, including severe injuries to his right elbow, left wrist, hip, knees, shoulders and collarbone.

He has had numerous surgeries, the most serious a complete reconstruction of his right wrist in 2024.

On Wednesday, he said that the injuries had taken "a huge toll on me both physically and mentally". □

McIlroy questions LIV stars 'value' as talk of PGA return builds

Los Angeles, United States

Rory McIlroy on Wednesday questioned whether Bryson DeChambeau and Jon Rahm had ever "brought value" to LIV Golf, as the divisive rival tour scrambles to reinvent itself and speculation mounts that its stars could jump ship.

Having lost its deep-pocketed Saudi backers, breakaway series LIV this week was forced to cancel its season-ending team championship event in a bid to stay afloat into next year, when it is exploring a slimmed-down schedule.

Asked whether LIV's biggest stars should be allowed to return to the PGA Tour as has been widely rumored and if they would "bring value," McIlroy was dismissive.



Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland looks on from the eighth tee prior to the BMW Championship 2026 at Bellerive Country Club on August 19, 2026 in St Louis, Missouri.

"I mean, I would argue, have they brought value to LIV? You know?" said McIlroy.

DeChambeau and Rahm were among the most prominent and highly paid defectors to LIV Golf.

LIV reportedly received more than \$5 billion from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund between 2021-2026, before it pulled the plug.

Six-time major winner McIlroy has remained steadfastly loyal to the traditional PGA Tour, and an outspoken critic of LIV.

"I feel like I've kept my position consistent that LIV has never been a good thing for the game," said McIlroy on Wednesday, ahead of the BMW Championship in Missouri.

While former LIV stars like Brooks Koepka have recently accepted deals to return to the PGA Tour, McIlroy predicted it will be "a tough, tough road back" for LIV's top holdouts.

World number one Scottie Scheffler had offered a more diplomatic answer when asked earlier Wednesday about the possibility of LIV stars returning to the PGA fold.

"When you look at the higher levels of LIV Golf there's definitely some players that would provide a lot of value to the Tour," he said.

Meanwhile, LIV officials continued to express optimism about their tour's viability, despite reports that multiple players and vendors are owed money.

LIV has touted a "2.0" version going forward under new investors, including a shorter season, with smaller prize pots, but offering its players greater equity.

At a press conference Wednesday ahead of LIV's Indianapolis tournament, chief executive officer Scott O'Neil outlined proposals for "five marquee team championships on each of the five continents we play. There would also be "five team signature events, predominantly in the US and positioned around major championships."□



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