



Fun facts about cacti hedges "Trankera"



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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



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In U.S., rare earths extracted from coal mine wastewater



A basin containing treated and decontaminated water at West Virginia University's pilot plant in Mount Storm, West Virginia, on August 12, 2026.

Mount Storm, United States In the Appalachian region stretching through the U.S. state of West Virginia, the reddish water flowing out of retired coal mines is acidic, full of heavy metals and toxic for the environment. But that water is also rich in rare earths, the highly coveted minerals needed for many high-tech products such as smartphones and the clean energy industry

that have become a focus of geopolitical competition.

Some believe this acid mine drainage could help the United States improve its position in the increasingly vital rare earths market.

The minerals are used to manufacture powerful magnets used in electric vehicles and wind turbines, but also in drones and fighter jets.

The limited resource is one of the key challenges in the rivalry between the United States and China, which currently dominates the market, both in terms of production and refining.

Washington sees Beijing's near-monopoly as a strategic threat and wants to reduce its dependence on China by finding new producers to develop a domestic supply chain.

So far, the U.S. only has one rare earths mine, in Mountain Pass, California, which primarily yields so-called "light" elements.

"Heavy" rare earths, which are more difficult to mine and more highly desirable, are largely sourced outside the United States.

"The U.S. has started to make inroads on the mid-stream and downstream portions, but what we haven't had domestically is the front end feedstock," said Mark Gavin, the vice provost of West Virginia University (WVU).

- 'Environment cleanup' -

About 10 years ago, university researchers discovered that the wastewater from shuttered mines contained rare earths.

With public financing, they developed a pilot program to collect the runoff at a retired coal mine in Mount Storm.

The water emerging from the mine is trapped in a basin where ochre-colored deposits, typical of acid mine drainage, are visible.

It is then piped into a small hillside plant, where it passes through three separate pools and is treated to eliminate pollutants and extract the rare earths in concentrated form.

When the water emerges

on the other end to be discharged back into nature, it is nearly turquoise.

"With this operation, we achieve two purposes: one, environment cleanup, and second, recover rare earths as a valuable by-product," said Lance Lin, director of the WVU Rare Earth Elements Initiative.

Lin said that the process is a boon for the U.S. industry as acid mine drainage is rich in "heavy" rare earths, which are already naturally dissolved -- meaning another mine is not needed to recover them.

The potential for the Mount Storm facility is nonetheless rather limited: it can produce about four tons of rare earth oxides per year, and about 45 percent of that is "heavy" rare earths, Lin said.

"If we produce 300 metric tons per year of rare earths, we can meet seven to eight percent" of global demand for rare earths such as terbium and dysprosium, said WVU engineer David Hoffman.

- 'Minimum supply' -

Tommee Larochelle, an engineer and specialist in the development of rare earths extraction and refining processes, questions the commercial viability of the WVU project but says it could "ensure minimum supply to the defense industry."

"If the political will and financing align, it is doable in the short term," Larochelle told AFP.

Once the rare earth concentrate has been extracted from the wastewater, the individual elements must then be separated out and processed.

The United States however only has limited processing capabilities.

The U.S. government has been pouring money into the development of companies specializing in separation, refining and magnet production.

This year, the startup that is part of the WVU project concluded a preliminary agreement with one of these companies, REalloys, to treat rare earths extracted from acid water drainage. □

Paseo Herencia

WEEKLY LIVE SHOWS

8PM

MON	LATIN DANCE SHOW <i>By RCC Aruba</i>
WED	CULTURAL DANCE SHOW <i>By Youth in Action</i>
THU	ACROBATIC PERFORMANCE <i>By RCC Aruba</i>
SUN	VIOLIN SHOW <i>By Angela Flores</i>

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Trump admin predicts U.S. trade war 'devastating' for Canada

Washington, United States

The Trump administration on Sunday warned that Canada would be "foolish" to think it could win a trade war with the United States, predicting a "devastating" impact on its northern neighbor.

Negotiations between Washington and Ottawa broke down late Friday, putting into force new 50-percent U.S. tariffs impacting about \$20 billion worth of Canadian goods, or 5.5 percent of Canadian exports to the United States.

Canada in retaliation said it would match U.S. tariffs, with new levies notably targeting the US steel and dairy industries to take effect on September 8.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Canada would come out worse from tussling with President Donald Trump in a trade war. The United States currently accounts for roughly 70 percent of Canadian exports. "We're great trading partners, right? But Canada gets the benefit of trading with the US way more than the U.S. gets the benefit of trading with Canada," he told the "Fox News Sunday" talk show.

"To think that they're going to go to war with Donald Trump and actually win that war with the US, I think it's foolish on their part."



This combination of pictures created on August 22, 2026 shows US President Donald Trump in Washington, DC, on July 13, 2026 and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on August 22, 2026.

He predicted that Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney would return to negotiations "very very quickly, because it's going to be devastating for his country." Carney was defiant on Saturday, announcing retaliatory tariffs on the U.S. after walking away from a "bad deal" on trade as the rift between the longtime allies deepened.

"You're at war when you get attacked. We got attacked," Carney said. Carney cited last-minute U.S. demands that would re-

strict Canadian trade deals with other countries and unacceptable "threats" to the French language and Quebec culture.

Trump hit back early Sunday, saying, "Canada wants the benefits of being a State, without being one!!!" "They have also charged our great farmers, for many years, massive amounts of Tariffs. No more!!!" Trump added in a post on Truth Social.

- 'Bully in Washington' -

The acrimony underscored

the deepening rift between the close allies since Trump began his second term in January 2025 -- including his repeated threats to make Canada the 51st US state.

Carney has said bilateral relations have been forever changed, and that Canada must reduce its reliance on the United States. Despite the economic fallout, he has won political support at home for his willingness to stand up to Washington since taking office two months after Trump returned

to the presidency.

"We have a bully in Washington," Canadian retired teacher Stuart Edwards told AFP Saturday in Fort Erie, Ontario in the shadow of the Peace Bridge, a conduit for billions of dollars in annual trade with the United States. "We're not going to put up with it, Canada isn't. We'll fight back," he said.

In the recent talks in Washington, Canada was seeking relief from Trump's tariffs on autos, steel and aluminum, which have battered the country's economy, forced job losses and strained what was once an iron-clad trade relationship.

The White House had alleged "discriminatory treatment" by Canada against U.S. alcohol, automobile and dairy products in introducing the duties.

U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer told the New York Times on Saturday that the US had offered to reduce its tariffs on steel, aluminum and autos, as well as eliminate a recently imposed tariff on Canadian lumber.

Greer said those measures would have given Canada "the most preferential treatment of any trading partner," according to the Times. He also said no new talks were planned with Canadian negotiators. □

Anthropic market debut could break SpaceX IPO record: media

San Francisco, United States

The market debut of artificial intelligence start-up Anthropic, a chief rival to OpenAI, could break the record set by SpaceX, U.S. media have reported.

Elon Musk's space company went public in June at a value of \$1.77 trillion and raised \$85.7 billion in its blockbuster initial public offering, the largest in history.

Anthropic, maker of the Claude AI models, "expects to match or beat the size" of SpaceX's deal, according to Bloomberg. The company's bankers have told potential investors it could seek to raise "more than \$100 billion" in its IPO, which could put the company's value at \$2 trillion, The New York Times reported

Friday, citing two unnamed sources with knowledge of the talks.

That would more than double the five-year-old company's previous valuation at \$965 billion, reached in its last funding round in June. Only a handful of companies including Apple, Microsoft and chip maker Nvidia have surpassed the \$2 trillion mark. Anthropic declined AFP's request for comment.

After filing to go public in June, the company could reveal its public offering prospectus in the coming weeks, the Times reported, with shares possibly listed in the autumn.

Anthropic could then beat OpenAI, the maker of ChatGPT, to market. That com-

pany is hoping to list its shares in 2027.

Founded in 2021 by siblings Dario and Daniela Amodei and other former executives at OpenAI, Anthropic has positioned itself as a safety-focused alternative in the AI race. Claude Code, its coding assistant for developers, has become one of its most popular products, helping push its projected annual revenue to \$47 billion.

Anthropic's commercial success has been accompanied by difficulties in meeting demand for computing power, amid a shortage of chips and servers.

Potential investors could be dissuaded by the company's difficult relationship with President Donald Trump's



A smartphone screen displays the logos of OpenAI and Anthropic against a blurred backdrop of the American flag, symbolizing the intensifying competition in artificial intelligence between the two US-based companies in Tunis, Tunisia on June 17, 2026.

administration. In March, the government broke off its contracts with Anthropic and designated

the company a supply chain risk after it refused to grant the military unfettered access to its AI models. □

'So bad it's good': rough animated film becomes surprise Chinese hit

Beijing, China

A low-budget Chinese animated film that was widely mocked for its crude visuals became a viral hit, with people packing cinemas to see just how bad it is.

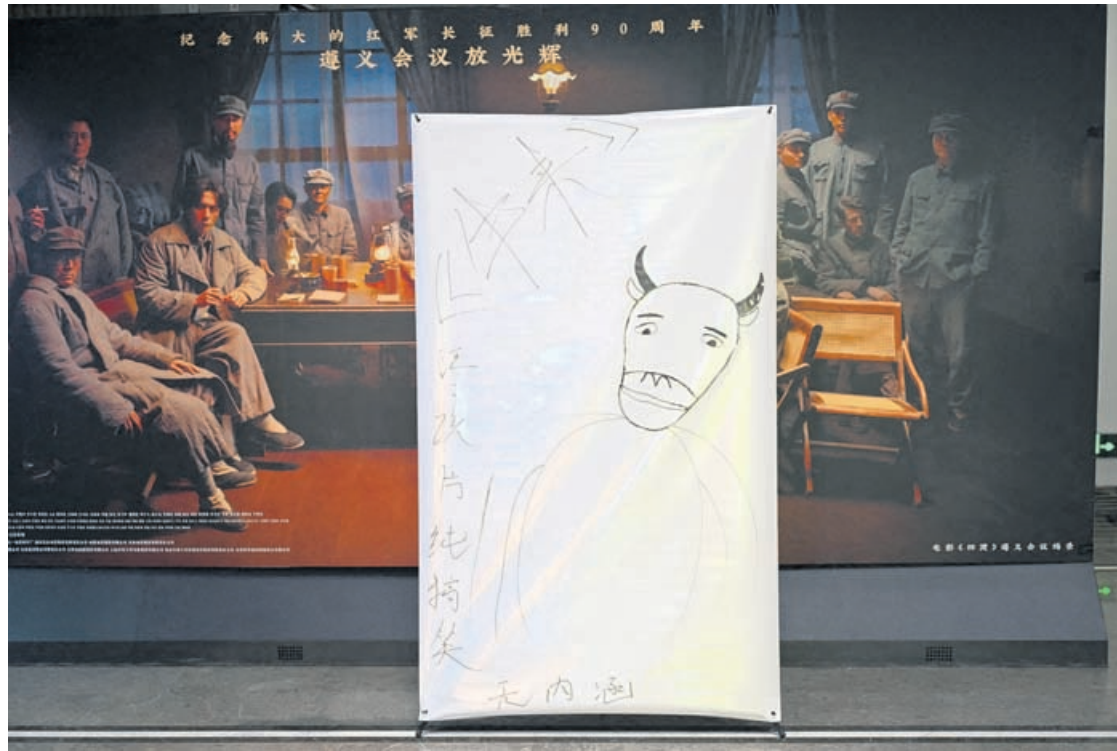
"Niu Lai", which translates to "Here Comes the Cow", earned around 7,000 yuan (\$1,000) in its opening week from August 5, before surging to 33.06 million yuan (\$4.92 million) at the Chinese box office, according to ticketing platform Maoyan.

The film, made by a mother and son, follows the journey of a calf named Niu Lai and was crafted frame by frame over five years, local media reported, with the duo also composing original scores for the end credits.

Caelan Moriarty, an American musician working in China, told AFP the film is "so bad that it's so good".

"I appreciate how bad it is, but there's some heart (put) into it, so you can't hate that," the 25-year-old said.

Artificial intelligence could make the movie in "like ten seconds or even faster", Moriarty said, but "the fact that



A hand-drawn poster advertising the film "Niu Lai", which translates to "Here Comes the Cow", is seen at a cinema in Beijing on August 21, 2026.

they didn't use AI, they took time" was impressive.

"It's not perfect. But because it's not perfect, it's good, it shows how human it is... and I think that's why this is trending."

With its stiff 3D characters and awkward dialogue, the movie traces Niu Lai's relationship with his mother. The film's unpolished style quickly went viral on social

media, with fans embracing its imperfections as part of its charm.

Student Stella Xing, who watched the film in Beijing after seeing memes online, told AFP: "Even though it's pretty rough around the edges, there are so many funny details -- like the way (Niu Lai) walks, for instance". "It's hilarious and really makes people want to

come see it," she added.

- 'Part of its appeal' -

At cinemas in Beijing, hand-drawn banners of human-like cows with eyebrows stood in stark contrast to the glossy posters promoting Christopher Nolan's latest film "The Odyssey". Barely any conventional marketing had been done to promote the film.

As "Niu Lai" took China's internet by storm, online retailers on platforms such as Taobao rushed to produce merchandise featuring the yellow cow, including T-shirts, figurines and even boxer shorts.

One online merchant told AFP he started selling "Niu Lai" keychains as the movie became a hit.

The film offers "something different from the polished, sophisticated productions we are used to", Pan Wang, an associate professor at Australia's University of New South Wales, said.

"It is a bit like eating refined grains every day and then suddenly having some coarse grains for a change -- the contrast itself feels refreshing," Wang added.

"Its roughness, absurdity and imperfection become part of its appeal."

Animated films have proven highly popular in the world's second largest economy.

The more polished Chinese blockbuster "Ne Zha 2" ousted last year Disney's "Inside Out 2" to become the highest-grossing animated film of all time. □

'The Dink' sees comedy in U.S. pickleball craze

Los Angeles, United States

When filmmaker Josh Greenbaum first ventured onto a pickleball court, he found an accessible pastime that could quickly turn intense, generating not just sweat but a range of emotions in minutes.

His conclusion: pickleball had all the right ingredients for comedy.

Greenbaum drew on that observation to direct "The

Dink," an Apple TV film premiering this Friday on the streaming platform.

"I think part of what's so funny about it is, you know, how quickly something that starts very (much) as casual fun can become deeply competitive and also weirdly emotional," the 47-year-old director told AFP in an interview.

"The Dink" brings together Dusty (Jake Johnson) -- a former tennis prodigy who spends his time reminiscing about past glories, much to the chagrin of his father (Ed Harris) — and Candace (Mary Steenburgen), a divorcee who has developed a passion for pickleball in this new phase of her life.

The film, which features real-time former tennis ace Andy Roddick, is about re-invention, ego, friendship, "and trying to find purpose," Greenbaum said.

"You have these kind of

two lost souls, obviously of different generations, who are trying to figure out who they are and redefine themselves, and they help one another to do so," he said. The movie, written by Sean Clements and produced by Hollywood staple Ben Stiller, also touches on intergenerational conflict.

"Maybe in this version, tennis represents sort of the way things have been done, and pickleball is representing a new way," said Greenbaum, who directed "Will & Harper," a 2024 documentary chronicling a cross-country road trip by two old friends.

At the heart of "The Dink" is pickleball, a sport played with small rackets and perforated plastic balls that is all the rage in the United States, where schoolkids, seniors and A-list Hollywood celebrities are on board.

The movie takes its name from the controlled dink shot that pickleball players deftly



Josh Greenbaum attends the premiere of Apple TV+'s "The Dink" at AMC Century City 15 on July 20, 2026 in Los Angeles, California.

arc over the net.

The "unique" relationship between tennis and pickleball was fertile ground, the director said.

"There's a contentiousness between the two sports at the moment, and I think a lot of it's driven by the fact that they're fighting over limited resources," said Green-

baum, who was trounced in his first pickleball game by opponents in their sixties.

"It's just a sport that makes you laugh, that you make friends with people, that you share something together, and that you can get better at. Even, you know, at my age," says 73-year-old Steenburgen, herself an avid player. □



Pope's 'couturier of the sacred' fueled by faith

Santarcangelo di Romagna, Italy

Far from the solemn pomp of the Vatican, nestled under the arcades of the mountain town of Santarcangelo di Romagna, a tailor clad all in black leaned over his sketch.

With a few strokes of his pencil, Filippo Sorcinelli brought to life a flowing liturgical robe -- fitting for the man whose artistry and faith have cemented an international reputation for one-of-a-kind ecclesiastical attire.

On Saturday, Pope Leo XIV donned a green and white vestment created by the 51-year-old Sorcinelli while presiding over mass in the nearby port city of Rimini.

Having run Atelier LAVS for sacred vestments for 25 years, Sorcinelli is well aware of the weight of his responsibilities. He has created liturgical garments for the last three popes -- Benedict XVI, Francis, and now the Chicago-born Leo.

"Dressing a pope is, first of all, like dressing a priest. The respect is the same, the parameters are the same -- caring about respect for the role the priest and the pope occupy, therefore for their dignity and how they present themselves to the world," Sorcinelli told AFP.

The liturgical norms to be



Founder, artist and designer Filippo Sorcinelli holds a liturgical vestment in his LAVS (Laboratorio Arte Vesti Sacre) Italian atelier specialized in sacred vestments, in Santarcangelo di Romagna, central Italy, on August 21, 2026.

respected "are not constraints but guidelines, rules, fixed points," he said, calling sacred art "an absolutely important message of revelation".

- Incense, textiles -

Dubbed "a couturier of the sacred" by Vogue magazine, Sorcinelli has seen his business expand over the years, now encompassing perfumes and body products for the general public. But the ardent Catholic is still driven by faith, first sparked in the small church of his

native town of Mondolfo, in Italy's eastern Marche region, where he can still recall the smell of incense and the closely guarded antique fabrics within the sacristy.

"I could never do this work if I didn't believe, if I weren't living an experience of faith in some way," said the designer who has also served as the principal organist of the cathedral of Rimini and others nearby.

"My path really begins in that little church in Mondolfo in the Marche region, where, from the time I was a child, I

would go with my mother to help clean that building," he said. Sorcinelli, aided by 11 seamstresses, displayed the green silk forming the basis of Leo's vestment for Rimini, rolling out the sumptuous fabric onto a long table.

The "deep, solemn" green colour "precisely evokes that period of the liturgical year dedicated to hope and to the safeguarding of creation", he explained.

Gold and silver inlay work and green agate stones complete the garment.

"There was really no bet-

ter choice to describe this setting: right there on the beach, right there in the port of Rimini, where through the ornamentation we also almost echoed the portholes of the boats."

- Art as expression -

Once when young, Sorcinelli met the former Robert Prevost -- the birth name of Pope Leo -- then just an Augustinian priest, but the men have not spoken since, he said.

During papal assignments, he submits possible designs and fabric swatches to the Vatican office that organises masses and other papal celebrations, the Office for the Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff.

"The process of creating a pontifical vestment -- in this specific case the chasuble and the mitre, that is, what he wears on his body and what he wears on his head -- can range from the simplicity of a few weeks up to three or four months of work," he said.

What's next for the designer/perfumer/organist remains to be seen, he said.

"I regard art as an inexhaustible source of expression. To stop would mean having completed one's existence, and I don't think I'm there yet." □

Top India court orders new steps to protect threatened elephants

New Delhi, India

India's top court has ordered tough new steps to protect wild elephant herds as habitat loss and human-elephant conflict intensify, a move welcomed by campaigners on Friday.

The world's most populous nation is also home to the majority of Asian elephants, a species listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and whose habitat is increasingly being sliced up by highways and railways or clawed up by mines.

The Supreme Court has directed states to prevent the blockage of elephant corridors -- routes used by herds to move between rapidly shrinking habitats -- and or-

dered a survey to identify obstructions along those routes.

That must include steps to end the use of any "coercive measure to divert the natural movement of the elephants", it read.

A ban on "hulla parties" -- groups deployed to drive elephants away using "fireballs" and burning stakes -- is required, it said.

The court ruling, issued on Monday, said ministry guidelines were already in place to ensure "unobstructed" elephant corridors, but those routes have often been impeded.

Wildlife conservationist Prema Singh Bindra, who led the pro bono public interest case, told AFP her petition

had challenged state governments "supporting horrifically cruel practices".

"It becomes a mob situation with thousands of people chasing the elephants using burning spears," she said.

"That does nothing to resolve conflict; science shows it only exacerbates the conflict."

- 'Intelligent, social animals' -

There are fewer than 50,000 Asian elephants in the wild, according to the World Wildlife Fund -- most in India, with others in Sri Lanka and South-east Asia.

Elephants are protected by law, are named as India's "national heritage animal", and many followers of the elephant-headed Hindu de-



A herd of wild elephants grazes at Kaziranga National Park in Nagaon District of Assam, India, on June 7, 2026.

ity Ganesh see the animals as sacred.

But they face mounting pressure from habitat loss, fragmentation, and increasing human-elephant conflict.

Bindra, a former member of India's top governing body for wildlife conservation and policy, the National Board for Wildlife, said the court's order was needed to ensure the survival of elephants in one

of the most densely populated areas in the world.

"We know where elephant corridors and habitats are -- and they are being destroyed and fragmented at an unprecedented pace," Bindra said.

"The will to protect and preserve is markedly absent. We hope with this Supreme Court order, this survey must lead to action." □

Brazilian narco violence spills over into tranquil Bolivia

Guayaramerín, Bolivia

A river port in the Amazon has emerged as a new battleground in the Latin American drug trade as Brazilian gangs cross into neighboring Bolivia to battle for control of cocaine supply routes.

The Mamore river, one of the largest tributaries of the mighty Amazon, forms a natural border between Bolivia, the world's third-largest cocaine producer, and Brazil, a key exit point for drug shipments to Europe.

Travelers pour off boats crossing from the Brazilian border city of Guajara-Mirim to the Bolivian town of Guayaramerín and stream past an immigration office in the port terminal without so much as giving it a second glance.

"Nobody ever checks (papers)," Donald Somoza, a 75-year-old retired bricklayer, mused as he relaxed in a nearby park.

Guayaramerín, a town of 40,000 people with dusty streets of red earth that contrast sharply with the vivid green of the jungle, survives off trade with Brazil.

It appears peaceful during the intense heat of the day, but residents say they are living in fear.

- Shot 80 times -

Guayaramerín, like other towns along Bolivia's 3,423-kilometer (2,172 miles) border with Brazil, has been infiltrated by Brazil's two most powerful organized crime groups:



Bolivian Police officers of the Special Force for the Fight Against Drug Trafficking (FELCN) stand guard during a Bolivia-Brazil border security plan in Guayaramerín, Bolivia on August 13, 2026.

the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) and Comando Vermelho (CV).

A dozen murders on the Bolivian side of the border have been linked in recent weeks to the two groups, both designated terrorist organizations by the United States.

The massacre of a family, the discovery of decapitated bodies and the murder of a police officer have shocked Bolivia, a country largely spared from mafia violence.

Somoza, the retiree, said he was a witness to the recent killing of a Brazilian man in Guayaramerín's main square. The man was shot more than 80 times, in what appeared to be score-settling between

Brazilian drug traffickers.

This is "a fairly new phenomenon in Bolivia," a "very safe country until a few years ago," Joaquin Chacin, an investigator specializing in organized crime, told AFP. In the past, the state largely turned a blind eye to drug trafficking, worried that by confronting them it could provoke an outbreak of violence.

A "mafia peace" prevailed, said Chacin.

"And this has somehow been broken."

- Hunting kingpins -

Between January and September 2025, 774 homicides were reported in Bolivia,

compared to 325 during the same period of the previous year, according to official data -- an increase of 138 percent.

Guayaramerín residents also report an increase in armed robberies, kidnappings, and other crimes.

Currency trader Adhemar Zapata, who changes money on the sidewalk near the port, was attacked recently on the street by two men, one of them Brazilian.

"They pointed their gun at me to subdue me and to take the money I have for my work, along with my motorcycle, my cell phone, and all of that," he said.

The government of center-

right President Rodrigo Paz accuses the socialists -- who ruled for two decades before being voted out last year -- of allowing crime to flourish. Since Paz took office in November 2025, 17 international crime bosses have been captured, his administration said.

They include Uruguayan drug trafficker Sebastian Marset, one of South America's most-wanted men and a top PCC commander, Gerson Palermo.

- Bridge project divides -

On a visit to Guayaramerín last week, Paz announced plans to deploy more police to the border and boost intelligence sharing with Brazil. Chacin said the expanded police presence could help stem violence, but that tackling organized crime required, above all, following the money -- investigating how the proceeds are laundered and who is benefitting most.

"A serious plan is needed, but we don't hear of anything like that being worked on," he said.

Paz, on his Amazon visit, also announced plans to build a bridge across the river in Guayaramerín, as part of a planned road corridor that would extend from Brazil all the way to the Pacific coast in Peru. Many locals, like money changer Zapata, have mixed feelings about the project. □



King Harald V of Norway) attends the commemoration of the Fram Committee's 100th anniversary and the opening of an exhibition at The Fram Museum in Oslo on May 21, 2025.

Oslo, Norway

The health of Norway's 89-year-old King Harald V, in hospital due to complications from a blood condition, has "deteriorated" over the weekend, a statement from the palace said Sunday.

Europe's oldest reigning monarch is being treated for haemolytic anaemia, a condition caused by an abnormally rapid destruction of red blood cells which leads to fatigue, paleness and shortness of breath.

Norwegian King Harald's health has 'deteriorated': palace

"His Majesty the King's health deteriorated over the weekend," said the palace.

"The King is receiving antibiotics for a bacterial infection in his blood and has responded to this treatment," the statement added.

He was admitted to Oslo University Hospital on Monday due to fluid retention from the cortisone treatment he is receiving and placed on sick leave for two weeks.

The palace has previously said the king had cancelled his visit to the central region of Trondelag scheduled for September 1 and 2 -- after the end of the previously announced sick leave period.

Several members of his family have visited him in hospital. The Verdens Gang newspaper reported that his wife, Queen Sonja, their son Crown Prince Haakon -- who is acting as regent in Harald's absence -- and Haakon's wife Crown Princess Mette-Marit visited him on Sunday, as did the king's sister. None of them made a statement upon leaving the hospital.

- Turbulent year -

Harald, who ascended the Norwegian throne in 1991, has had multiple health problems in recent years, forcing him to have a pace-

maker fitted and to scale back his official schedule. But he has always ruled out abdicating, arguing that he took a lifelong oath before the Norwegian Parliament. In February, he was hospitalised for an infection and dehydration in Tenerife, where he was on a private trip with Queen Sonja.

His wife, also 89, was briefly admitted to hospital in May due to heart problems.

Harald's health woes come at a turbulent time for the Norwegian royal family. Haakon's wife Mette-Marit is under scrutiny for her ties to the late US sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. □

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Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) – Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Sometimes, due to the need of a quick “to-go” breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sand-

wiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi bonch'i rabo (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew), comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not

consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening “meal” can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts



include bolo di pistachio (pistachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesillo (flan), bolo preto (fruit cake), drigidek (ginger-bread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, baskets, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert

and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun. □

*ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao

*Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)

*Saco: Saco literally means “bag”. Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba

Fun facts about cacti hedges “Trankera”



(Oranjestad) – When off-roading in inland Aruba, you may notice some cacti hedges around various properties or lined up by certain pathways. These man-made hedges are called “trankera” and play an important role in maintaining our flora and fauna.

The trankera dates to colonialism, where settlers established several ‘cunucu’ (farm) on the island. People either used stone walls or trankera as a fence to ward off strangers and wild animals that can feed on the cunucu vegetation or cattle.

Nowadays, trankeras are

less common, and those that still stand are often not maintained. On the surface this seems like a bad development, however this proved to be beneficial for our flora and fauna. Naturally developed flora around the hedges offers more shelter for fauna. Another aspect is the propagation process. When pruning hedges, flowers and seeds were removed, which limits propagation to a minimum.

So, though trankeras don't play that big of a role in Aruba's agriculture anymore, our environment still reaps the benefits of these long-standing natural structures. □



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What Aruba means to Mariana!



ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to give you a shout-out by inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island!

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

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

For today we received a lovely message from Mariana from Salta, Argentina. She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is magic! It is my first time in Aruba. Everything is beautiful here. This pelican surprised me with his flight in the sunset photo. Thank you Aruba Today. Every morning I read your newspaper with Aruban stories."

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

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Conchi: Aruba's hidden natural pool

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

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle’s Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you’re up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to

enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you’ve completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely



no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It’s also relatively deep, and you can climb up the

rocks and jump in!

Fun fact: “Conchi” means small bowl in Papiamentu.

Once you get there, you may see why we call it that.



A guide for the perfect picture: Where to find the most Instagrammable places in Aruba

(Oranjestad)—Imagine, you’re out and about on the island and you want to take the most picture-perfect photo to show your friends and family back home and online. It seems like the perfect spot can be hard to find, but Aruba

is full of great spots for a quick snapshot! Here are the most Instagrammable places in Aruba.

Wooden Swing on Plaza Daniel Leo

While you’re in Mainstreet Oranjestad, check out the

wooden swing on Plaza Daniel Leo. This is another favorite among visitors wanting a cute snapshot for Instagram.

Since you’ve made it this far, one question: How many blue horses have you spotted already?

Mangel Halto

For a different take on beach photos, we definitely recommend Mangel Halto! You can get in the water right by the roots of these beautiful trees (please be careful not to climb them, though!). You will see beautiful skies, birds and other wildlife, and among the greenery of the mangroves, your picture is sure to pop!

Yacht Dock in Oranjestad

Last but certainly not least, the Yacht Dock in Oranjestad is the perfect spot to

take a beautiful picture, especially at sunset. The dock is located behind the Wilhelmina Park. This spot offers a gorgeous view of the ocean and sunset, accompanied by the soft waves crashing on the shoreline. You may even spot some iguanas!

“I LOVE ARUBA”

While you’re in the area, check out the ‘I LOVE ARUBA’ sign is a great first stop for a quick shot with the

family. This spot is among the few that has become a favorite among tourists, especially those that are visiting Aruba through a cruise vacation.

Speaking of giant signs that read “Aruba” (because there can never be too many), there is another sign you can find along the Linear Park. It may be a long walk from the harbor to get there, but while you’re at it, check out these other spots along the way!□



Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for

urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.



Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of

the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Coneu (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigro-nuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Coneu, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Coneu can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Coneu has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when

they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 liters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Coneu is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Coneu is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Coneu can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. □



Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried

to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitch a ride home, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that the there

was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.



Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the is-

land that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass holds a lot of value to our culture of folkloric story-telling. □

Source: visitaruba.com

The Aruban way of life: Creating community with Cas di Torto

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban people understand that a happy life is spent in great ambience with your loved ones. Passed down from one generation to the other, building community has been a key aspect in forging our traditions and customs. The Cas di Torto (mud house) played a big role in cultivating community, bridging families together and forming close bonds with your neighbors—something we highly value today.

Cas di Torto: History and construction

The origin of the Cas di Torto is said to date back to the early 19th century in the Paraguaná Peninsula in Venezuela. Refugees who sought sanctuary on Aruba introduced this building method to the island.

The uprights of the walls were made with sturdy and straight wayaca or kwihi wood, or from thin mangrove struts. Then, the wattle walls were weaved in using branches and twigs from the warero and sisal plant, daubed with a mixture of grass and mud. Finally, the walls got a coat of white plaster to seal everything in.



For roofing, corn stalks, palm fronds and straws were used, allowing air to flow freely through the house. This method of roofing was known throughout the ABC islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), but the use of cornstalks in Aruba eventually got replaced with use of mud and white plaster for the roofs. The white plaster all around made

the houses look like cake, hence the name "Torto" (Spanish for "cake").

Building community

Building Torto houses was often a community effort. Young couples who were about to get married had to have their house built before they could tie the knot and start their own family. This is where the help of

the community comes into play.

Neighbors, extended family and friends would all help in the construction of a Torto House. And everyone had a role: The men oversaw the building of the house, and the women were tasked with collecting wood and straws, cooking and taking care of the little ones.

The couple's family were primarily responsible for feeding everyone who helped build the house. Before construction, someone usually had the task to prepare the meal; going fishing or slaughter farm animals like goats, chicken or sheep. Even the older kids had their tasks; the older children of the family usually helped with collecting

water and mixing the mud.

The average duration of constructing a Cas di Torto was 4 months.

At the end of a long day of work, everyone would gather around and enjoy a feast of hearty food. This type of help from friends and family became a tradition and was called "paga lomba": You help me today; I'll help you tomorrow.

Nowadays, traditional Cas di Torto are rare, especially those that are still inhabited. Houses that do exist probably date back more than a century.

Picture credits: Aruba National Library (BNA) and the Monumentbureau archive on Coleccion.aw □



CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

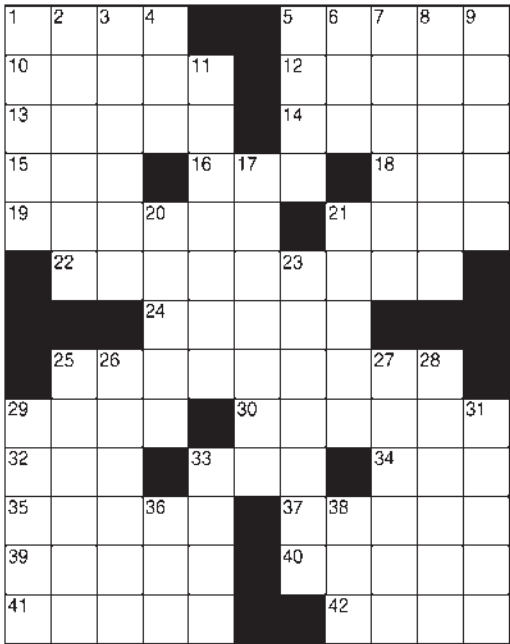
ACROSS

- 1 Bit of change
5 Derision
10 Protons' places
12 Camp craft
13 Betray
14 Game setting
15 Quarter-back Manning
16 Resistance unit
18 Plopped down
19 Muralist Diego
21 Actor O'Shea
22 Vouched for
24 Kind of kitchen
25 Put right
29 Phone message
30 Charge for cash
32 Much of N. Amer.
33 French article
34 Phoned copy
35 Support staff
37 Bring to bear

- 39 Loosen, as laces
40 Saltpeter
41 Sports figures
42 Designer Wang

DOWN

- 1 Bold one
2 Stressed type
3 Whodunit element
4 Moody music
5 Con man's con
6 Lot sight
7 Infant outfit
8 Jimmy's successor
9 "Swell!"
11 Express disdain for
17 From Port-au-Prince
20 Put up
21 Half note
23 Age for a quinceañera
25 Take offense at
26 Track bet
27 Decadent
28 More precious
29 Ballet costumes
31 Spare
33 Calls on
36 Popular song
38 Twice VII



A XYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

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

5-6 CRYPTOQUOTE

MWSHS XHS BSL WKCHR PE
NPBS IKHS XDHSSXQNS MWXE
MWS WKCH ASAPGXMSA MK
MWS GSHSIKEJ FEKLE XR
XBMSHEKKE MSX. — WSEHJ
OXISR

Cryptoquote: GETTING TO A PLACE OF COMFORT CAN BE UNCOMFORTABLE. — MARCUS SAMUELSSON

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

ARUBA TODAY

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

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

Difficulty: ★

8/24

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

8/23

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What a record-breaking El Nino could mean for the world



A road damaged by Hurricane Lala is seen in Mountain View, Hawaii, on August 16, 2026.

Washington, United States

This year's El Nino is on track to be the strongest on record, threatening to unleash extreme weather across the globe and make 2027 the hottest recorded year by far.

It is expected to be the most "intense" El Nino in more than a century, the head of long-range forecasting at the UK's Met Office warned on Friday. Stacked on top of long-term human-caused climate change, the temporary jolt will offer a glimpse of the heat the world can expect by the late 2030s, experts say.

Here's what to know.

- What is El Nino? -

El Nino is the warming phase of a natural cycle in the tropical Pacific known as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

It sets in when trade winds that blow from east to west temporarily ease up, allowing warm water which normally piles up in the western Pacific Ocean to slide back east and rise to the surface. When those warmer-than-average surface temperatures last for a few months, they cause more storms and clouds over the region, "which cause ripple effects through the entire global atmosphere," explained Emily Becker, a climate scientist at the University of Miami. The upshot is hotter and drier conditions in some places, cooler and wetter in others.

Some effects are already being felt. For example, Indonesia's long, intense dry season has fed wildfires that have burned hundreds of thousands of hectares.

year on record, currently held by 2024, and make 2027 a near certainty for top spot, since most of the heat impact is felt the following year.

According to calculations by climate scientists Zeke Hausfather and Andrew Dessler, El Nino will add a temporary 0.3C on top of the long-term global warming trend, resulting in a 2027 temperature of 1.76C above preindustrial levels -- compressing into a single year as much warming as would otherwise be expected by 2037.

"It's kind of a preview of the future," Dessler, a professor at Texas A&M told AFP, though much of that heat will be focused in the equatorial Pacific.

Mike McPhaden, a senior scientist at NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, had a similar estimate, telling AFP: "It's not inconceivable that 2027 may top out at 1.7C above preindustrial levels" if model forecasts bear out.

There is not one single accepted way to measure El Ninos.

NOAA in February adopted the Relative Oceanic Nino Index (RONI), which gauges warming in the Nino 3.4 region against warming across the whole tropical belt, to try to better represent the ocean-atmosphere system driving ENSO impacts.

On that scale, the numbers

run lower but the predicted ranking remains the same: NOAA puts the odds at 69 percent that this El Nino will be the strongest in its dataset going back to 1950.

- How climate change fits in -

Scientists agree climate change increases El Nino's impacts.

Our greenhouse-gas-warmed atmosphere holds more moisture, so El Nino-linked rains can turn more extreme. It also dries out soils, deepening drought where El Nino brings drought.

There is less consensus on whether climate change itself triggers stronger El Ninos, though evidence for this is emerging.

"Climate change may be amplifying the El Nino cycle itself," said NOAA's McPhaden.

Warmer tropical seas make the winds that drive El Nino more responsive to the ocean, tightening the feedback between the two and letting events build faster, he explained. □

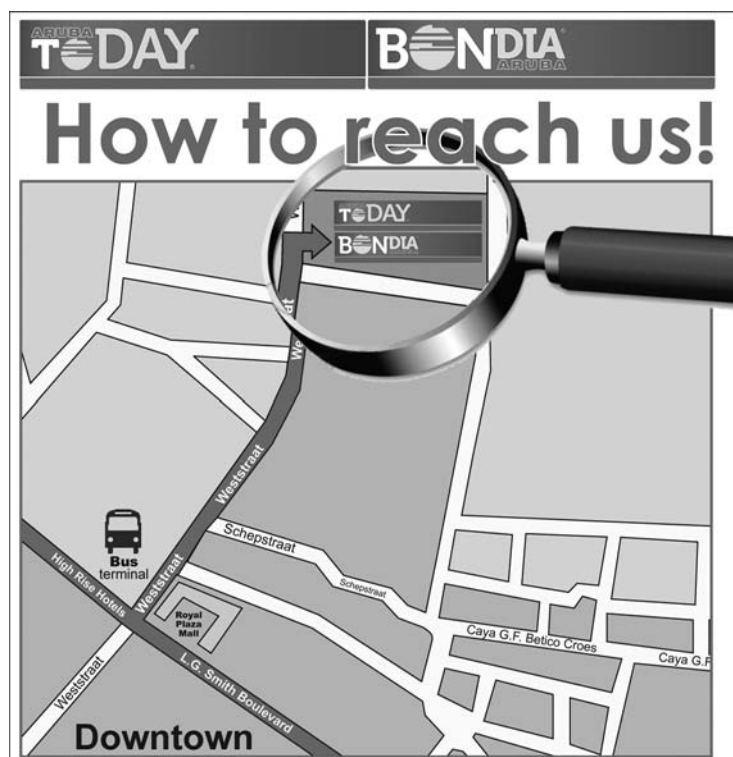
"Stronger events mean that we can expect to see more of these expected El Nino impacts," Michelle L'Heureux, ENSO team lead at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s Climate Prediction Center, told AFP, though she cautioned none are guaranteed.

- What's going on this year? -

Daily sea surface temperatures in the Nino 3.4 region -- an imaginary box in the Pacific -- are currently running about 2.6C above a rolling 30-year-average, according to the highly cited Climate Brink dashboard, which draws on NOAA's satellite-and-buoy sea surface record.

The dashboard also aggregates forecasts that put El Nino on course to peak at a 3.9C anomaly this November -- well above the 3C anomaly detected in the 2015 El Nino.

It stands to make this year a contender for the hottest



HEALTH



DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad
Hospital
7:00 pm/10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas
IMSAN
24 HOURS
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad: Sta. Cruz
Tel. 585 8028

San Nicolas: Centro Medico
Tel. 584 5794

OTHER

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

EMERGENCY

Police 100
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Seville, Jefferson-Wooden roar to 100m wins at Silesia Diamond League

Chorzów, Poland

World 100m champions Oblique Seville and Melissa Jefferson-Wooden roared to victories at the Silesia Diamond League on Sunday, as Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis wrapped up another dominant pole vault display.

The assembled field was outstanding in Poland. Of the 260 athletes appearing in Silesia, 55 were Olympic medallists, 101 have made the podium at world championships, and 68 were European championships medallists.

Quality shone throughout the meet, in front of 40,000 spectators at the Stadion Slaski, none less so than when Jamaica's Seville blasted to a meet record of 9.83 seconds for victory.

Americans Kenny Bednarek (9.87) and Christian Coleman (9.93) completed the podium.

The women's blue riband event was won by their teammate Jefferson-Wooden, in the season's first head-to-head over 100m with Olympic champion Julien Alfred, in a season's best of 10.78sec.

Alfred, of St Lucia, came in second, at 0.05sec.

"Julien pushed me, but before the race my coach told me to just control the race and focus on my own lane. I did that, did not panic, I think I did a good job," said Jefferson-Wooden.

Duplantis had an uncharacteristic three failures in the



Melissa Jefferson-Wooden of the United States and Julien Alfred of Saint Lucia in action in the Women's 100m Final at the Silesia Diamond League meeting of the 2026 Wanda Diamond League circuit at Silesian Stadium on August 23, 2026 in Chorzow, Poland.

pole vault, before girding himself for the business end of the showdown with Greek rival Emmanouil Karalis.

The U.S.-born Swede eventually claimed victory with a best of 6.20m, 20cm higher than Karalis. One attempt at what would have been a 16th world record, at 6.32m, was enough before Duplantis called it a day.

"The competition was super difficult for me. I was really sloppy at the beginning," said Duplantis.

"I lost a lot too much energy at those lower heights to break the world record today."

- Dos Santos on fire -

One of the stand-out performances on the track was Brazil's Alison Dos Santos, unbeaten this season, holding off Karsten Warholm in a thrilling 400m hurdles to win in 46.43sec, the sixth fastest time ever run.

The world-leading time smashed the meet record of 46.82sec set by Warholm last year.

"I expected a fast race, the line-up was amazing - everybody was here," said Dos Santos.

"I knew that to win here I had to give my best.

"It was a great race today and a great time."

The Brazilian made it four wins from four outings in Silesia and also four wins this season over Warholm, who claimed a fourth European title in Birmingham this month, as well as a second gold as part of Norway's 4x400m mixed relay quartet. "You cannot be mad if you set a season's best," acknowledged Warholm.

"Of course I always want to win. But 46.5 is really good coming out of the European championships, which really took its toll. The other guys have not been racing in a month and they were fresher."

Warholm's teammate Jakob

Ingebrigtsen, fresh from winning European 5,000m gold, made his first Diamond League appearance in a 1,500m in two years.

Ingebrigtsen clung on to finish fourth in a race won by American Ethan Strand, in 3:30.77, ahead of Kenya's Phaniel Kipkosegi Koech and Olympic champion Cole Hocker of the US.

"I felt a little rusty at the beginning, then a little better as the race went on," said the Norwegian. "Every day I will be stronger."

Ethan Katzberg and Camryn Rogers, who ensured hammer throw domination for Canada with two golds at last year's Tokyo worlds, dominated the two events here for victories with bests of 82.92 and 77.09m respectively.

Olympic and 2023 world champion Marileidy Paulino of the Dominican Republic won the women's 400m in 48.87sec, but there was no such luck for Morocco's two-time Olympic 3,000m steeplechase champ Soufiane El Bakkali, beaten into second by Ethiopia's Gemechu Godana, who clocked a meet record of 8:02.74.

World record holder Ja'Kobe Tharp claimed the victory in the 110m hurdles in 13.05se, while teammate Alaysha Johnson won the women's short hurdles in 12.52.

Ukraine's Yaroslava Mahuchikh equalled the meet record to win the women's high jump in 2.00m. □

Humanoids break records at Beijing Robot Games



A humanoid robot competes on the first day of the 2nd World Humanoid Robot Games in Beijing on August 22, 2026.

Beijing, China

Faceless humanoids exceeded human records and delighted hundreds of spectators at the World Robot Games over the weekend in Beijing as China showcased its dominance in the industry.

Dozens of humanoids and their human operators descended on Beijing's Olympic speed skating arena Sunday to compete in events from athletics and boxing to football and martial arts. During Saturday's opening

ceremony, a Chinese robot broke Jamaican legend Usain Bolt's record for the 100-metre dash, a feat splashed across headlines in Chinese state media.

The white and headless humanoid called Tiangong Ultra finished the sprint in 9.39 seconds according to state broadcaster CCTV -- surpassing Bolt's best of 9.58 seconds, set in 2009.

On Sunday, robot-makers scored another win, with the same humanoid model shattering the 400-metre world record by nearly five seconds.

Developed by a local government-backed research

centre in Beijing, it finished in 38.16 seconds -- with its time later revised to 38.15. In one 400-metre heat, a white-shelled robot thrashed its arms side to side as it propelled itself around the track, leaning dangerously forward as fans wondered out loud if it would fall.

The robot wobbled as it stormed toward the finish but managed to remain upright. Fans were just as pleased to watch the robo-athletes flop, as multiple robotic runners failed to start.

Others made their way around the track at the pace of a brisk walk or crum-

bled immediately after the gun start.

Children and their parents giggled as a toddler-sized robot kicked a football off the pitch over knee-high barricades.

- 'It's not a test of intelligence'

Each clunky, barely defended goal earned the waddling humanoids roars of applause from the stands. Spectators erupted into laughter as a humanoid in a boxing ring stumbled off to the side and folded over the ropes where it stayed motionless until humans lifted it away. □

Clark fends off McIlroy to win BMW Championship

Los Angeles, United States

A nervy Wyndham Clark birdied the final three holes to dramatically win the BMW Championship on Sunday, having earlier surrendered his five-stroke lead to Rory McIlroy. Clark had claimed his second U.S. Open title earlier this summer by barely clinging on to a huge final-day advantage, and history repeated itself at the penultimate event of the PGA Tour's FedEx Cup playoffs. Having struggled all day, Clark finally made his first birdie on 16, followed it with another on 17, and watched on with relief as his final pair partner McIlroy bogeyed after finding two separate bunkers.

Clark sealed the memorable win with a 17-foot putt for a third straight birdie, and a round of 70 to finish at 17-under par.

"It was weird. I wasn't really nervous. I was kind of like out of it, and I just was making just dumb bogeys," Clark said.

"As much as I would have loved to run away with this, it was fun getting the juices going, and (to) really feel the angst coming down at the end," he added.

Clark's five-shot overnight advantage had immediately dropped to three on the first hole at Bellerive Country Club in St. Louis, Missouri, as he three-putted for bogey while McIlroy opened with a birdie. Gary Woodland then cut the gap to two, with birdies on two, four and five.

A jittery Clark wobbled as the pressure mounted. He saved par on five after totally mis-hitting a simple fairway approach, then bogeyed the next hole after a heavy chip.

The double Major winner then escaped with par again after hitting the lip of a fairway bunker on eight, before bogeying 10.

McIlroy briefly appeared to falter, with bogeys on four and seven. But he pulled those back with birdies on eight and nine.

And the popular Northern Irishman dramatically tied Clark for the lead with a perfectly judged putt on the 11th green that sent the crowd wild.



Wyndham Clark of the United States is presented the winner's trophy after winning the BMW Championship 2026 at Bellerive Country Club on August 23, 2026 in St Louis, Missouri.

- 'Chances' -

The two men exchanged before Clark rolled in a 17-foot putt on the tricky par-

three 16th for his first birdie of the day.

For the third straight hole McIlroy narrowly missed his birdie putt, giving Clark a one-shot advantage with two holes to play.

On the par-five 17th, McIlroy from deep rough yanked his ball into a fairway bunker, and found another bunker with his next shot, essentially handing the tournament to Clark, who birdied.

"I don't think I could be too disappointed -- I'm probably not playing well enough to be disappointed that I didn't win," said McIlroy.

"But I had my chances on the back nine."

Patrick Cantlay -- trying to secure his place in the final field of 30 at next week's Tour Championship -- had earlier briefly moved just one back from Clark. □



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Create precious memories in the heart of Costa Linda Beach Resort; Water's Edge Restaurant offers the complete vacation experience!



(Palm Beach) – Consider your family dinner plans taken care of at Water's Edge. Located in the heart of the Costa Linda Beach Resort and on the shores of the world-famous Eagle Beach in Aruba, Water's Edge offers an elegant yet cozy dining experience that the entire family can enjoy. Whether you're craving Steak, Seafood, International Dishes or a bit of the Caribbean flare, Water's Edge caters to all your culinary needs, all the while offering you a cozy and flexible service with a spectacular view of Aruba's top-rated sandy beaches.

Water's Edge's new menu has a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts all on one menu specially made just for you. From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. Flexible and professional service allows you to enjoy your meal in the cool and elegant indoor dining area, on the sandy, breezy beaches of Eagle Beach or by the open bar outside. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, Water's Edge has it all for you, any time of the day.

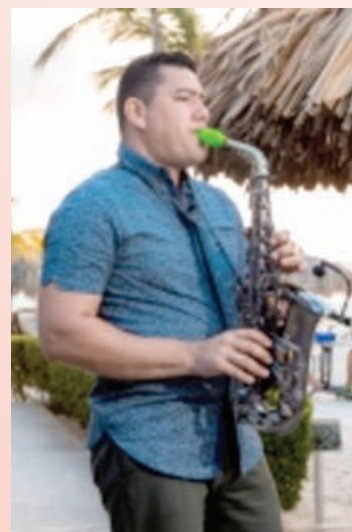
Start your day off with a hearty breakfast. Water's Edge offers a variety of delicious breakfast items, including their house specialties of Avocado Toast, Chicken & Waffles made with homemade Belgium waffles and topped with a gorgeous hot honey sauce. If you want something on the sweeter side, try their Crème Brûlée French Toast, served with an in-house mascarpone whip cream and topped with fresh fruit and powdered sugar. Or maybe the Traditional American Breakfast is more to your liking, complete with any kind of serving of eggs, bacon, sausage and toast, served with a side of hash browns.

For lunch, keep it easy with their handheld items like their Bacon and Cheddar Burger, Mediterranean Quesadillas or Street Tacos. Want a taste of the Caribbean? Try the Grouper Reuben; A local twist to the traditional Reuben, complete with rye bread, in-house 1000 island dressing, sauerkraut and grilled grouper, served with a side of Cajun Fries.

Dinner plans are set with Water's Edge mouthwatering dinner menu. Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the delectable Coconut Shrimp. You can also opt for their Water's Edge House Wedge Salad or freshly made Shrimp Louie Salad, made with poached shrimp, tossed in Louie dressing, fresh avocados and vine ripe tomatoes. For something a bit heartier, try their classic French Onion Soup, Lobster Bisque or Crab and Corn Chowder.

Follow your appetizers with your choice of Seafood, Chicken or Pasta dishes. Enjoy their succulent Shrimp and Clam Sauce with Angel Hair Pasta, a nice plate of Chicken Francese or explore the Water's Edge Fish Market—your pick of Mahi Mahi, Snapper, Grouper or Salmon, served with homemade mashed potatoes, sauce of choice and fresh herbs and vegetables.

Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of Steak, including a Petite Filet, French Rack of Lambs or their famous 14oz pan-seared Pork finished with a fantastic



apple glaze. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi-glace, mushroom sauce, chimichurri or bacon blue cheese butter. Enjoy it with a side of fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, and four different types of fries. Combine your meal with your personal choice of international and exclusive wines.

Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled Kids Menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests.

End the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness. Choose from a variety of dessert options, including a piece of coconut flan, NY cheesecake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Live entertainment

For seven nights a week, there is live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, every night is a relaxing experience under the stars, where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Water's Edge prides itself on bringing elegance and comfort to your dining experience, offering personalized service fit for everybody's needs.

Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106 or + 297 586 9494 (direct), or reserve your table online at reservations@watersedgearuba.com. For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website watersedgearuba.com