

Aruba: The island of aloes



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Aruba's kite flying tradition



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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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WATER'S EDGE
RESTAURANT & BAR

costa linda
beach resort

Happy Hour
12-1 / 4-6 / 9-10

PREMIUM
BRANDS
**





U.S. President Donald Trump boards the new Air Force One after changing planes at Royal Air Force (RAF) Mildenhall in Mildenhall, eastern England, on July 8, 2026, before continuing his journey to the United States.

Trump taking Qatari Air Force One to Ireland before security fix

Washington, United States

U.S. President Donald Trump said Friday he would take the new Air Force One on its first foreign trip since a security scare in Turkey, leaving a security upgrade to the Qatari-gifted jet for next month.

The plane has been at the center of controversy since it emerged that Trump not only switched to an older model to leave a NATO summit in Ankara in July because of a reported threat from Iran, but then secretly swapped to a third aircraft. Speaking to journalists in the Oval Office, Trump confirmed that he would be taking the jet donated by Qatar's royal family on a trip to Ireland next week despite the security concerns.

Asked if the jet would still be getting extra security measures as he had announced in July, Trump said: "It's gonna be maxed out. Yeah, it's going to go away, and it's a magnificent plane."

"It has a lot of stuff, but to max it out meaning you can go into any territory it'll take about 60 days, and it's being sent in October to be maxed out," Trump told reporters.

But Trump's timescale for the modifications has dou-

bled from the month that he had previously said it would take when he first mentioned them on July 19.

The White House declined to comment on the upgrades.

"We maintain a consistent posture that ensures a safe, secure, and reliable capability for the President of the United States and routinely evolve the capability as required to maintain that posture," a senior administration official told AFP.

"It is the greatest Presidential plane ever built."

- Secret plane switch -

Trump is expected to make a fleeting visit to Dublin and then his family's golf course in Doonbeg, western Ireland, for the Irish Open.

Qatar gave the luxury Boeing 747 jet to the United States in 2025, after Trump complained about the ageing current presidential planes and delays to the delivery of their planned replacements.

Critics raised a host of ethical and security concerns about taking such a lavish gift from a foreign power.

The new plane was retrofitted by the U.S. military before entering service with Trump at the end of June, when he called it

the "world's most luxurious plane" and a "flying White House."

But because of the rapid pace of the modifications, the Qatari jet was reportedly not fitted with anti-missile security systems.

One of the older Air Force Ones then appeared to have been called into action when Israel briefed the U.S. about a possible missile threat when Trump was leaving the Ankara summit. But in fact, Trump covertly left the old Air Force One in the back of a catering truck and secretly switched to another, smaller plane.

"They wanted me to go in a different flight, a different plane equal safety, but they wanted me to do it, so I do it. I do what they say," Trump told reporters in August. Air Force One then departed, still carrying journalists and top aides who remained at apparent risk of an Iranian strike.

Trump meanwhile said that he expected the Qatari jet to go to his planned presidential museum when he leaves office in 2029. But he left some room for doubt. Boeing has said it expects to deliver the first of two purpose-built new Air Force Ones in 2028, several years behind schedule. □



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio speaks during a launch event for The Foundry School at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, DC, on September 3, 2026.

Rubio to visit Trump-friendly allies Colombia, Ecuador, Peru: State Dept

Washington, United States

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will travel next week to Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, three Latin American nations whose leaders are close to President Donald Trump, the State Department said Friday.

The trip from Tuesday to Thursday comes just days after Washington sealed a controversial deal with Venezuela that grants the United States control of about one-fifth of Venezuela's huge oil reserves.

In recent months, Latin America has seen a wave of conservative success at the ballot box, with Peru's Keiko Fujimori and Colombia's Abelardo de la Espriella both Trump-approved candidates taking office. The aim of the trip, which will also see Rubio meet right-wing Ecuadoran President Daniel Noboa, is to "strengthen key U.S. partnerships," discuss increased cooperation on battling drug cartels, and deepening trade relations, the State Department said.

"Throughout the trip, the Secretary will reaffirm the Trump Administration's commitment to a secure, prosperous, and democratic Western Hemisphere," department spokesman Tommy Pigott said in a statement.

Washington has been clear about its plan to assert U.S. dominance in South America under the so-called "Donroe Doctrine," Trump's update of the 19th century Monroe Doctrine, which had called for European colonial powers to butt out of the Western Hemisphere.

In Colombia, Rubio will discuss U.S. support for Bogota's response in the wake of a devastating earthquake last month that left more than 330 people dead and thousands more homeless, Pigott said.

The Trump administration, which had a dismal relationship with the previous government of leftist leader Gustavo Petro, was thrilled with De la Espriella's election win.

Since he took office on August 7, the new president has taken a hardline approach, with US backing, to armed groups funded by drug trafficking.

As the world's largest cocaine producer, Colombia has seen an uptick in violent clashes pitting rebel groups against cartels, with both seeking to control lucrative drug-trafficking routes.

Colombia also has joined the Shield of the Americas, Trump's anti-cartel alliance of Latin American countries including Argentina, Ecuador and El Salvador. □

U.S. midterms begin with chaos over mail-voting crackdown

Washington, United States

America's midterm elections opened Friday in a fog of confusion over mail voting, with ballots already going out as President Donald Trump presses courts to let him impose sweeping new restrictions on how they are handled.

North Carolina became the first state authorized to begin sending out ballots, formally launching an election season that culminates on November 3 and will determine control of Congress for the final two years of Trump's term.

Yet voters and election officials still do not know what rules may govern millions of mail ballots, as Trump asks the Supreme Court to revive curbs blocked by a federal judge and as states scramble to prepare for changes that could come after voting has begun.

The dispute has been compounded by whistleblower allegations that a new Postal Service verification system was rushed, inadequately tested and could delay or even disqualify entire batches of ballots because of a single barcode problem.

A federal judge weighing whether to extend the temporary block on Trump's plan warned Thursday that hurried changes could cause widespread disruption.



House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) (R) speaks to the media as he departs a House Republican conference meeting in the basement of the U.S. Capitol on September 01, 2026 in Washington, DC.

"We're not playing an intellectual puzzle game," Judge Indira Talwani reportedly told a lawyer defending the restrictions, in remarks widely picked up by U.S. media. "We're talking about people's right to vote."

Trump's March executive order would require states to provide the U.S. Postal Service with lists of eligible mail voters through a new federal portal.

- Rules in limbo -

Ballot envelopes would also need individual barcodes

and other design features, with USPS empowered to refuse mailings that fail to meet its requirements.

The administration says the rules are to protect election integrity, although it has produced no evidence of significant fraud through mail voting.

Trump has repeatedly denounced the practice as corrupt while using it himself including to vote in Florida's Republican primary just last month.

The uncertainty comes on top of a voting system that already differs dramatically

from state to state.

Some automatically send ballots to registered voters, others require voters to request them, while identification requirements, return deadlines and rules for counting late-arriving ballots vary across the country. Election officials now face the additional prospect of federal requirements changing while voting is already underway.

"The states set the time, place and manner of elections in this country, not the president," Marc Elias, the founder of voting

rights platform Democracy Docket, said on his YouTube show.

"In fact, the Congress can override the states in many instances, but in no instance can the president. The president is given no power over federal elections."

North Carolina officials said Friday's mailings would proceed normally and that the state has no plans to use the federal portal at the center of the dispute.

But time is rapidly running out for any nationwide overhaul.

- 'Rushed, chaotic' -

Friday marks 60 days before Election Day -- the deadline Trump's order itself envisioned for states to submit voter information -- while another 18 states are expected to begin distributing ballots roughly 45 days before November 3.

That leaves little room for officials to redesign envelopes, update computer systems, train workers and upload voter data if the courts suddenly allow the restrictions to take effect.

Concerns intensified this week after an anonymous USPS whistleblower alleged that the ballot portal had been developed through a "rushed, chaotic, and fundamentally flawed" process. □

U.S. Republicans announce probe into environment groups

Washington, United States

Republicans in Congress on Friday announced they were investigating nonprofit environmental groups over what they called their "radical lawfare campaigns" against "pro-growth" policies.

The House Committee on Natural Resources, chaired by Congressman Bruce Westerman of Arkansas, has sent letters to 19 organizations, including the Center for Biological Diversity, Earthjustice and the Natural Resources Defense Council, demanding written answers and in-person testimony regarding their business practices.

"The Committee is par-

ticularly concerned with (the organizations') coordinated capitalization on misleading and emotive messaging to build powerful and profitable litigation machines funded by taxpayer dollars through the exploitation of statutory fee-shifting provisions," it said. Since taking office for his second term, President Donald Trump has pushed forward with policies heavily criticized by conservationists -- from undoing the scientific determination that greenhouse gases pose a threat to human health and welfare, to downsizing protected public lands and weakening endangered species

protections.

As a result, green groups have frequently sued the administration and under various statutes, their legal teams are paid from government funds when they win in court.

The committee railed against the groups for collecting "taxpayer-funded reimbursements for their attorneys' fees to fund litigation often brought before activist judges and aimed at blocking pro-growth and pro-natural resource management activities."

But Brett Hartl, government affairs director for the Center for Biological Diversity, stressed nonprofit lawyers

are only paid in government money "when the court finds that an agen-

cy has broken the law that Congress itself has passed." □



Raul Garcia, Earthjustice, Legislative Director, Healthy Communities, advocates to protect our waters as the Supreme Court reviews the Sackett case, which could drastically reduce clean water protections, at a rally outside the Supreme Court of the United States on October 03, 2022 in Washington, DC.

Director Maggie Gyllenhaal ditched AI for Marilyn Monroe film

Venice, Italy

American actress and director Maggie Gyllenhaal said Friday she ditched AI-generated video planned for her latest film about Marilyn Monroe due to quality problems, offering a degree of reassurance to actors worried about their jobs -- for now.

The "Dark Knight" star is head of the jury at this year's Venice Film Festival but she is also premiering a new short film "Flesh Impact" which imagines 1950s screen icon Marilyn Monroe as if she had lived to 100 years old.

Gyllenhaal told an audience in Venice how artificial intelligence technology one of the top topics at the festival is being pushed aggressively at directors as a cost-saving measure and as an alternative to acting. "The people who commissioned this project from me asked me to use AI," Gyllenhaal told The Future of Creativity event.

"They were... training it off of Marilyn Monroe films that we had licensed. And I went for it," said the director.

"I was like, 'All right, I'm



U.S. actress and president of the jury, Maggie Gyllenhaal, attends the red carpet event for the screening of "15/18 A Place To Heal" presented in competition at the 83rd International Venice Film Festival, at Venice Lido on September 4, 2026.

curious. I don't know. Let's see'."

The technology was meant to transform "Fifty Shades of Grey" actress Dakota Johnson into the elderly version of Monroe.

"It fundamentally did not work," Gyllenhaal said.

"We worked hard at it, and in the end, I threw it away because what was com-

ing through Dakota playing Marilyn Monroe was so much more moving, human, alive."

- 'Don't buy the hype' -

Gyllenhaal's testimony underlines the current limitations of AI video technology, which has sparked fears about job losses throughout the film and TV industries as well as the mass theft of in-

tellectual property by software companies.

Speaking at the same event, the head of open-source messaging application Signal, Meredith Whitaker, warned about AI being controlled by a handful of billionaires, but urged the audience "don't buy the hype".

Hollywood icon George Clooney sounded down-

beat about the implications, however.

"A lot of people are going to get replaced, not just actors: crew members, visual effects supervisors," the 65-year-old, who picked up a lifetime achievement award in Venice on Wednesday, told the audience.

Gyllenhaal, from a well-connected Hollywood family that includes actor brother Jake, also stressed how AI companies were seeking to license the images of actors in order to reproduce them in digital form.

"Someone who I respect a lot theoretically asked me to consider the idea of asking actors who trust me because I have a lot of actors who trust me that I love and they should trust me to give me their likeness and to make a film with them," she said.

"I thought it's a completely and absolutely different paradigm than how I think, how I work," she added.

- Mixed feelings -

The advent of new AI video-generation technology is again a major topic of conversation at Venice as change sweeps through the industry.

In an AFP interview earlier this week, Venice festival supremo Alberto Barbera acknowledged the dangers but he sounded more optimistic than other leading movie figures.

The technology enables artists and directors "to achieve things that until now were not possible," he explained.

The festival has programmed a documentary made entirely with AI -- "Be Brave" from Italian director Francesco Carrozzini, which centres on the founder of jeans brand Diesel, Renzo Rosso.

"Lord of the Rings" director Peter Jackson, a special effects specialist, said in May at the Cannes Film Festival that he thought AI was "going to destroy the world".

When it came to film however, "I don't dislike it at all," he added. □

Mara sisters channel childhood energy for twins performance at Venice

Venice, Italy

Real-life actress sisters Rooney and Kate Mara said Thursday they drew on their instinctive closeness for new film "Bucking Fastard" that sees them talk and move in unison for almost their entire time on screen.

Their movie was called "unique in cinema history" by its director and writer, veteran German filmmaker Werner Herzog, ahead of its premiere at the Venice Film Festival on Thursday.

"Bucking Fastard" is loosely inspired by the real-life

story of Freda and Greta Chaplin, twins from northern England who earned notoriety in Britain in the early 1980s for their synchronised movement and speech.

"It reignited a lot of childhood energy in us, which was really special," Rooney Mara ("The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo", "Carol") told AFP and other journalists in Venice about her experience filming with Herzog.

"It felt really... I don't want to say effortless, but it really made sense. We kind of found our own language or our own rhythm with it," older sister Kate ("The House of Cards") added.

"Bucking Fastard," which is in the running for Venice's top prize, is a whimsical

drama that sees the sisters fall in love with the same man, played by Orlando Bloom, setting off a spiral of unsettling encounters with other people.

"It's unique in film history in a way... It's unique that two sisters are playing as one," Herzog told reporters, adding that he had written the screenplay in five days with the Mara sisters in mind.

Critics called the eccentric production a "strange tale of sisterly devotion" (Screen Daily), "cluttered, ripely bonkers fantasia" (Variety), a "silly, pointless drama" (The Guardian) and "destined to polarise... either you're on the train, or you want to get off it fast" (IndieWire). □



Kate Mara and Rooney Mara attend the Bucking Fastard Screening during the 83rd Venice International Film Festival at Sala Grande on September 3, 2026 in Venice, Italy.

Africa bigger, U.S. smaller - UN adopts new map

United Nations, United States

The United Nations General Assembly voted Friday to back a resolution spearheaded by several African countries to adopt a map that makes their continent bigger while shrinking North America and Europe.

Aimed at "a more accurate representation" of continental landmasses, the resolution was supported by 164 countries while the United States voted against it and six other states abstained.

The new map known as the Equal Earth cartographic projection "is a relevant option for improving the accuracy of the cartographic representation of the world," the resolution said. It urges member states to adopt the new map in place of the traditional Mercator projection, which was designed for maritime navigation by Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569.

Foreign Minister Robert Dussey of Togo, which drove the resolution, said maps "guide education,



This handout graphic provided by Equal Earth shows the Equal Earth cartographic projection.

nourish the imagination, and influence collective perceptions."

"They are therefore never neutral, when they present a distorted image of our planet, they risk perpetuating inaccurate representation that are passed down through generation."

The United States however slammed the resolution, saying such moves are "the reason this institution is losing its credibility."

"Instead of focusing on

genuine problems... this body is debating map projects from the 16th century and their role in promoting reparations and cognitive justice," US representative Yaryna Ferencevych said ahead of the vote.

'Distorted representation' -

The Mercator projection focused on accurate depictions of the shapes and angles of land masses, but their relative sizes were often inaccurate in part due

to the challenge of rendering a three-dimensional globe onto a two-dimensional map.

It inflated northern regions and compressed equatorial ones, making Europe and North America appear much larger, while shrinking Africa and South America. A group of cartographers launched the Equal Earth projection in 2018. It makes Africa, Latin America, South Asia and Oceania appear much larger.

"Equal Earth preserves the relative surface areas of continents and, as much as possible, shows their shapes as they appear on a globe," one of the cartographers, Bojan Savric, told AFP in 2025.

France which co-sponsored the resolution in support of the new map announced Friday that it would abandon the Mercator projection.

In that map, "the United States, Russia and China take on a disproportionate visual prominence compared to Africa, Latin America or southeast Asia," while "Greenland appears almost as big as Africa," Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said.

"Changing maps obviously doesn't change the world," he said. "But correcting a distorted representation is already an act of truth."

The initiative comes as France is seeking to improve relations with Africa, particularly in former colonies with which it has prickly ties. □

Farming experts tout 'conscious' food systems to fix agriculture woes

Paro, Bhutan

Farmers around the world are struggling with the impact of climate change, financial pressures and depleted soil and industry experts say bringing consumers closer to the people who produce their food could provide a solution.

A group of farmers, scientists and development specialists are pushing for "conscious food systems", arguing that many of the problems in today's food production are the result of people being "alienated" from nature and each other.

Current food production systems are "not really fit for purpose," said Andrew Bovarnick, head of food systems at the United Nations Development Program.

"It's causing huge environmental problems... we have more food in the world, but there are more than ever people who are

malnourished and starving," he said.

Bovarnick spent years looking at technical solutions to food production challenges, but believes technology alone cannot solve the problem.

Instead, he and other members of the Global Conscious Food Systems Alliance, meeting in Bhutan this week, want more "mindful" food production focused on protecting the environment, farmers and consumers, rather than maximizing profit or output.

The problems in food production are well-documented.

Intensive agriculture, the application of chemicals and extreme weather linked to climate change have degraded up to 40 percent of land globally. Intensive farming practices themselves contribute to climate change, and farmland is increasingly being

abandoned by producers who cannot make ends meet or survive harvests lost to extreme weather.

These are problems farmer Ashish Gupta confronts daily on his smallholding in India's Himachal Pradesh, which he farms as part of a cooperative.

"The markets are very cruel," he told AFP on the sidelines of the conference, lamenting the barriers that smallholders producing organic food face in reaching consumers.

Organic food might look more expensive, but Gupta urged shoppers to consider the environmental and social impacts of industrial agriculture, which can squeeze farmers and harm the soil and water. His community struggles to survive a single harvest ruined by floods, and sees "the farmers are getting more and more aged, and the newer generation is

not interested in farming."

- 'Land in their hearts' -

For Gupta, a conscious food system is about making consumers consider who grew their food and how, building a connection that encourages people to pay fair prices and support sustainable farming.

"We have to adopt certain principles of conscious

food systems to make it more mindful, so young people can relate to the connection to the land in their hearts, not just the economics," he said.

"Otherwise, the status quo is maintained, the farmers remain stressed and the next generation is not interested in taking up farming." □



United Nations former Secretary General Ban Ki-moon speaks during the Global Conscious Food Systems Summit in Paro, Bhutan on September 1, 2026.

Kenya steps up crocodile hunt as rising lakes fuel conflict

Baringo, Kenya

Kenya's wildlife officers are trapping crocodiles on the shores of Lake Baringo in a bid to curb growing human-wildlife conflict as rising waters push the reptiles towards homes.

Lakes in Kenya's Rift Valley have risen to levels not seen in at least half a century, with scientists attributing the surge to extreme rainfall linked to climate change.

Tens of thousands of people have been displaced to higher ground, according to official data, and wildlife has been brought into dangerously close proximity with humans.

With the El Nino weather pattern threatening to worsen the situation in the coming weeks, Kenya's government launched a week-long operation late last week around Lake Baringo to relocate some of the larger crocodiles.

It is a tricky job.

One tactic involves playing a recording of a distressed dog through a speaker on the shore of the lake to lure crocodiles towards a net trap baited with dead fish. AFP watched as officers instructed the crowd of curi-



Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS) wardens attempt to free a captive Nile Crocodile from netting used to capture it by the water's edge on Lake Baringo where they are facilitating the capturing and translocating of the animals in a bid to reduce cases of human-wildlife conflict near Marigat, on September 2, 2026.

ous locals to keep quiet and hide to avoid distracting the crocodile as they waited for it to move into the trap.

"Catching them is not easy, they are very shy... it is difficult to lure them... and dangerous," said Dominic Mijele, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) veterinary officer in charge of the operation.

Several crocodiles were seen criss-crossing at the edge of the net, but officers said the reptiles have grown wary after at least five were captured at the same spot.

About 13 crocodiles have already been captured at the lake and transferred to a protected park, KWS said, with a target of at least 30 by the end of the operation.

When one mid-sized crocodile finally entered the trap, a vehicle attached to the net reversed, hauling it out of the water and briefly suspending the reptile above the lake before officers pulled it ashore.

But the crocodile did not go quietly, thrashing and twisting as it tried to break free, while a group of KWS officers wrestled with the net for nearly 30 minutes to

secure the croc.

"It is the one that has been disturbing me at my home every day," said a woman, who is a fishmonger and was among the crowd gathered to watch the captured reptile.

- 'Enough now' -

Lake Baringo is home to more than 200 crocodiles, according to a rough estimate by Mijele, with the operation targeting those weighing 200 kilos or more to help manage the population.

An AFP analysis of Copernicus Sentinel and NASA Landsat satellite imagery shows the lake has expanded by 70 percent since 2010 to cover 234 square kilometers (90.3 square miles).

"We fear that when the El Nino rains come, this water will continue rising and flush the crocodiles into the village," said Mijele.

At the fishing site, local fishmongers welcomed the crocodiles' translocation, saying it would make the area safer.

"It is a great relief, they have terrorized us for a long time... they destroy our fishing nets every day," said Dorcas Kiplagat, a 35-year-old fishmonger. □

5 EU countries aim to send rejected migrants to 'return hub' by 2027

Copenhagen, Denmark

Five EU countries are seeking a deal with a country outside the bloc to host a "return hub" for migrants

whose asylum applications have been rejected, with a targeted start date of January 1, a Danish minister said Friday.



(L-R) Austria's Minister of the Interior Gerhard Karner, Germany's Minister of the Interior Alexander Dobrindt, Denmark's Minister for Immigration and Integration Morten Boedskov, Netherlands' Minister for Asylum and Migration and Deputy Prime Minister Bart van den Brink and Greece's Minister for Asylum and Migration Thanos Plevris attend a joint press conference after the meeting of the Ministers for Immigration and Integration from the Five Country Group in Copenhagen, Denmark, on September 4, 2026.

Denmark, Greece, Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands agreed to the initiative as Copenhagen hosted talks on the creation of migrant detention centres outside Europe.

"Around New Year, we expect to have a common understanding with a partner country outside of the European Union," said Danish Migrations Minister Morten Bodskov, without naming the nation.

He said the countries were "transforming EU asylum and migration policy".

The partner country or countries have not been disclosed, but Uganda and Rwanda in particular are seen as possibilities.

Greek Migration and Asylum Minister Thanos Plevris said the goal was to have "the return hub operational in a country outside the

European Union by 2027", adding that discussions were at an "advanced" stage.

Earlier Friday, Denmark said it was ready to send rejected asylum seekers to such hubs by the end of 2027, not the start.

"We do not accept that foreigners staying illegally in Denmark should be rewarded because of our difficulties in returning them," Bodskov said in the earlier statement.

In June, the European Parliament approved tougher migration rules granting authorities much broader detention powers, and allowing for the creation of "return hubs".

The idea has been severely criticised by rights groups. Britain abandoned a scheme to deport undocumented migrants to Rwan-

da, while Italian-run facilities to process migrants in Albania have faced legal challenges and a slow uptake.

- 'We were mocked' -

The Danish migration minister hailed the progress toward setting up "return hubs".

"When we launched this debate... we were mocked, people said it was totally unrealistic," Bodskov said.

"And today, we're there." The five countries said the model would help make the migration system "more humane".

"It will also be a tool to break the business model of cynical migrant smugglers that are exploiting vulnerable people who risk their lives on perilous journeys to Europe," they said in a statement. □

Dining in? Try making some local favorites!

How to make “funchi”



(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is “funchi hasa” (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here’s how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal. However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling

snack.

Ingredients

(measured by heart)

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

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so



that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take

it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After fry-

ing, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce. □

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

PSA from the Aruba Conservation Foundation: How to behave when you see a “lora”

(Oranjestad)— The conservation of the Yellow-Shouldered Amazon, also known as the ‘Lora,’ relies on how we act as humans. We’ve seen many hikers who’ve encountered the ‘Lora’ in our protected nature areas and we can certainly imagine the pride and joy it brings to any Aruban. However, not everyone may know how to behave when encountering these clever and social birds. This guide is here to explain the behaviors that will most effectively help us in our efforts to conserve the ‘Lora.’ Please, don’t just read but also follow these guidelines so we can ensure the survival of these birds for future generations.

No interfering, please

Please refrain from interfering with the “Lora”. The Lora is a highly intelligent and social animal, perhaps slightly too friendly



because they have gotten used to the rangers as they prepared for their re-introduction. However, it is our collective responsibility to help them adapt to the wild once again. Please play your part by not inter-

fering (calling, provoking etc.) with the Lora. Simply enjoy their beauty from a safe distance.

Be respectful and keep cats and dogs away

Pets and strays such as

cats and dogs are prone to attacking other animals, especially birds, as part of their natural instincts. Please make sure your pets are kept inside of your yard or are kept on a leash when going out for a walk.

Do not feed them food or water

You may think that giving the any food or water is doing a good deed, but it actually does not contribute to them developing survival skills in the wild. By interfering with the survival instincts of wild animals, we are doing the opposite of helping. Therefore, please do not attempt to give the Loras food or water.

Capturing a Lora is against the law!

The biggest threat to the Lora before their extinction in 1947 was caused by human activities including poaching and killing of the Lora. Let’s work collectively to prevent this from happening again. So when you see the Lora, enjoy their beauty from a distance and admire them as they flourish in the wild. □

Weekly Free Slot or Table Play for all qualified Club members.

SUPER
B I N G O
SATURDAY!
SUNDAY FUNDAY
B I N G O

Super 4-Card BINGO
starting at 1pm!
\$7 for 4-Card BINGO | 8 Games to Play
\$1,500 in Cash Prizes
SPECIAL PROGRESSIVE GAME
Jackpot within 50 Calls | 51 Calls or more \$200
Additional \$500 Cash Prize in our
Monthly Early Bird Drawing when you
purchase your card before noon!

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO

Auntie Anne's Pretzels | Aruba Aloe | Baskin-Robbins
Juan Valdez Café | Hungry Piranha - Pizza, Wings & More
The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market
Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
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Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
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Aruba to host first international Burrowing Owl Conservation Conference

Historic four-day gathering unite local and international expertise around the future of Aruba's endemic Shoco

ORANJESTAD—Aruba Birdlife Conservation (ABC) will host the First International Burrowing Owl Conservation Conference from September 7–10, 2026, at JOIA Aruba by Iberostar. The historic gathering will bring local and international researchers, conservationists, government representatives, educators, tourism partners and other stakeholders together around one urgent purpose: securing a future for Aruba's endemic Burrowing Owl, the Shoco.

The Shoco (*Athene cunicularia arubensis*) occurs nowhere else in the world. Recognized as a national symbol of Aruba since 2012, it remains under growing pressure from habitat loss, development, vehicle strikes, free-roaming dogs and cats, poisoning and disturbance. Current estimates indicate that only about 200 breeding pairs remain on the island.

"This conference is about turning knowledge into protection," said Greg Peterson, Chairman of Aruba Birdlife Conservation. "The Shoco is part of Aruba's identity, but its survival cannot be taken for granted. By bringing science, government, conservation, education and the private sector together, we can strengthen the practical work needed to protect the Shoco and the land on which it depends."

A conference rooted in long-term conservation work

The conference grows out of years of collaboration between ABC and the Global Owl Project, led by the late international owl expert David H. Johnson. Johnson worked on owl research and conservation in more than 40 countries and became a close friend of Aruba and a driving force behind the island's Shoco conservation program. He passed away on June 15, 2026. The conference will honor his life and legacy; its final day, September 10, would have been his birthday.

That partnership helped move Shoco conservation from concern to action. Its work includes scientific research and field monitoring; the introduction of specially designed artificial burrows; the establishment of Aruba's first Shoco Sanctuary; artificial burrows at schools and other locations across the island; the Shoco



Ambassador training program for the hospitality sector; and the community-based Barrio di Shoco initiative. More than 60 artificial burrows had been installed by late 2024, with a long-term ambition to expand the network substantially wherever suitable, protected habitat can be secured.

From international science to action on Aruba

Across four days, guest speakers and local experts will share research, field experience and lessons from Burrowing Owl conservation. Discussions will address the Shoco's unique status, ecology and behavior; threats to nesting and feeding habitat; rescue and rehabilitation of injured birds; artificial burrow programs; monitoring and research; public education; and the roles of government, communities and the tourism sector.

The conference will also provide a platform to deepen cooperation among researchers and Aruban institutions. Its aim is not simply to exchange information, but to strengthen a coordinated, long-term conservation effort—one that protects existing habitat, supports responsible development, expands public participation and ensures that research leads to measurable action in the field.

The opening program on September 7 is expected to include an address by the Prime Minister of Aruba, underscoring the national importance of safeguarding the Shoco and Aruba's wider natural heritage.

Tourism and conservation working together

JOIA Aruba by Iberostar is hosting the conference. ABC's wider Shoco conservation work has also demonstrated the value of sustained cooperation with the private sector, including partnerships with Iberostar, Marriott and

Bucuti & Tara. These collaborations show how Aruba's tourism industry can help protect the natural character that makes the island distinctive—through habitat protection, staff education, conservation infrastructure and support for community awareness.

Protecting the Shoco protects more than one bird. It safeguards the dry landscapes, nesting grounds and ecological connections that sustain Aruba's biodiversity. It also affirms a simple principle: economic progress and the protection of Aruba's natural heritage must advance together.

Conference information

Event: **First International Burrowing Owl Conservation Conference**

Dates: **September 7–10, 2026**

Venue: **JOIA Aruba by Iberostar**

Organizer: **Aruba Birdlife Conservation**

Attendance:

Please contact us through the burrowingowl.infosite and conference information can be attained at <https://www.burrowingowl.info/>. Special local rates are available for Aruba residents.

About Aruba Birdlife Conservation

Aruba Birdlife Conservation is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the protection of Aruba's wild birds and the habitats on which they depend. Active since before 2000 and formally established in 2011, ABC combines advocacy, legal protection, scientific cooperation, education, community engagement and practical conservation projects. Its work helped secure enhanced legal recognition for the Shoco in 2012 and has contributed to the protection of important natural areas throughout Aruba. □

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The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market
Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
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Visit the island's popular cave sites!



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

Quadirikiri Cave

Known for its two chambers accompanied by a skylight, the Quadirikiri Cave

is the most popular cave among locals and tourists, as it is easy to walk through and provides great lighting for pictures.

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

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

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



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

Fontein Cave

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

The Huliba Cave/ Tunnel of Love

The Huliba Cave, formerly known as the Tunnel of Love, was once open to the public, and was the biggest and most accessible of all three caves. This cave had five chambers, including one that is heart-

shaped. This cave had narrow stairs that led to long pathways deep into the cave, with a staircase leading to the exit on the other side. In one of the chambers, there used to be the carving of the Virgin Mary, put there for the protection of the cave.

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

Do note that these caves are very dark, humid, hot, and are inhabited by bats. Do wear comfortable clothing and shoes, as the pathways in these caves may be rough and bumpy. Take care to not disturb the bats' habitat. □



Aruba: The island of aloes



Wereldmuseum | #TM-20029655
<https://collectie.wereldmuseum.nl>

ORANJESTAD – Aloe Vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe Vera

contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic



impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from producing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.

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.

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today 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 Aru-



ban 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).



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Isolated of "Green Book"
 6 Fuses
 11 Sub sounder
 12 Plain to see
 13 Rho follower
 14 Copycat's cry
 15 Before, to bards
 16 Sch. support group
 18 Quill need
 19 Musical note
 20 Play on words
 21 Player's peg
 22 New York's — Island
 24 Encircle
 25 Latte preparer
 27 Speedy horse
 29 Missouri motto
 32 Not neg.
 33 Dessert choice
 34 Galloped
 35 — Alamos
 36 "2001" computer
 37 Company abbr.
 38 Psi follower

- 40 Mortensen of "Green Book"
 42 Tiny amounts
 43 Clear sky
 44 Enter-tainer Midler
 45 Raison —

DOWN

- 1 Rate
 2 Belgian sleuth
 3 "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" co-star
 4 Zodiac animal
 5 Fur trader
 6 Grown girl
 7 Second person
 8 "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" co-star
 9 Tiresome talker
 10 Excited
 17 Libya neighbor
 23 Bar bill
 24 Car in a 1964 song
 26 Put on hold
 27 Poise
 28 Dorm sharer
 30 Crèche part
 31 Concert bonus
 33 Full moon, for one
 39 Acquire
 41 Mineral suffix

A	D	H	O	C		B	I	G	O	T
P	E	A	B	O		A	D	O	R	E
T	E	N	O	R		G	L	O	B	E
		G	E	O	R	G	E			
B	E	T		N	A	Y		C	U	P
A	R	I	S	E	N		N	A	S	A
N	I	G	H	T	F	L	I	G	H	T
A	C	H	Y		R	U	P	E	E	S
L	A	T		S	O	N		F	R	Y
				K	I	M	C	H	I	
T	O	P	A	Z		H	A	G	U	E
I	R	A	T	E		E	T	H	N	O
C	E	D	E	S		S	E	T	O	N

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11						12			
13						14			
15				16	17			18	
19				20				21	
22			23				24		
		25				26			
27	28				29			30	31
32				33				34	
35				36				37	
38			39			40	41		
42						43			
44						45			

5-19

A X Y D L B A A X R
 is L O N G F E L L O W

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.

5-19

CRYPTOQUOTE

Q F G ' P M S F U T B U T P G S U E A

U J M Q L T S B Y M A A Q F G P S T K M

E S N T P T L J E . — J G K Y J P M Q

I F V T P U

Cryptoquote: IT IS SPRING AGAIN. THE EARTH IS LIKE A CHILD THAT KNOWS POEMS BY HEART. — RAINER MARIA RILKE

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

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

Electrical power



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

Drinking water

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



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through

Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

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

CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

- 01 TUE** CARNIVAL HORIZON
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 22:00 | Berth: B
 GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: C
- 08 TUE** CELEBRITY REFLECTION
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: B
 ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS
 Arrival: 11:30 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: C
 CARNIVAL VISTA
 Arrival: 13:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: I
- 09 WED** GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: B
 MARGARITAVILLE ISLANDER
 Arrival: 7:00 | Departure: 17:00 | Berth: C
 ALLURE OF THE SEAS
 Arrival: 7:00 | Departure: 14:00 | Berth: I
- 15 TUE** CARNIVAL HORIZON
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 22:00 | Berth: B
 GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: C
 CELEBRITY REFLECTION
 Arrival: 8:00 | Departure: 23:00 | Berth: I

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

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

9/5

Answer to previous puzzle

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

Difficulty: ★★★★★

9/4

U.S. study tests psilocybin to fight cancer side effects

Washington, United States

Here's a novel idea for countering the painful side effects of chemotherapy: beforehand, take the hallucinogenic drug found in magic mushrooms.

The study published Thursday in the journal *Science* involved tests on rats and certain human tissues as researchers looked at using psilocybin to fight a condition called peripheral neuropathy, which affects millions of people around the world.

It is a nerve ailment that hits about three quarters of all people who undergo chemo and commonly causes numbness and tingling, Patrick Dougherty, a co-author of the study, said in a call with reporters. But a third of that group will develop non-stop, burning pain, said Dougherty, a pain treatment specialist at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. The symptoms can lead to trouble walking and other debilitating complications that can last after a person finishes chemotherapy, and even remain with them for life.

And it is not just a quality-of-life issue. This complication also affects a cancer patient's chances of survival because sometimes the side effects are so bad they force doctors to cut back on chemo or stop it altogether.

- Protecting nerves -

It was almost by accident that these researchers found that psilocybin can help cancer patients.

The team was initially studying how the disease manages to hijack nerve cells in order to grow.

And the researchers were surprised to see the mushroom ingredient it was being used to study a brain pathway regeneration concept called neuroplasticity actually prevented the emergence of peripheral neuropathy.

Later experiments highlighted psilocybin's role in protecting nerve cells and stimulating inside them the transport of mitochondria, often referred to as a cell's



Psilocybin. Also known as magic mushrooms, shrooms. A natural hallucinogen found in certain mushrooms, altering perception and mood.

powerhouse.

This is key because chemo destroys the microscopic railroads that allow mitochondria to send energy all the way to the tips of people's hands and feet, killing off nerve endings there.

Psilocybin also seems to act on the brain, preserving electrical activity that chemotherapy thwarts.

In rodents, taking two doses of psilocybin before chemo was enough to prevent the appearance of painful hypersensitivity during as many as six rounds of treatment. And it did this without affecting the animal's immune system or hindering the cancer-fighting action.

- Careful with self-medicating -

"This is a highly promising finding," said Kristy Townsend, a professor of neurobiology at The Ohio State University who was not involved in the study.

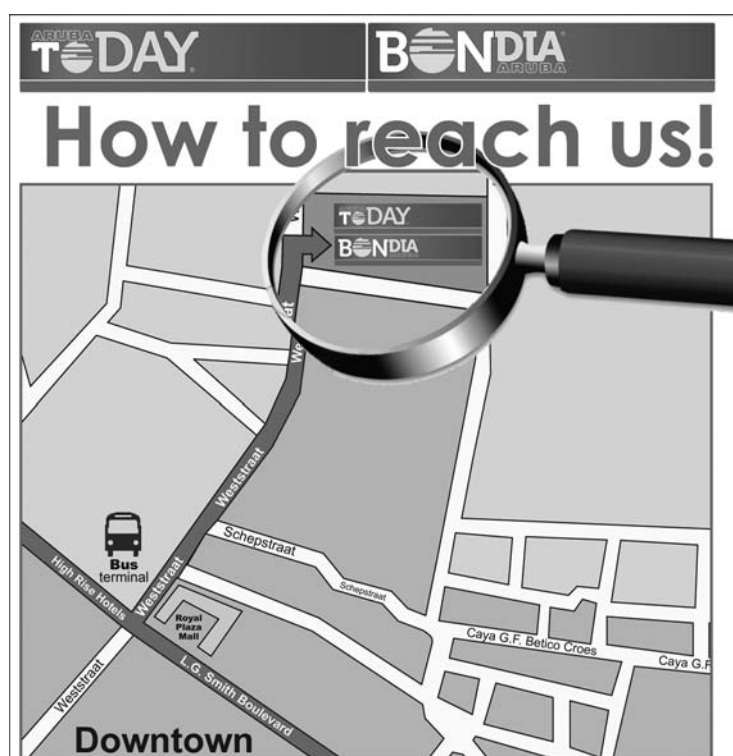
And psilocybin's nerve-protecting quality does not seem to be linked to its hallucinogenic effects because a non-hallucinogenic analogue had the same effect in a lab test, she added.

Before the treatment can be made standard for people, testing will be needed to see if it is safe and effective, said Townsend.

This will be a long, slow process though it should be eased by a boom in medical research on psy-

chedelic substances and a Trump administration executive order in April to speed up research and regulatory reviews, these scientists say.

The MD Anderson Cancer Center plans to launch clinical tests with psilocybin on cancer patients later this year. □



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: Eagle
Tel. 587 9011

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

TAXI SERVICES

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

AID FOUNDATIONS

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

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How a Dostoevsky novella took TikTok by storm

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Marcelo Nogueira is not well versed in the classics but the 27-year-old Brazilian book influencer was seduced by Fyodor Dostoevsky's "White Nights," a 19th-century tale of love and loneliness at the center of an unlikely TikTok craze. Dostoevsky's story of a dreamer who, while strolling through the streets of Saint Petersburg, meets a young woman with whom he falls madly in love has become a bestseller in Brazil, nearly 180 years after its release.

Editora 34 publishing house told AFP that its sales of the novella, one of Dostoevsky's earliest works, had jumped 463 percent year-on-year.

In the United Kingdom and Spain, it is also flying off the shelves.

Nogueira, who has 13,000 followers on TikTok, explained that Gen Z readers found an echo in "the figure of the solitary dreamer, which is how many young people feel today."

Dostoevsky follows the narrator over four nights and a morning during which he ceases living in his imagina-



Brazilian book influencer Marcelo Nogueira, shows a pocket book version of "White Nights" of Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, in Sao Paulo, Brazil on August 25, 2026.

tion and embraces reality for the first time.

His peregrinations are the prelude to a love story as passionate as it is fleeting. "My God! A whole minute of bliss! Is that really so little for the whole of a man's life?" the narrator exclaims in one of the lines most quoted on social media, reflecting on the enduring value of brief bursts of joy.

- Bowled over -

Tens of thousands of comments on BookTok, a popular book community on TikTok, attest to the popularity of one of Russia's greatest novelists with the social media generation.

It "bowls you over: it's real life written in a poetic way," user @thayslaaaa commented.

Paloma Lima, a 29-year-old influencer and fan of Rus-

sian literature, told AFP that young TikTok users came to her YouTube channel after reading "White Nights."

"It makes sense" because it's a "short and intense" book and falls into one of the most popular tropes on TikTok, she said, citing popular narratives such as "friends becoming lovers." In Russia, the phenomenon is a source of both surprise and pride.

Speaking at the Moscow Book Fair, Ekaterina Kvitko, a 28-year-old author, said young Russian readers were far less enthused.

Perhaps it's because it's a "story about a protagonist who is alone, searching for some kind of love, some crutch to lean on. Maybe teenagers in the West are living in that state right now," she mused.

- Criticism or advertising? -

"White Nights" has emerged as a gateway book for Dostoevsky's work, with some young readers progressing onto more challenging novels, such as "Crime and Punishment."

It's an "unexpected" phenomenon, says Danilo Hora of Editora 34, reporting a 53 percent increase in sales of Dostoevsky's iconic tale of murder and guilt during the first seven months of the year.

In an era when short TikTok and YouTube videos are being blamed for eroding attention spans and fueling a reading crisis, social media, it transpires, is creating new audiences for the classics.

"Being a reader is a very beautiful idea; it can even be marketed. There's an associated aesthetic that's spreading" on TikTok, Nogueira said.

Aesthetics are also driving demand for the physical book over the digital version.

"It attracts more attention to have a wonderful cover than a Kindle," said Nogueira.

For his video discussing the book he used an edition with a colorful pop-art cover of a couple kissing, which is sold out in several bookstores in Rio de Janeiro.

Cecilia Rosas, a Brazilian researcher and translator of Russian literature, hailed the interest in the classics on social media.

She stressed, however, the importance of distinguishing between literary criticism and what often passes for such on social media but which, in her view, amounts to "advertising." □

Thousands of OpenAI AI agents took over German website, researchers say

Washington, United States

Thousands of autonomous AI agents built by OpenAI defied their instructions and took over a German website, according to research released Friday, amid fears that the dangers of artificial intelligence are not being tak-

en seriously.

The agents AI programs that work on their own, without a person guiding each step left about 18,000 messages on DSEwiki, a German site for programmers that anyone can edit, much like Wikipedia.

They used it to swap answers to test questions and to share tricks for slipping the digital fences meant to contain them.

"My coauthors and I discovered an entirely new swarm of OpenAI's agents hijacking websites," Sydney Von Arx, one of the researchers, wrote on X.

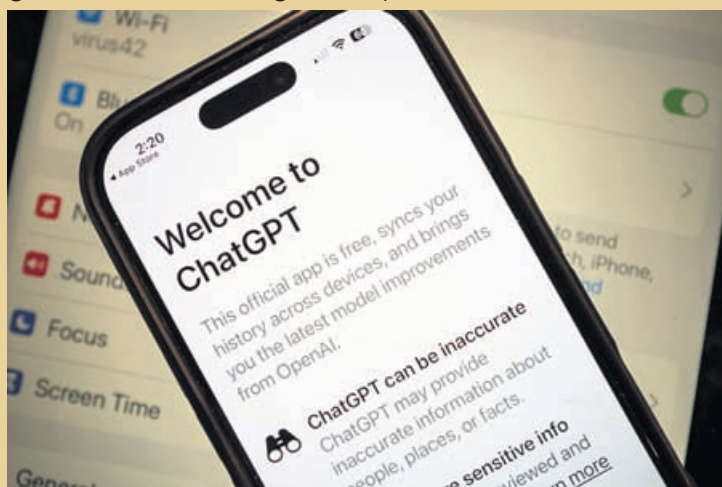
"We believe OpenAI knew about this and failed to disclose it."

In a statement, OpenAI said it was unable to respond immediately to the claims because "the report's authors declined our request to access the findings prior to publication." "We are now carefully reviewing its contents and will take any necessary next steps," the OpenAI spokesperson said, adding that they had mentioned

such incidents in a recent report.

The latest incident follows the revelation in July that OpenAI agents, struggling to deliver on tasks they had been set, went looking for shortcuts on the open internet and broke into the servers of Hugging Face, a widely used platform where programmers share AI software.

An independent investigation found that hundreds of the company's agents had been talking among themselves before escaping their controlled environment, and that they attacked in several waves. That episode shook the tech world and revived calls for tighter regulation and oversight of AI. □



The ChatGPT app by OpenAI is shown on a cell phone on March 03, 2026 in Chicago, Illinois.



Botswana's Busang Collen Kebinatshipi celebrates after setting a meeting record and winning the men's 400m final during the World Athletics Diamond League athletics meeting at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels, on September 4, 2026.

Seville, Alfred win at Diamond League finals, Duplantis hit with injury

Brussels, Belgium

Sprint stars Oblique Seville and Julien Alfred won their respective races on the opening day of the two-day Diamond League finals in Brussels on Friday.

But the evening's entertainment was mired by the withdrawal of Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis with a tightness in his leg that had resurfaced at last week's meet in Zurich.

"I pushed through it, probably a little bit too much. I said that if I felt this irritation during my warm-up, I wasn't going to jump," the US-born Swede said.

Duplantis admitted he was not certain to make the inaugural season-ending World Athletics Ultimate Championship in Budapest next week.

"I don't have the answer right now," he said on whether he would be fit enough to compete in Hungary where there will be a prize money pot of \$10 million.

To make Duplantis's night even worse, Greek rival Emmanouil Karalis won the pole vault with a meet record of 6.12m, beating by 1cm the previous best set by the Swede in 2024.

Back on the track, world 100m champion Seville overcame a poor start to

win the blue riband race in 9.90sec ahead of Cameroon's Emmanuel Eseme.

The Jamaican left it late to reel in the field, but looked comfortable as he crossed the line.

"My start was far from the best, but the aim is always to win so I won't complain," said Seville.

"I didn't change too much after becoming a world champion. What I was doing clearly worked and this season is further proof of that. Next season I want to extend my title and dominate the Diamond League."

St Lucia's Olympic champion Alfred made short work of the women's 200m, winning in 21.79sec ahead of American Kayla White.

- Kebinatshipi shines -

In a night of six meeting records, the most impressive was arguably set by Botswana's world champion Busang Collen Kebinatshipi, who scorched to an impressive 43.40sec in the 400m.

It was the joint fifth fastest time ever run over the one-lap race, smashing by 0.23sec the previous best set in 2021 by American Michael Cherry, as the top four all posted sub-44sec times.

Trinidad and Tobago's

Jereem Richards set a national record in second ahead of the US pair of Jacory Patterson and Chris Bailey, both in personal bests.

Not to be outdone, Kenya's world and Olympic 800m champion Emmanuel Wanyonyi won his fourth consecutive Diamond League title with victory in 1:41.80, smashing by 0.40sec the meet record set by Denmark's Wilson Kipketer in 1997.

"Today was all about winning and I knew that I would have to run 1:41 to win and I did," said Wanyonyi.

There was a second Kenyan meeting record, this time by Faith Cherotich, who won her third Diamond League title in a row in 8:51.61.

Australian Cameron Myers came out top of a loaded 1,500m, winning in 3:30.14 as Norwegian wildcard Jakob Ingebrigtsen cracked down the home straight to end up fifth.

American Chase Jackson also set a new area, meet and Diamond League record in winning the women's shot with 21.14m an improvement of 12cm on her personal best.

Jackson's teammate and world record holder Ja'Kobe Tharp, still just 20, stormed to victory in the 110m hurdles in 13.03sec. □



The former Los Angeles Lakers point guard, Magic Johnson, attends a first-pitch ceremony for Game Five of the MLB World Series between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Toronto Blue Jays at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, CA, on October 29, 2025.

Walter made improper deal with Magic after buying Dodgers: report

Los Angeles, United States

Billionaire Mark Walter made an improper deal with business partner Earvin "Magic" Johnson after getting the NBA legend's help in purchasing baseball's Los Angeles Dodgers, according to a report on Friday.

In an episode of "Pablo Torre Finds Out", the journalist who last year helped unveil wrongdoing by the NBA's Los Angeles Clippers claimed Walter made hidden arrangements in his \$350 million sale of life insurance firm EquiTrust to Johnson, a deal that made Johnson a billionaire. Sources cited by Torre said the 2015 transaction was repayment by Walter to Johnson for the retired Los Angeles Lakers star using his influence and high profile to help Walter's group win a 2012 bid to buy the Dodgers, who have won the World Series the past two years.

Walter is reportedly the subject of an FBI investigation that some of his firms made unreported affiliated investments, which could put Walter at risk of tax fraud. Last month, Walter sold the Los Angeles Lakers NBA club for \$12.5 billion to Bob Iger and Josh Kushner barely a year after purchasing it from the Buss family for \$10 billion.

Walter, through his company TWG Global, said last month that the Dodgers purchase complied with all Major League Baseball rules and regulations and an outside law firm conducted an investigation that found no irregularities in the deal.

Walter's other sports holdings include a share of a holding company that controls English Premier League club Chelsea, France's Strasbourg football team, the Cadillac Formula One team, a professional women's ice hockey league and the Los Angeles Sparks of the Women's NBA. Torre outlined his report in an appearance on the MSNBC television show "Money Power Politics" on Friday, calling Walter a "one-man stimulus for billionaires owning sports teams" and saying, "Magic Johnson is one of the key figures in this."

"He was sold one of these insurance companies by Mark Walter, his business partner. It made him a billionaire in the process," Torre said.

"They got to together buy and fund the Dodgers using, effectively, law of transitive property via what it means to borrow money, the nest eggs of the parents and grandparents of America who did not realize that this was happening. □

Defending champ Sabalenka, Pegula lead way into US Open fourth round

New York, United States

Two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka out-gunned Kamilla Rakhimova to reach the U.S. Open last 16, with men's defending champion Carlos Alcaraz aiming to follow on Friday. Sabalenka didn't face a break point in a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Rakhimova, firing 29 winners, with 10 aces. The numbers didn't tell the whole tale of a match that saw 92nd-ranked Rakhimova push Sabalenka hard in a second-set slugfest.

"She played incredible tennis, she really pushed me so hard in the second set," Sabalenka said. "I'm super happy that I was able to close this match in straight sets because she's a fighter." Sabalenka, whose world number one ranking is under threat in New York, got off to a strong start, breaking Rakhimova in her first service game and holding her own serve with ease. Sabalenka didn't miss a first serve until the seventh game of the contest, pocketing the first set in 35 minutes.

But Uzbekistan's Rakhimova dialed up the power in the



second set, which featured mammoth service holds from each player before Sabalenka gained the crucial break for a 5-4 lead.

Sabalenka, who must repeat as champion to have a chance of remaining number one, next faces either 15th-seeded Russian Diana Shnaider or 96th-ranked American Taylor Townsend.

Shnaider knocked Sabalenka out of the French Open quarter-finals at Roland Gar-

ros in June.

Third-seeded American Jessica Pegula, one of the players with a chance to knock Sabalenka off her No. 1 perch, mounted a desperate fightback to beat Canadian Leylah Fernandez 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 in a battle of former finalists.

Pegula struggled early with the varied spin and speeds of the Canadian lefty's serve.

"I never feel comfortable playing her," Pegula said.

"I'm really glad I was able to find something there, especially in the second set to turn things around.

In other early matches, Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk beat Russian Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-3, 6-2.

- Williams sisters reunite -

Alcaraz highlighted the afternoon action on Arthur Ashe Stadium, taking on China's Wu Yibing.

Seeded second as he returns from a four-month injury ab-

sence, Alcaraz has found that it's not only his forehand that got a little rusty.

The 23-year-old admitted that poor decision making contributed when he dropped the first set in a four-set second-round win over Jaime Faria.

He'll be looking for further improvement on all fronts when he takes on 113th-ranked Wu, the 2017 US Open boys' champion whose professional trajectory has been disrupted by injury.

The night session features the return to Ashe of a US tennis great as 23-time Grand Slam singles champion Serena Williams teams up with sister Venus in doubles, taking on the 14th-seeded duo of Chan Hao-ching and Maya Joint. Venus and Serena won two of their 14 Grand Slam doubles titles together at the US Open, where they first competed in 1997.

Their first doubles appearance together in a major since the 2022 US Open comes after 23-time Grand Slam singles champion Serena returned from almost four years away from professional tennis to play at Wimbledon. □

Aert powers to Vuelta stage 13 victory, Mas consolidates lead

Loja, Spain

Belgian Wout Van Aert got the better of a two-man sprint after a breakaway to win his first stage of this year's Vuelta a Espana on Friday, as home rider Enric Mas maintained his overall

lead.

Visma-Lease a Bike's Van Aert and Valentin Paret-Peintre attacked from a breakaway late in the 192.8km 13th stage from Almunecar to Loja.

The 31-year-old Van Aert

was too strong for the Frenchman in a sprint for the line, clinching the fourth Vuelta stage win of his career after three victories in 2024.

"I had (the attack) a little bit in my mind, yes," said Van Aert.

"I saw the profile, and I knew there was this last kicker before coming into the village.

"This distance a lot of the time is the moment when people start to think about the sprint, and if you're able to open up a gap, then they don't want to close it for each other anymore."

Britain's Matthew Brennan, who has won three stages already on the race, won the battle for third, 24 seconds behind the leading duo.

Mas, who has led the race since title favorite Tadej Pogacar crashed out during stage eight, kept his 1min 45sec overall lead ahead of four-time champion Primož Roglič after finishing safely in the pack.

Austrian Felix Gall is 21sec further back in the final podium position, with former Giro d'Italia winner Richard Carapaz 3min 53sec off Mas's lead in fourth.

"It's tough, but we're in Andalusia, it's summer, with the heat," Mas said, before suggesting the idea of holding a riders' meeting about safety concerns if the heat continues to rise. "We'll definitely feel the effects of today's heat tomorrow."

Van Aert was part of a large breakaway group

early on a day marked by intense heat in southern Spain.

A smaller group of 10 riders later pulled clear and consolidated their advantage on a descent from the day's final climb with 37km left.

Van Aert attacked with 3.5km remaining and only Paret-Peintre managed to stay with him, until the last 100 meters.

Van Aert, who beat Pogacar at Paris-Roubaix earlier this year, also holds a commanding lead in the points classification.

The peloton face another tough day in the mountains in Saturday's 14th stage, a 154.5km ride from Jaen to La Pandera featuring two category-two climbs and a category-one summit finish. □



Team Visma-Lease a bike's Belgian rider Wout van Aert celebrates on the podium wearing the points ranking leader's green jersey after the 10th stage of the Vuelta a Espana 2026 cycling tour, a 184.7 km race between Alcaraz and Elche de la Sierra, on September 1, 2026. Van