



All about Gibraltar



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It's 30 years since Gibraltar's frontier reopened after a 16-year nightmare and the Spanish are still up to their old borderline tricks but what a difference three decades make, reports Rob Horgan

AT WORLD'S END: Europa point at Gibraltar's southern tip is a stunning mix of old and new



The times they are a-changin'

AS I tailgated a silver Renault Megane on a slow crawl to the Gibraltar border, I cursed my luck for landing at the back of a 35-minute queue. Frustrating as it might have been, the queues however, are a good deal better than they were a year ago... not to mention three decades ago when the Gibraltarians were unable to cross the frontier at all. When Spanish dictator General Franco closed the land border between Gibraltar and Spain in 1969, he divided families and friendships at a stroke. Gibraltarians were cut off from loved ones in La Linea, as were Spaniards with relatives on the Rock. For 16 long years an entire generationn were forced to communicate by shouting through the border gates. They shared their joys, sorrows and glimpses of their new-born babies through cold iron bars. When Franco died in 1975, Gibraltarians hoped their enforced incarceration would end but extraordinarily, it wasn't for another 10 years - on February 5, 1985 - that the border gates finally swung open. The frontier is inextricably linked to the Rock's past and present and probably its foreseeable future too but get over it - there's a lot more to see when you do! My tip is to avoid taking your car in at all. You don't even need to join the queue, as Gibraltar is easily walkable, given moderate fitness (and there is always the Number 5 bus from the border to the centre costing just a

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Photo by Tom Powell

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Home away from home

From Page 17

ound). Indeed, one of the surreal attractions is crossing Europe's shortest airport runway - the only way into town for both motorists and pedestrians. Passing Victoria Park football stadium and you'll soon arrive in Casemates Square, a lively

spot with cafes overlooked by the Rock's jagged limestone silhouette. At this point, there are three principal options: take on Main Street; conquer the Rock summit; or circumnavigate it (by car or on foot) to its southernmost tip to see what lies beyond (Africa). Main Street, the eponymous

shopping artery, is a home away from home for British expats and holidaymakers with its Marks & Spencer, Topshop and British Home Stores. Recognisable international retail names are interspersed with those of quirky local emporia - Seruya, Stagnetto and Marble Arc - and other merchant traders established way

back when. Meanwhile a hike up the Rock - not for the faint-hearted - affords amazing views over the border to the La Linea road, which snakes down through the Spanish countryside towards the frontier. Although the cable car is a much easier route to the summit, trudging up the back roads on foot offers a more far-reaching glimpse into Gibraltar's military past. A number of abandoned batteries scream out to be explored, alongside tours of the WWII and Great Siege tunnels. Just in front of the entrance to the WWII tunnels is a plaque commemorating the day, in 1954, that HRH Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh stood and looked out over one of Britain's most famous overseas territories.

It was a long time ago. But standing here, watching Gibraltarians kicking a football in distant Victoria Stadium, the Union Jack flapping in time with the red and white banner of Gibraltar, is enough to make even the most unpatriotic of Brits proud. This is merely a stop-off for a breather on my voyage to the top of the Rock, a series of seemingly never-ending hills that begin to take their toll on the backs of my calves. Then, just when the thought of a cold beer back in Ocean Village seems too tempting to ignore, I'm jolted back to reality by a bunch of Gibraltar's most famous residents... the Bar-

bary macaques. Atop the Rock, the monkeys run the show. They know how to open tourists' backpacks in search of food, they love wrecking car aerials and one of the younger macaques - buzz off - seems to be showing too much interest in my specs. Panic over! They're a friendly bunch if you don't let them get too familiar. Just being with them up here is supremely cool, as is the view across sandy Catalan Bay to Morocco. But it's time to move on to St Michael's Cave. With one million visitors each year, this underground gallery created by rainwater erosion is the most visited of the 150 caves inside the Rock. A 100-seater auditorium sits in the centre of the largest cave. Its natural acoustics make it the ideal concert venue and it has hosted all kinds of events, including the Miss Gibraltar beauty pageant. The next stop on my round-trip checklist is the Moorish Castle. The Union Jack flying above its battlements is another reminder of Gibraltarian patriotic fervour while the cannons still in place underscore its amazing military history.



PATRIOTIC: Steps to the top of the rock

From here, you can look down at the coloured apartment blocks rising up like stalagmites from the lower Rock, and the construction cranes at work building new ones, a timely reminder of how far Gibraltar has come in the 30 years since the border reopened. Time to start my descent, it would be easier to hitch a ride on the cable car but the Mediterranean steps are far more impressive. Staked out by inquisitive Barbary apes which refuse to budge, this stairway to heaven and back zig-zags down the front of the Rock's face, offering spectacular views. Built by the British Army as a means of reaching several military points, the crumbling staircase was restored in 2007 to offer safer passage to fitness fans who enjoy taking the Med Steps Challenge. Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and his wife Justine are among them!

Back in town, having given the last monkey the slip (not including fellow *Olive Press* reporter Tom Powell), my final port of call is Europa point. The site of the future university, also earmarked for a 8,000-capacity football stadium, this wild open beauty spot is symbolic of the dramatic transformation going on in Gibraltar, which has one of the most upwardly mobile economies in the world - some 10% growth last year alone - and is spending its riches accordingly. As leader Picardo so rightly said recently, echoing the lyrics of Bob Dylan: 'The times they are a-changin'.'

With annual international music and literary festivals attracting the world's top artists, the Rock has carved out a place for itself on Europe's cultural calendar, too. Last month, 20 grandmasters flocked to Gibraltar to take part in the annual Chess Festival at the Caleta hotel. Next month, the world's top darts players will meet up at the Tercentenary Sports Hall for the annual Gibraltar Darts Trophy. And with the national football team competing in European qualifiers for the first time ever, things are also looking up in the sporting arena. All around the Rock, times are a-changin' for the better. My day in Gibraltar may have taken its toll on my calves and worn out the soles of my Converse. But as I sat in yet another border queue - thankfully just 30 minutes - to cross back into Spain, I felt only admiration for the tiny British territory which keeps on rolling with the punches and rocking with the times.



LEGACY: Admiral Nelson's statue and (inset) the Victualling Yard he frequented

Pocket of patriotism

Admiral Nelson's legacy in Gibraltar lies beyond cemetery walls

DESPITE its name, Trafalgar Cemetery is home to just two victims of 1805's almighty battle. Instead, many tombstones commemorate those who died in three devastating yellow fever epidemics around the same time. Nonetheless, this tiny pocket of Gibraltar still radiates patriotism. Its moss-covered graves and low-hanging branches could tempt anyone in for a moment of reflection while en-route to the cable car. The cemetery - originally known as Southport Ditch Cemetery - was abandoned for many years until a huge restoration effort in the 1980s. Each year on the Sunday closest to the battle of Trafalgar (October 21), the Royal Navy holds a ceremony here.

While most of those that died at Trafalgar were buried at sea, Admiral Nelson's body was being transported back to London for a state funeral and burial at St Paul's cathedral. However, he was initially taken to Gibraltar's Rosia Bay, in his ship HMS Victory, where his body was put in a vat of rum to conserve it, before being sent to the UK. But the connection goes deeper, before his heroic death Nelson would have been a regular on the Rock, especially at naval haunts like the Victualling Yard and Old Naval Hospital. And it was his close friend Aaron Cardozo - a wealthy Gibraltarian merchant - who inherited Nelson's medal commemorating his victory in the Battle of the Nile.



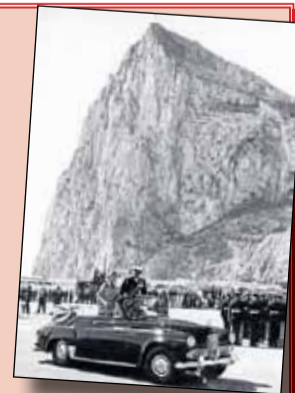
RUGGED: The top of the Rock and (below) soldier guards Governor's house



CLOSED DOWN: Franco shut border

Did you know?

- The height of the Rock is approximately 426 metres or 1,400 feet
- The distance between Gibraltar and the coast of Africa is 24 kilometres or 15 miles
- The Rock was formed approximately 200 million years ago and is composed of Jurassic Limestone
- The UK pound can be used freely in Gibraltar, so there is no need to convert UK notes to Gibraltar ones. However, Gibraltar banknotes are not legal tender in the UK and will not be accepted there
- In recent referendums the nearly 30,000 Gibraltarians who live on the Rock voted overwhelmingly to reject any involvement by Spain in their government
- Queen Elizabeth II last visited Gibraltar in 1954
- The border was closed by Franco in 1969 and was shut for 13 years, only reopened partially for pedestrians in 1982 before being reopened fully in 1985



ROYAL VISIT: Queen in 1954





CRASH: Memorial

Monumental conspiracy

NOT a lot of people know that Europa Point showcases a monument to a former Polish Prime Minister who died in a freak plane crash on the Rock.

Wladyslaw Eugeniusz Sikorski lost his life in 1943, when his plane crashed into the sea just 16 seconds after taking off from Gibraltar.

At the time, the crash was attributed to cargo moving to the back of the plane during takeoff.

But several conspiracy theories are still doing the rounds today.

Shoddy maintenance causing the controls to jam, a deliberate crash-landing from the pilot (the only survivor) are two of the most popular.

And recently, articles and films produced in Poland have claimed the general was murdered.

In 2008 the Polish government ordered a reassessment, but could not reach a conclusion.

One thing is certain: in the months before his death, Sikorski was proving to be a thorn in the side of the Russians as he promoted an independent Poland...

AN Atlantic gust sweeps through the abandoned cricket pitch and swirls around the minaret of an unexpected mosque. Across the Gibraltar Strait, a burst of sunshine lights up the majestic Moroccan mountains.

I swivel 360 degrees and try to decide which stunning image to photograph first. Uninterrupted views are not what you expect to find in postage stamp-sized 'fortress Gibraltar'. But its spectacular southern tip, where the Atlantic meets the Mediterranean and Europe and Africa wave at each other across the Straits, is a wondrous little world of its own. Europa Point may be familiar to the birds and the bees - it's a favourite trysting spot for lovers as well as the first landfall for migrating birds returning from Africa; but it's a part of Gibraltar many tourists never reach. However they should! Standing on the edge of its limestone cliffs, a fierce wind biting at my face, I could truly sense the power of this little nation, geographically and historically.

Europa Point is the polar opposite of Casemates, Main Street and Ocean Village but equally steeped in fascinating history. Plus, there's not a monkey in sight.

Musician of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment, Tony Evans, 26, explains: "The compact size of Gibraltar means these sort of spaces are very limited and it is no wonder many locals regard it so highly.

"What was once the end of the world has been given a new lease of life."

Instead of catching the bus - a prospect I tend to sneer at in

The Rock's wild and windswept southern tip is well worth a visit but hurry - soon Europa Point will be changed forever, writes Tom Powell

tiny Gibraltar anyway - I took the varied and intriguing walk along the coast.

With bold and colourful apartment blocks clinging to the rock on one side of the road, and craggy coastline on the other, there was barely a soul around on this chilly February afternoon.

Passing Camp Bay lido with its classically-British holiday facilities, reminiscent of a 1960s Margate, I nervously navigated an endless tunnel blasted through the rock, eventually emerging into dazzling sunshine illuminating a wide open space. Practically a surfeit of space! What a contrast to the high rise office blocks and stacked tiers of apartments back in town, where every square inch is maximised.

Standing proudly at the tip of Europa Point is the red and white Trinity lighthouse, guiding vessels through the busy Straits. It was first lit in 1841



WIDE OPEN SPACE: Worlds away from the busy centre of town

LOOKOUT

but is now entirely machine-operated. Nearby Harding's Battery provides another reminder of the outpost's military importance.

Named after Sir George Harding who was chief engineer in 1844, the sunken magazine below is now a visitor centre. Set back from the cliff-edge, separated by green

grass, a car park, a small cafe and children's play area, is the

striking Mosque of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. Inaugurated in 1997, it was a present from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and took two years - and around £5 million - to complete. It serves the 2,000-plus Muslims in Gibraltar and also contains a school, library and lecture hall. Its curvaceous architecture strikes a surreal pose against the lofty, wind-sculpted limestone cliffs.

This whole other side to the Rock, the escapist's Gibraltar, is the British territory's last-remaining untamed outpost.

Despite a £4.4 million facelift in 2010 and the reopening of Dudley Ward tunnel, closed for eight years after a rock fall, it's the part of Gibraltar that has seen the least development. Until now, that is. At least one and possibly two major projects are destined to change Europa Point forever.

That transformation is already underway, with construction crews busy laying the foundations for Gibraltar's first university, due to open this September. The fast-track project to upgrade the St Christopher's

Standing proudly at the tip of Europa Point is the red and white Trinity lighthouse



One of Savills' favourite properties on the market is Ashtead Cottage, a detached villa with many original features, a private pool and five-car garage.

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PICTURESQUE: The Mosque on the Rock



School site as the main campus, with Halls of Residence for 200 students from abroad, represents a £10 million investment.

Controversy still surrounds the second major project mooted for Europa Point – the new UEFA football stadium.

The plan is to give the one-year-old Gibraltar national football team its own home ground and create a complex for other sports and events.

“The Europa Point Stadium presents the perfect opportunity to create a magnificent, beautifully designed public space for everyone to enjoy – together with the chance to create a globally recognised symbol for Gibraltar,” reads a government mission statement. However, many Gibraltarians have objected on environmental grounds to the loss of their last remaining open space. More than 1,500 people signed a petition calling on the government to reconsider the chosen site, fearing that a natural beauty spot will be lost forever. There’s also concern

over match-day mayhem as thousands of fans pour over the frontier and sweep through to the other end of the territory like a flash flood.

As local Darren Olivero explained: “The design - hideous though it is - is not the issue; the location is. Europa Point and the views of and from it would be ruined forever by any such large structure.”

He has a point. Europa Point will certainly never again be the way it was for me; open, airy and beautiful, like standing at the edge of something truly special.

It would be a spectacular stadium, no doubt, although one that totally dominates the landscape. Still, there is no way I’m missing that first Gibraltar game at the new stadium.

Although I can’t help feeling that, in striving to be like the rest of Europe - flashy university, international football stadium - Gibraltar could be losing more than it gains.

Whatever your viewpoint, see the one at Europa Point before it changes forever.

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Advertorial

Deeply successful



After a whirlwind year for Gibraltar’s Ocean Village it’s all aboard for 2015

OCEAN Village is arguably Gibraltar’s ultimate contemporary success story and this year looks to be one of the most exciting yet for the mixed use resort.

It all kicks off with the Gibraltar carnival this week, hosted at Ocean Village on February 20 and 21. The carnival spirit will be positively tangible, with Cuban and Latin music, fancy dress and masquerade parties to see the adults through until late on Friday night/Saturday morning. However, Saturday 21 is all about families. The activities start at 12pm and continue until 5pm, with a fancy dress competition for kids, face painting, a photo booth, fun fair games, a bouncy castle and rodeo bull, gladiator dueling and dancing, just to name a few of the activities planned for the day. The rest of the year looks to be just as exciting with product launches and charity fun runs in the planning stages.

We can’t mention too much, but safe to say watch this space! Of course, Ocean Village will also be hosting the annual Cardboard Boat Race (usually taking place at the end of August to the beginning of September) offering fun and excitement for all the family and to the spectators of this fantastically popular event. This year has also seen the launch of ‘What’s On at Ocean Village’, a monthly marketing initiative which can be found online which details special offers

and promotions from the restaurants, bars and shops - as well as upcoming events.

With its distinctive blue glass-clad residential towers, Ocean Village is Gibraltar’s ‘shop, eat, drink, play’ destination, offering everything to those who want to work hard and play hard and is located only 10 minutes walk from the border. There is a wide array of venues, including Asian Fusion, Indian and Cuban restaurants as well as popular favourites, such as Pizza Express, a variety of bars, clubs and cafes, plus Gibraltar’s only casino - and all located within the busy marina.

For your day-to-day needs, there is also an estate agent, beauty salons, a specialist boutique, insurance and a convenience store, to name but a few! Ocean Village Marina and neighbouring Marina Bay cater for even the largest of superyachts and 2014 saw the official launch of the highly-anticipated 189-room Sunborn Yacht Hotel.

In July 2014, the developers of Ocean Village began work on the construction of the World Trade Center, located minutes away from Ocean Village, and completion is expected in Spring 2016. Demand has been high with over 60% already sold or let and a further 20% under negotiation. Make sure you don’t miss out on what is happening in Ocean Village during 2015 - check out ‘oceanvillagegibraltar’ on Facebook for more information.

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Gibraltar special

Hooked!

THE arts scene in Gibraltar has often been described as burgeoning. But it has been given a massive boost by the recent global success of one of its homegrown painters, and ambition is in the air.

Gibraltarian Christian Hook has seen the value of his work skyrocket since becoming Sky Portrait Artist of the Year 2014. The exclusive Mayfair gallery, Clarendon Fine Art, is selling Hook commissions for up to £75,000 and has a 200-strong waiting list of people lusting after his creations.

The Rock houses a bustling community of artistic talent and production. Over the decades it has nurtured artists who have made it big but refuse to sever ties with their roots.

Government spending on the arts is on the up, and regular competitions and exhibitions are geared towards fostering artists, the history of art, philosophy and politics.

Other great artists born here include Mario Finlayson and the three Sefarty sisters – Jane Langdon, Bathsheba Peralta and Willa Sefarty – who founded The Fine Arts Gallery and the Gibraltar Art Gallery.

The Ministry for Culture's Gino Sanguinetti is optimistic about the artistic landscape – and says it's growing.

"About 15 years ago the art was more staid here, but artists are getting more confident, freer in their self-expression, we are seeing a lot more risk-taking. The work is more off-beat," he said.

Sanguinetti describes the art

With collectors queuing up to spend five-figure sums on works by Christian Hook, Gibraltar's artistic landscape is looking rosy, writes Iona Napier



WINNER: Hook (left) and Cumming in front of the winning piece

scene as 'a group of friends with a common will to work'. Artist Jane Langdon goes as far as to compare the community as a supportive family. She said: "We support one another. Politically we are isolated, but we have always been aware that we have to work at creating and keeping momentum going."

"Gibraltar has a lot of artistic talent because there is a fusion of cultures, so it happens automatically, and we live surrounded by natural beauty which is very inspiring."

The political and geographical history of Gibraltar goes some way to explaining its impressive art scene. Not only home to the first Neanderthal rock engraving – 39,000 years old – Gibraltar's lack of censorship during Franco's dictatorship in Spain meant creativity was relatively unbridled.

During the frontier closure, Gibraltarians were closeted together in isolation, so they shared ideas more, and fought to survive and create. Even today, the constant comings and goings at Gi-

braltar Port foster an exchange of ideas in a community that never stagnates. Renowned Gibraltarian artist Mario Finlayson, now 88, departed for London's famous Slade School of Art in 1966, returning with fresh ideas.

He has dedicated his life to the Rock's art scene and will have the ultimate privilege of giving his name to the soon-to-be-inaugurated Gibraltar National Gal-

lery in the City Hall, an event he fought hard to bring about.

"I have been at the helm of all the art movements here since I was very young and have been able to be like a father for many of the artists in Gibraltar," says Finlayson.

"It's very vibrant, people are curious and hungry to do things here, wanting to express themselves."

"Our artists travel and expose themselves to all sorts of influences in different countries but everything comes back here, where they put their ideas together."

The Sefarty sisters are good examples. While they studied with local artist Leni Mifsud when they were very young, they also

Gibraltar has a lot of artistic talent because we live surrounded by natural beauty



FROM GIBRALTAR TO DIOR: Tiana Langdon



AT THE HELM: Finlayson

Art beat on the Rock

ART collectors will find an eclectic choice of ancient and modern treasures to take their fancy at the Cavilla Gallery, in the town centre.

This elegant emporium, based at 14 Horse Barrack Court, specialises in international contemporary paintings and sculptures. It

also deals in antiquities and Islamic, Indian, Himalayan and South East Asian art.

The gallery is open from 10am-1pm, and 2pm-6pm, Monday to Friday.

For more information, call 540 02648, email dylancavilla@me.com or visit the Cavilla Gallery Facebook page.

February 19th - March 4th 2015



ers, returned home to paint. He was making marmalade the day he heard out about Sky's competition, shortly before the deadline, and had no inkling of the extent to which it would propel him into the limelight.

He would go on to be bombarded by around 6,000 emails from prospective buyers in the month following the win. A commission went up from £15,000 to £75,000 with Hook surprised by the interest.

"It was just ridiculous - I had no idea of the repercussions of the competition - I just needed to try something new, which is why I entered, and I enjoyed it a lot," Hook told the *Olive Press*. The process took him to New York and he spent time with celebrities like Sir Ian McKellen, Amir Khan and Alan Cumming, to study and paint them.

Hook's final depiction of Alan Cumming sees him on stage, wearing a top hat and tartan in a nod to Scottish independence, in a painting that will hang in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Gibraltar takes great pride in Hook's success, regardless of the material value of his work. As Jane Langdon said: "Paintings are worth what they are worth because they are an extension of self. You can't buy the feeling of creating, it's not on a shelf in a shop."

"Art is an affair of the heart and, as an artist, you can dedicate a lifetime to creating something positive." Long may the creation and positivity continue.



RIOT OF COLOUR: Patrick (left) and a range of his paintings, while (right) a portrait of him as a child



Cafe culture

The Olive Press talks to avid collector Patrick Sacarello about his extensive art collection

YOU won't just get a tasty meal at Sacarellos restaurant. Under the same roof, you can browse one of the largest private art collections in Gibraltar - food for the soul!

The higgledy-piggledy cafe showcases 80 paintings in a treasured collection that all began when architect John Langdon was transforming the old Sacarellos Coffee Shop into a restaurant.

He noticed that the original features of the former warehouse, with its archways and varying levels, made it ideal for exhibiting art, and owner Patrick Sacarello was soon bitten by the collecting bug.

"Thus, by accident, we became a popular local art gallery where the works on display are continuously changing," he says. "This metamorphosis would not have been possible without my friends, Genny Whiteland and John Langdon, who have been on hand over the years organizing art exhibitions at little personal gain."

The Sacarello Collection includes works by prominent Gibraltarian artists, including Gustavo Bacarisas, Mario Finlayson and Christian Hook, the award-winning Guatemalan artists Erwin Guillermo, Edin Morales and Brian Johnston, and the English painters James Foot and George Apperley.

"Since 1992, Sacarellos has hosted regular art exhibitions by both local and international artists and invariably we would end up buying a painting or two," says Patrick. "In 1994 on a trip to Colombia and Peru, I realised the majesty of landscapes and colours. This awakened my artistic senses and my eye for art developed. My art collecting subsequently extended to international works which I have since enjoyed sharing with the patrons of Sacarellos." In recent years, Patrick as 'Art Collector' has helped judge various local exhibitions, most recently the first National Day Exhibition with Christian Hook.



ABSTRACT: A variety of Gibraltar paintings

lived in Madrid, trained in Florence and had their first exhibition in Hampstead, London. Jane Langdon was an apprentice to the Florentian master and muralist Alfio Rapisardi. Her daughter, Tiana, worked for John Galliano for 15 years at the House of Dior in Paris. Gibraltar's connection with the

UK, links between universities and participation in international art competitions all help project its identity as a quirky place where talent is born. Gibraltar-born Hook studied at Middlesex University, lectured at the Royal College of Art and, after illustrating over 200 books for leading UK publish-



THE CAVILLA GALLERY

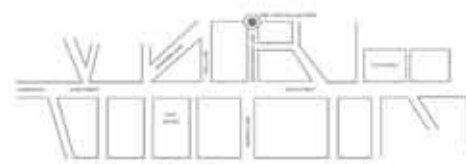
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I'm no charlatan and I can prove it!

Gibraltar's leader tells Olive Press editor Jon Clarke how he believes a free and flowing border would create 40,000 jobs

GIBRALTAR'S chief minister is in fine form. Just back from a successful address to a spectrum of political figures in Madrid (minus the ruling PP party, of course), Fabian Picardo is bristling with good humour.

As eloquent as ever, he's as happy to talk about his current passion for Lady Gaga, as he is the upsurge of political party Podemos. But one thing he is adamant about: Gibraltar's economy is still as solid as a Rock.

Despite losing an estimated £40 million of tourist income last year, due to the border problems, the enclave still saw growth of 10.3% in GDP terms. "That was despite being under the cosh and with our tourism really hit for six because of the queues," he explains.

"The economy is booming and look at the prosperity that we're achieving and the contribution to the Campo de Gibraltar despite having our backs (facing) each other."

By this he is referring to the impact the Rock has on the surrounding area, in terms of jobs and income spent in local Spanish businesses.

A new study by the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce is set to demonstrate that the GDP of the enclave has grown from 12.2 % for the Campo de Gibraltar to a staggering 25% in just six years.

"It's a fantastic study which shows that even with the governments turning their backs on each other and queues of sometimes six or seven hours, we represent a quarter of the area's GDP."

But the impact, he explains, also reaches as far as Tarifa, Manilva, Jimena and Estepona, from where thousands of people commute every day to work. Plus, of course, what he terms the 'Ikea frontier', the area between Jerez and Malaga, where the thousands of ordinary Gibraltarians regularly spend their hard-earned money.

Now, what he is hoping for this year is a new government coming to power in Madrid that understands the potential of



WELCOME: Fabian Picardo with Jon Clarke

Message to Olive Press readers

"The queues are a thing of the past, come down to Gibraltar, enjoy what we have to offer. There's a lot to do here. Our culinary delights are greater than ever, our hotels are fantastic. There's no reason not to rediscover this beautiful rock of ours."

working with Gibraltar.

"Just imagine the impact of actually working with the Spanish government to go out and sell the Bay of Gibraltar as a product. The industrial zone here could create jobs for all the 40,000 unemployed people in the area.

"A massive claim? Why doesn't Spain put me to the test? If they say I'm a charlatan, I'm giving them an excellent opportunity to prove it."

The present sterile approach of the PP is slightly right of Genghis Khan

His idea is to create a special economic zone between Tarifa and La Linea that 'dovetails' Gibraltar's tax advantages and encourages businesses to relocate there. Stressing the advantages of an international airport, a key container port in Algeciras, and space to build around San Roque, he adds: "We would be creating the new European Luxembourg, but in one of the most beautiful corners of the Mediterranean."

It is the second time I've interviewed the Chief Minister, who

is clearly enjoying his job and relishing the prospect of winning a second election later this year.

He is particularly interested in the political fervor around the new Spanish party Podemos, even though he is quick to stress that his party, the GSL, is naturally allied to Spain's socialist PSOE party.

"Podemos is a very inspiring, exciting political alternative which, in my view, also represents potential pitfalls if you analyse its politics. But it's bringing people back to politics, which is a positive thing."

But he continues: "I would never tell anyone in Spain how to vote but I think there are much more exciting options for Spain's relationship with Gibraltar than the present sterile approach of the PP, which is slightly to the right of Genghis Khan."

Above all, he is very keen to stress his affection for Spain, a country with which he has many links, particularly through his Spanish grandmother Maria Magdalena Marchante, who came from Los Barrios.

"I've got Spanish blood in my veins, I hope we can get back to the days when it was easy and normal for Gibraltarians to shop and eat there."

And, perhaps surprisingly, he is optimistic that tourism is about to start growing again.

With key elections in Spain this year, he believes there will be less appetite for causing problems, particularly given the blame for border queues lies solely with the current Spanish government.

As for changes to the Spanish side of the border queue, he is as much in the dark as everyone else. "We're trying to get details from the European Commission, but even they are finding it difficult. We certainly hope it's designed in good faith."

Lady Gaga and my second son

A keen music fan, Fabian Picardo's current favourites include two local bands This Side Up and Headwires, as well as Lady Gaga (left) and Tony Bennett, who have just recorded a Grammy-winning duets album together. "That's what I'm listening to at the moment... the modern and the old," he says. Finally, he is happy to reveal he will become the father of another boy in April. "Please God everything will be OK and, while Sebastian, who will be three, is not sure about the concept of having a younger brother, it is great to know that we are having another boy... it's the cheapest option with all the hand-me-downs."



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26



Gibraltar special



CHEF: Alfred and (below) a creation

As refurbishments go it is little short of amazing. From the striking black and white check marble-floor lobby with its clean lines and chandeliers to the elegant dining room, with its stunning views and subtle colours, the Rock Hotel has been totally re-born.

The multi-million pound refurbishment has seen all the bedrooms upgraded, as well as a redesign to the lounge bar, lobbies and conference and banqueting facilities.

But it is comforting to know that a few things haven't changed. The 1930s hotel, which once put up Winston Churchill, Errol Flynn and Alec Guinness, still has its famous façade, as well as gardens and outdoor wisteria dining terrace.

And, best of all, thankfully it still has its excellent head chef Alfred Rodriguez, 56, who has been cooking at the Rock for 41 years.

While he has spent time away – principally working on the QE2 and for the Roux brothers at

London's Michelin-starred Le Gavroche, alongside Gordon Ramsay – he is very much back and constantly coming up with new and exciting dishes.

In particular, a lobster and squid salad with leeks was not only delicious, but incredible value at just £5. And his signature orange creme brulee with winter berries was a delight.

"I am always looking for new things to cook and we are very lucky that the quality of ingredients coming in from Spain these days is better than ever," he explains.

"And we also get plenty of stuff from Morocco the other side so all the bases are covered."



ALL CHANGE

The grand dame of Gibraltar The Rock Hotel has had a stunning renovation



STUNNING: New lobby

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You beauties!

The Rock has developed a reputation for beautiful women following international pageant success. Here Tom Powell casts an eye over the crème de la crème of Miss Gibraltars

THE first three things you see when entering Gibraltar are a traditional red phone box, a Rock tours information counter and a giant poster of the first and only Gibraltarian Miss World. Kaiane Aldorino, who first won Miss Gibraltar before the international equivalent in 2009, is certainly something of a national hero. After fighting off the world's best to take the crown in South Africa, she embarked on a global tour before her rapturous homecoming, with 15,000 people clamouring to cheer her up Main Street. In an interview with the *Olive Press* in 2010, she praised her 'totally unique, really special' home. "There is nothing like the amazing views from the top, to Africa and into Spain," she said. "I also love the beaches, the lighthouse and the people are so friendly."

Kaiane was awarded the Freedom of the City in 2011, in recognition of her devotion towards the Rock she still calls home, despite the fame and glory. In fact, Miss Gibraltar has won special awards at international pageants three times, an incredible achievement for such a small nation. The contest is still an important part of the social calendar, and the first place prize of entry into Miss World is a mouthwatering prospect. The pageant has been held everywhere from St Michael's Cave to the Caleta Hotel, while stars such as Albert Hammond, Paco de Lucia and Sinita have performed at it. But that's not to say the other winners in its 56-year history are not glowing symbols of the Rock's appeal. The highlights include:



VICTOR: Miss World Kaiane Aldorino



Jessica Palao

Jessica went on to win 'Miss Congeniality' at the Miss Universe pageant a year after winning Gibraltarian hearts in a sparkling silver outfit aged just 18.



Melissa Berllaque

The youngest ever Miss Gibraltar fought off her more experienced competitors with a sparkling white outfit to take the crown at the age of just 17, one month and 20 days.



Jessica Baldachino

Clad in an extravagant green and beige dress, Jessica topped the competition to be crowned the tallest ever Miss Gibraltar - measuring a neck-aching 1.83cm.

1959

Viola Abudarham

The first ever Miss Gibraltar contest was organised by Vox newspaper and held at a dance organised at the CFCA hall on Main Street. The then 23-year-old stole the show with a black and silver number.



1984

Dominique Martinez

With blonde hair, green eyes and an elegant white dress, Dominique was victorious on the Rock before winning the 'Miss Personality' title at the worldwide pageant later that year.

1986



1994

Kaiane Aldorino

All the fame in the world couldn't harm Kaiane's adoration for her home. The former hospital administrator has now married her long-term boyfriend, who works on a cruise ship.

2009



2012



KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY: Melanie Chipolina

Family affair

Twice in the competition's history has one winner given birth to another, but only one family can boast three separate winners

Grace Valverde - 1966

After dazzling her way to the title in a silver dress, Grace - then just 17 - developed a taste for success. But she caused controversy at the World pageant in London that year, after Miss Spain refused to accept Gibraltar's presence in the competition, and promptly withdrew.

Michelle Torres - 1992

Undeterred by her mother's political strife, Michelle stole to the title 26 years later in a multi-coloured dress, also aged 17.

Melanie Chipolina - 2005

Inspired by the family success, Grace's niece Melanie made it a hat trick when she won with a green dress, at the older age of 23.



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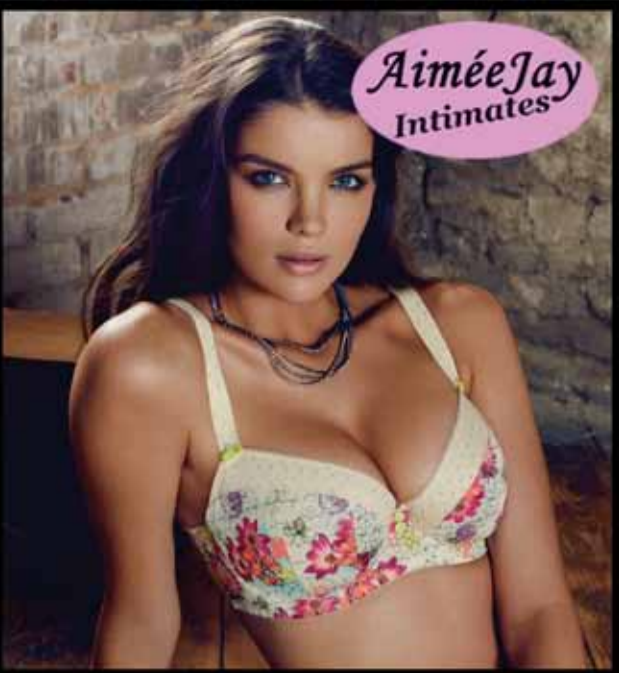
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Olive Press sexy swimwear offer

'BRA-STYLE' swimwear gets the gold treatment this season as AimeeJay Intimates launch this year's catalogue featuring hundreds of styles of swimwear separates. As ladies with over DD cup struggle to find great fitting swimwear on the coast, the catalogue has bikinis, swimsuits and tankinis from six brands offering DD to KK cup and amazingly, stock including maternity and mastectomy lines, is available all year. Pick up your free catalogue in store or view online at www.facebook.com/aimeejayintimates. Olive Press readers will receive a free stylish beach bag with every fitting... Just mention us when visiting.



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REGAL PERCH: A happy ape at the top of the Rock



KINGDOM: For centuries the Rock has been a home for apes, while (right) dogs used for smuggling above far left) troops in the bay and (above) food on Main Street. While (above) taking the old runway, and (right) a rally in the 1960s



King of the swingers

WATCHING the sunrise from the top of the Rock, sprawled on my favourite crag and nibbling on an onion, I wonder if there is anywhere more idyllic. It's my home, and it's been my ancestors' home since Moorish times, way before our Rock became British. And, frankly, I can see no reason to ever move from this sun-drenched stone. Although for 30 of my more mischie-

Tom Powell imagines on what a Barbary ape might ruminates

vous friends, there was simply no choice. I suppose they took it too far, became too confident, lost sight of what really matters... all I know is the naughtiest ones were taken in the night to a far-away place called 'Scotland', a place where it never stops raining. Farewell, my cousins.

Over here the day begins when the big shiny, metallic hulks of metal drift into the harbour below. Some call them cruise ships, but to me they're simply a mouthwatering delivery service.

A day of glorious gastronomy awaits. I just know there will be chocolate, strawberries, sandwiches, oh and maybe some of those choc chip cookies from Morrisons!

An all-you-can-eat buffet is on its way, hand-delivered by hordes of tourists ascending the Rock via cable car, jeep or on foot.

It makes me laugh to remember my early childhood, when I actually struggled to open zips on rucksacks. These days I'm a pro, the best on the Rock. I sit preening myself on the wall, posing for pictures and lapping up the attention. But then, like a flash, I'm in a handbag rooting out the Rolos (a particular favourite of mine), amid laughter and shrieks.

Sure, the keepers up here are kind enough to provide a daily supply of fresh oranges, apples, onions, and cabbage. But you can't beat a warm, chewy Rolo, with a bit of silver foil for added crunch.

Anyway, after a hard day of thieving, eating, posing, eating and swinging around, I'm always shattered. I know some of my friends are beginning to head down into the town area, but I have no intention of ever leaving my home atop the Rock. Not with the threat of 'Scotland' looming over us.

Orwell: 'Gibraltar Chronicle was more or less pro-Fascist'

MOST famous for his novels 1984 and Animal Farm, not many know that British writer George Orwell spent two days on Gibraltar in 1938, noting down his thoughts on the Rock.

He had stopped off there, en route to Morocco with his wife, after suffering a serious injury from fighting for the Republican Government during the Spanish Civil War.

His notes include musings on various local newspapers, including their adverts and political standpoints. He said of the Gibraltar Chronicle, now the longest-running newspaper in the world, that it was "more or less pro-Fascist".

He also mentioned a destroyer, the Jose Luis Rodriguez, that lay in the harbour, as well as the Rock's wildlife.

"The population of the town is about 20,000," he noted. "Largely Italian origin but nearly all bilingual English-Spanish."

Many Spaniards work here and return to Spain every night. At least 3,000 (of them) refugees from Franco territory. Authorities now trying to get rid of these on pretext of overcrowding."

He continued: "Standard of living not very low, but barefoot adults. Fruit and vegetables cheap,



VISIT: Orwell visited in 1938

wine and tobacco evidently untaxed or taxed very little."

"No English sugar or matches, all Belgian... Some of the shopkeepers are Indians and Parsees."

"The Barbary Ape is said to be now very rare at Gibraltar and the authorities are trying to exterminate them as they are a nuisance."

"At a certain season they come down from the rock and invade people's houses and gardens."



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Working on the belief that one size doesn't fit all, Managing Director Steve Whittam understands the importance of being independent and providing advice and services that fit the individual client's circumstances and objectives. "Our advisers take the time to assess client's personal requirements and then research the market to find the best solution. We

have access to a whole range of services including overseas pensions such as QROPS, QN-UPS and even Spanish compliant retirement solutions".

Co-Director and Head of Private Client Services Steve Burdett added, "with our knowledge of the financial services market and through our range of professional contacts, we can bring solutions to Gibraltar that previously were not available. We believe that the people of Gibraltar deserve access to the same high standard of financial services available in the UK, but sadly this is often overlooked by large UK insurance companies so we work with them to bring these services to the Rock. Recently these have included life assurance and income protection



STRATEGIC WEALTH TEAM: (Right to left) Darren Mills, Glenda Brancato, Steve Burdett and Steve Whittam

cover, both of which were not previously available."

Senior Private Client Manager Darren Mills previously worked for a large international bank in Gibraltar and with over 20 years' experience in international financial services he is proud of the high level of

service that clients receive. The team is supported by born and bred local, Glenda Brancato, who worked with Darren during his time at the bank. There have been major changes introduced in the UK regarding pension legislation which have an impact on clients in Spain

and Gibraltar. With effect from April this year, the UK Government will allow more freedom of choice for private pension policyholders regarding how they take their income. From age 55 it will be possible to draw all of the money held in a private pension as a lump sum.

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Incredibly, Gibraltar's economy has doubled in size over just seven years to an annual GDP of £1.4bn. Not many economies can claim that level of success. As the crisis began in 2007, a Chamber of Commerce study revealed that Gibraltar accounted for one out of every six jobs in the Campo area; and

Edward Macquisten of the Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce on why the economy of the Rock just keeps growing

the Rock's entire economy accounted for one eighth of the Campo's economy. Frontier workers – defined as people who lived in Spain but worked in Gibraltar – earned €145m, the vast majority of which would have been spent in Spain. Today this has nearly doubled, as a new report is soon to show.

So how has Gibraltar managed to pull off such a stellar economic performance when its Spanish neighbour, and much of Andalusia, remains in a sclerotic state?

Primarily it is because Gibraltar's economy is based on

trade. With a distinct lack of any natural resources, our business people are extremely active in seeking out new opportunities wherever they may be. If one market dries up they will seek out four more. In short, they hustle.

The second reason is that Gibraltar's economy has diversified considerably since Spain re-opened the frontier in 1985. With this diversification has come a need for new skill sets and qualifications. Every Gibraltarian going to university has their fees covered by the government and when they come back there are good jobs for them to fill, whether in the



OPTIMISTIC: Edward Macquisten

public or, more usually, private sector. So Gibraltar has a diversified economy serviced by an increasingly educated workforce. And as the economy has grown and developed, Gibraltar has attracted companies to come and base themselves on the Rock so that they can service markets elsewhere.

These may be in financial services, wealth management and insurance or in other sectors such as online gaming or web-based businesses. The emphasis is on reputable businesses and they are all licensed by the local regulator, with both the IMF and Financial Action Task Force giving us glowing references.

The government, after all, does not want any dodgy or dubious operators. Such practices are discovered and shut down quickly.

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Dr Elisabeth Strahlberg has been at the helm since Mike Clark stepped back into a consultancy role in 2014, and she has brought a wealth of experience to Gibraltar.

Since qualifying from the Karolinska Institute in Sweden in 1999, she has chalked up 12 years of success in Sweden and the UK, both in the private sector and corporate practice.

If there is one element which defines the economy it is that our business community is based on real relationships, not just contacts. In this age of LinkedIn and Twitter, networks of contacts are all very well. But unless you have good relationships with each of your contacts it is difficult to use them to mutual advantage.

Advertorial

IT has been a great year for Russell Hood of First Choice Recruitment.

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"Fortunately the whole region is still a desired destination for experienced expats of all nationalities, so any shortfall in local talent is made up for by them and the local Spanish population, who are experiencing a lack of opportunities in their own communities.

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Advertorial

The street lawyers

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Describing her firm as a team of 'street lawyers', because they deal with their clients' personal issues, she adds: "We feel we have an ethical and moral responsibility to help them in whatever way possible. That can mean providing support emotionally and psychologically."

"It's more than just being a friendly face, we want to help positively transform their lives." A refreshing approach to legal work, going back to old fashioned caring values, the group of lawyers, now numbering four, share all the running costs of the firm.

Solicitor and mediator, Fiona Young fits in perfectly with the



ON THE RIGHT ROAD: Fiona, Amber and Simon

firm's ethos.

Formerly working at leading firms in both London and Gibraltar - she now juggles bringing up two children (eight and five), while running a flourishing employment practice.

"I needed to work for a firm where things can be flexible and I'm working with like-minded people," she explains.

Having first met Amber from opposing benches on an employment tribunal case, the

pair now form an impressive double act.

"We are supporting working men and women and often work together to get the best possible result," she explains.

The firm is now set to begin a recruitment drive to add to its team of specialists, also including Spanish lawyer Francisca Luna Ivars and personal injury solicitor Simon Murphy, who recently joined from a top Liverpool firm.

The patriotic playboy

A Gibraltarian institution, estate agent Solomon Levy is well-known for his love of the ladies. But he's 'not all that bad', writes Imogen Calderwood



LEVY HQ: Solomon's office

EVEN though he's pushing 80, Gibraltarian estate agent Solomon Levy MBE still has to talk down his playboy image.

"I'm not all that bad, and I'm certainly not some perverted old man," says the 77-year-old, who has become an institution on the Rock over the decades.

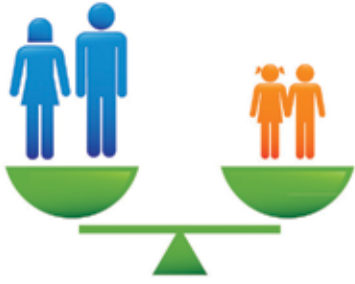
Looking dapper in a pinstripe suit and one of his signature bow ties, Solomon - known locally as 'Momy' - celebrates an astonishing 55 years in business on April 1, making him the longest-serving estate agent on the Rock.

"I feel very proud about that, because in 1713 in the Treaty of Utrecht it was stated no Jews or Moors will be allowed on the Rock," he adds.

"But one of the proudest achievements of my life was being made the first civil mayor of my home town."

Solomon was civil mayor between August 2008 and July 2009, following a family tradition and the political footsteps of his late uncle Sir Joshua Hassan, the first Chief Minister, who ruled for nearly two decades.

"If I had to choose between the knighthood or being mayor I would definitely choose being mayor," says Solomon.



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The Rock stars...



...as having one of the highest GDP per capita figures in the world, explains Mike Nicholls of Chesterton Gibraltar

A landlords' market

The Olive Press met Anna Moffatt (below) of Find a Property Gibraltar

"THE property market in Gibraltar is moving at its fastest rate ever. We are embarking on our best year ever, with people buying at a rapid rate even though prices are slightly inflated due to a shortage of homes.

"Buyers are flocking in from Spain due to the changes in taxation and with the rise in gaming and insurance companies over the last three years, it has meant we have been severely short of both sale and rental properties.



"This has led to prices almost doubling in the rental market, with a three-bed lower end property rising from £750 to £1,400 and one-bed flats in Ocean Village, for example, going up from £1,000 to £1,650. This is definitely a landlords market. "We have recently seen the launches of the fourth and fifth phases of the stunning Ocean Village development, with its three gorgeous blocks playing host to swimming pools, jacuzzis and leisure areas overlooking the very attractive marina.

"Incredibly, the fourth sold out in just 36 hours leaving many investors disappointed and prices already rising as people put their names down for re-sales.

"It meant that Ocean Village had to be more clever when they launched the fifth phase and offered it out to VIP clients to reserve and sign once specifications had been released.

"Anybody who has bought in Ocean Village has definitely made a profit already, only in Gibraltar..."

It is why the property market is so strong in Gibraltar, he believes, adding that sales are up an incredible 32% this year so far. "Our clients are initially attracted to Gibraltar either for personal tax reasons or because their employer is in Gibraltar for corporation tax reasons," he explains. "It's this continual steady inflow of wealth and employment for tax reasons that underpins such economic growth year on year, despite Europe's economic woes generally".

In the next few years there is going to be a building boom in Gibraltar

His agency was established in London in 1805, the same year as Nelson was fighting the Battle of Trafalgar just off the coast of Gibraltar. Chesterton is now firmly established as the leading real estate agent on the Rock. It is the tax angle that is driving the Chesterton business.

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Advertorial

ONWARD AND UPWARD

NOT many properties on the Rock can count on a five-car garage and private pool. But stunning Ashtead Cottage is very much one of a kind.

On the market through Savills, the detached villa has many original features and even has its own separate self-contained apartment.

Boasting six double bedrooms, three roof terraces and panoramic views, it dates back to the 18th century. It was built by the widow of a Peninsula war veteran in 1815 and latterly lived in by respected Gibraltar lawyer Henry King, whose wife made extensive improvements to the property, costing £2,200,000.

This and many other stunning homes are available through prestigious agency Savills Gibraltar, which is



FIT FOR A KING: Ashtead Cottage, Upper Town

now striding into its fourth year with an ever-growing wealth of experience and priceless local knowledge.

Providing homeowners with the impeccable service that befits

a globally-recognised brand, Savills - based conveniently in Irish Town - is ready for all the Rock's real estate needs and has some exciting expansion plans for this year.

"Chesterton's transaction volumes are 32% per cent up on last year," adds Nicholls. "Firstly because there continues to be a net influx of people into Gibraltar requiring a property. And secondly, because the tenant or buyer demands a professional agent with a strong reputation to do the conveyancing." One concern for Nicholls is that the estate agency industry in Gibraltar is currently unregu-

lated. "We lag behind much of Europe in terms of properly regulating estate agency activity."

However, the implementation of the forthcoming Fair Trade Act in Gibraltar should at least see some consumer protection. "We have pushed for regulation for some time, so this new act is a start at least," he adds. "It's absolutely needed because in the next few years there is go-

ing to be a building boom in Gibraltar and estate agents are going to be busy. For the benefit of Gibraltar, we want to ensure that new clients' first experience in the property market is a professional one."

Mike Nicholls is managing director of Chesterton Gibraltar and treasurer of Gibraltar's Chamber of Commerce

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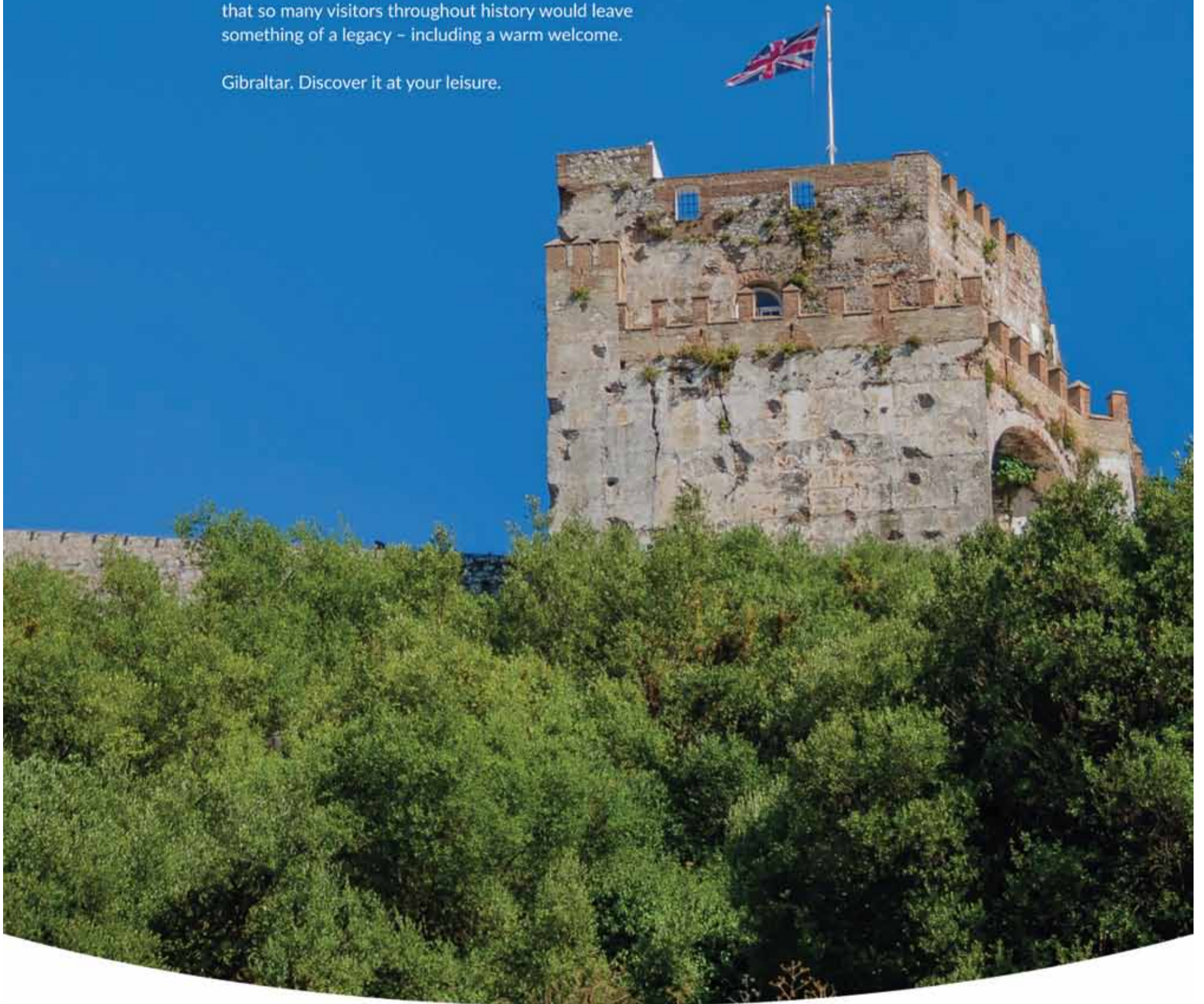
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In tip top health

INTERNATIONAL medical insurance company ALC Health has opened a new office in Gibraltar. Following on from the UK and Spain, the plush new base in Ocean Village is the perfect location to service the company's existing Gibraltar client base and to work with the large range of leading insurance companies in the enclave. Run by Sue Wilson, who has been working for the company in Spain since 2003, the company places a high emphasis on building one to one relationships with its clients. Its founder Sarah Jewell, who has worked in the medical insurance industry for two decades, was awarded an MBE last year.

Visit www.alchealth.com for more information about ALC Health

Still seeing red

BUST-UPS at the border are a tale as old as time. But now the Spanish are up to something even more peculiar at the frontier. With the European Commission telling Spain to sort its act out, the country is beginning to take action... but the action being taken isn't completely clear. Work has been ongoing on the Spanish side of the border for a number of months but it is unclear what is actually being built. It has been the topic of conversation in the House of Commons and within European Parliament. Earlier this month, it even lured Spain's new anti-corruption party, Podemos, into speaking out about the nations' soured relationship. Chief Minister Fabian Picardo even admitted that he was at a loss as to what the Spaniards are up to. In an interview with the *Olive Press* this issue, he said: "We're

trying to get details from the European Commission, but even they are finding it difficult." Meanwhile, a Spanish-led incentive to speed up the queues has fallen flat on its face. Labelled the 'red channel', people who live in Spain and work in Gibraltar were offered the chance to sign up to a scheme to fly across the frontier. Launched in July, over 4,000 Spanish workers with contracts of employment in Gibraltar are eligible to sign up. However, only 100 have signed up so far and Spanish workers union, Astecg, has labelled the system 'discriminatory'. Salvador Molina of Astecg said: "Why should we, the workers, avoid the frontier queues but others, such as expectant mothers and children, should not?"

Spain is finally taking action at the border... but it's still not clear what that action is

AFTER a couple of years working in the Gibraltar civil service Eddie Lucas figured there had to be something more exciting to do. It was the heart of the 1980s property boom and he saw a gap in the market... to open a builders' merchants. Now 27 years on and things are still going strong for Interbuild, one of Gibraltar's key suppliers of materials for the construction business. "I saw an opportunity for materials," explains the friendly Gibraltarian, who had previously earned himself an MOD apprenticeship. "I think we developed fast due to our strong belief in

Advertorial

Built from scratch

putting the customer first - without exception." The merchants supplies a range of products, from range ovens to paint and from fireplaces to kitchens. "We try to supply only the finest products around, tried and tested products we would only be too happy to have in our own homes," adds Lucas, who has a keen interest in local politics. Around 90% of the products are imported from the UK

Builders' merchants Interbuild has seen nearly three decades thanks to boss Eddie Lucas



Lucas. "Our motto 'Working Hard for Your Business' remains to this day and it is our code of practice. I am confident you will find our competitive service and customer support hard to match," he concludes. Visit Interbuild at Unit 12 The New Harbours, Gibraltar. Tel (350) 200 74567 or email sales@interbuild.gi

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WHERE TO STAY



IT has been a great few months for the Gibraltar hotel scene, with not one but two amazing new renovation jobs just finished. The first at **La Caleta Hotel**, sitting on its own beach with incredible views towards Africa, has seen the arrival of a stylish new restaurant and a total upgrade of the lobby and bar area, not to mention its rooms. The stylish textile walls in the bar and restaurant area, plus a series of arty black and white photos really add to the look. Another amazing new refurbishment

Sleep like a Rock



IDYLLIC: La Caleta and (left) the Rock Hotel's new dining room

has just finished at the **Rock Hotel**, one of the enclave's most established buildings, constructed in 1932. This charming place has had a very stylish new makeover

with brand new rooms and all the communal areas massively spruced up. Aesthetically-pleasing, this charming spot, which has counted on Winston Churchill,

Errol Flynn and Dennis Waterman as former guests, maximizes on light and has some wonderful views across the Bay of Gibraltar inland to the Serrania de Ronda.

WHERE TO EAT

A family affair

Jon Clarke picks out a selection of interesting spots to eat on the Rock

Advertorial

Join the tea set

IF you're still feeling peckish after lunch, head to The Landings restaurant on Queensway Quay, which now offers traditional afternoon tea. Owner Ann Hudson makes all the cakes, scones and savoury quiches from scratch. She takes pride in her cooking, and always makes sure there is a good selection available, from carrot cake and chocolate cup cakes to coconut macaroons and Victoria sandwiches.

It's a recipe that will go down especially well with the tea-loving British so when you're next in Gibraltar visit The Landings and do it 'proper' with an authentic afternoon tea.

You can also download The Landings app for free from the App store and search for up-to-date specials, news and menus.

For more information, call 20066100 or visit www.the-landings.gi

IT'S the Gibraltar equivalent of Piccadilly Circus and there is no better place to watch the world go by than on its finest terrace at **Café Solo**.

This institution, in Casemates Square, has been serving up a superb range of Italian and Mediterranean dishes for over a decade.

Inside you will be sitting within the old army barracks, where you get excellent WiFi facilities and a splendid coffee, plus cake, if needed.

Another institution, also big on its coffee is **Sacarello's**, which has been serving up a decent brew for nearly two centuries. A true Gibraltar haunt for morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea or supper, this charming old spot also counts on one of the best private art collections on the Rock.

This is all thanks to current boss Patrick Sacarello, 62, who is a huge art lover and regularly travels to exotic countries to acquire his paintings.

It was his great-grandfather Bartholomew who founded the existing business in 1888, following in the footsteps of his Italian grandfather, a trader, who had arrived on the Rock in 1817.

"Although I studied at a London university, I ended up coming back to coffee because it's such a beautiful business."

For a more formal fine dining experience you should head to charming Queensway Quay, a millionaire's playground, where houses start around the £4.2 million mark.

Here, you will find the excellent **Landings** restaurant, which has counted John Prescott, First Minister Fabian Picardo and a variety of Coronation Street stars as guests.

"We get a lot of wealthy yachting types too," explains owner Ann Hudson, who hails from the south coast of England. The menu is also appropriately grand, with a superb mix of ex-



TIMELESS: Sacarello's and (inset) sushi at La Caleta

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citing dishes and plenty of adventurous cuisine.

This season's highlights include a delicious duck leg and a tasty seafood salad of lobster and prawn, beautifully presented with a slice of goats cheese, baby grapefruit slices and a free range egg. It also specialises in afternoon teas.

Two more excellent options for dining are the restaurant at the **Rock Hotel** (see Page 26), and **La Caleta Hotel**, where you can find a fantastic range of dishes from around the world.

One of the highlights was the excellent sushi starter, as well as the Hoisin chicken wrap and the 'Reggae, Reggae Nachos'.

The best day to visit is every Wednesday when you will be treated to live music by a superb jazz trio... and if you've got any sense you will stay for the night.

TOP TERRACE: Cafe Solo

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