

The Tenerife Property & Business Guide

August 2026
Issue 261

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Montesol, San Eugenio Alto

We are delighted to present this beautifully renovated one-bedroom apartment in the sought-after Montesol complex, Costa Adeje.

€295,000 Ref: N1672

See Page 2 for more information.
To arrange a viewing, call 0034 922 724 110 /
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Stunningly Renovated 1-Bedroom Apartment, Montesol, San Eugenio Alto

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€295,000 Ref: N1672



We are delighted to exclusively offer for sale this stunning one-bedroom apartment, located in the highly sought-after area of San Eugenio Alto, within the popular Montesol residence.

Spacious, bright and beautifully presented, this delightful apartment has been fully renovated throughout to an exceptionally high standard. The property features a modern, fully fitted kitchen with all the latest appliances, a generous lounge furnished and finished to an immaculate standard, and a comfortable bedroom with fitted wardrobes and large sliding doors opening onto an impressive 20m² private terrace. The terrace area will soon have glass sliding doors around it so that it is protected in the wintertime and can be used as a second bedroom if desired. You can enjoy beautiful views of the pool, communal gardens and out to sea from the terrace.

The stylish bathroom has also been tastefully renovated and benefits from a

walk-in shower and sleek, contemporary fittings.

In addition to the main terrace, the property boasts a large front terrace, complete with fitted storage cupboards and a comfortable shaded seating area — the perfect spot to enjoy a morning coffee while making the most of Tenerife's wonderful climate.

A particularly attractive feature of this property is the opportunity to purchase a large 36m² enclosed private garage in the neighbouring Buenavista complex, situated immediately next to Montesol. The garage is available exclusively with the apartment and cannot be purchased separately, at an additional cost of €30,000.

Although there is communal parking within the Montesol complex, the private garage offers a secure and convenient alternative. It is ideal for owners who intend to live in the property permanently, as well as those looking for a safe place to keep a vehicle for use during their visits to Tenerife.

For further and information and viewings please contact Tenerife Properties:
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Luxury villa, La Caleta



We are delighted to present this luxury villa in with two separate apartments - totalling 8 bedrooms and 7 bathrooms - in the lovely coastal resort of La Caleta. Set on a huge plot, the property comprises the villa itself, private pool, various terraces and over 5.000m2 of land. Please contact us for more information.

€4,750,000

Ref: I1515

Client Review

Absolutely outstanding service from Tenerife Properties! From start to finish, everything was handled professionally, efficiently, and with genuine care. The team was friendly, knowledgeable, and always available to answer questions, making the whole process completely stress-free. They really listened to what we wanted and helped us find the perfect property. If you're looking for reliable, honest, and expert support in Tenerife, I couldn't recommend Tenerife Properties highly enough.

tenerife properties

Montesol, San Eugenio Alto



Immaculate 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom apartment with 2 large terraces and views over the communal gardens, swimming pool and out to sea. The property can be sold with an enclosed garage in the neighbouring complex with convenient access to the apartment for an extra €30,000. Viewing highly recommended.

€295,000

Ref: N1672

Windsor Park, Torviscas Alto



Lovely bright and spacious studio with a sunny terrace enjoying sea views.

€215,000

Ref: A523

Santa Maria, Costa Adeje



Studio apartment with sea and pool views.

€210,000

Ref: A521

Las Carabelas, Costa Adeje



Spacious 1 bed apartment with pool views.

€295,000

Ref: N1671

Club Atlantis, Costa Adeje



1 bed penthouse apartment.

€399,950

Ref: N1643

Parque Cristina, San Eugenio Alto



Spacious 1 bed, 1 bath apt with large terrace. Exclusive complex.

€339,000

Ref: N1666

Rogue del Conde, Torviscas Alto



Fantastic 2 bed penthouse apt with large terrace and sea views. Garage space.

€329,000

Ref: T1406

Vista Hermosa, Los Cristianos



3 bed apartment with parking space.

€420,000

Ref: I1498

Atalaya Court, Torviscas Alto



Beautiful 2 bed, spacious apt with multiple terraces, roof terrace and stunning sea views.

€295,000

Ref: T1412

Paradise Court, San Eugenio



2 bed, 2 bath apartment with sea views.

€299,950

Ref: T1417

Club Atlantis Bungalows, Puerto Colon



Exceptional 3 bed, 3 bath duplex.

€1,100,000

Ref: I1519



Translators available for any other languages.



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Rachel: 608 573 443
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2025-2026

5 BEDROOM DETACHED VILLA ROQUE DEL CONDE



A beautifully presented detached villa in a prestigious location with wonderful views of the coastline and mountains. Indulge in the comfort and tranquility of this impressive detached property offering four spacious double bedrooms, all with en-suite bathrooms. There is also a fully fitted self-contained studio sleeping two, with private access. Stylishly furnished & air conditioned throughout.

Ref: LA01983

Price: **€1,900,000** (approx. £1,626,000)

1 BEDROOM APARTMENT AMARILLA GOLF



First floor, one bedroom apartment with lift access. Good value for a first foot on the property ladder. Spread over one level, the property has American style kitchen and lounge area with access to a large terrace with sea and golf course views. The apartment offers a good sized bedroom with fitted wardrobes and a bathroom with walk-in shower. This apartment is a blank canvas for those interior designers amongst us.

Ref: AMG00655

Price: **€197,500** (approx. £168,312)

1 BEDROOM APARTMENT TORVISCAS BAJO



Located in the heart of the touristic area, this third floor, one bedroom apartment offers location, views and endless shopping and entertainment on your doorstep. A superb double balcony gives you plenty of space for daytime sunbathing, or evening relaxation, while you enjoy the view of the pool area and out to the Atlantic.

Ref: LA01985

Price: **€279,950** (approx. £240,000)

1 BEDROOM APARTMENT AMARILLA GOLF



Situated on a fabulous community, this charming & spacious, one bedroom apartment is beautifully furnished to a high standard, and ready to move in to. You can step out of your bed and into the pool for your morning swim, as the property is ideally located next to the complex pool, just a few steps from your sunny, south facing terrace. This ground floor apartment is set over one level, and is perfect for holidays or permanent living.

Ref: AMG00652

Price: **€225,000** (approx. £192,600)

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CC Puerto Colon - Playa de Las Américas

2 BEDROOM APARTMENT
GOLF DEL SUR



Are you looking for a two bedroom property, but don't quite have the budget? ...this could be a good alternative. The property is located in a well maintained, gated complex with lovely golf course views. The apartment is very spacious and open plan. Originally a one bedroom, but by using the generous square meters, it has been cleverly converted into a two bedroom property. Sold fully furnished.

Ref: GOLF01886

Price: €245,000 (approx. £210,000)

3 BEDROOM APARTMENT
GOLF DEL SUR



This immaculate, fully furnished three bedroom ground floor property offers total flexibility as a lucrative rental investment, a dream holiday getaway, or a permanent relocation home in the sun. Boasting exceptional space and quality throughout. The premium complex offers an array of resort-style amenities, including a welcoming reception and two swimming pools. Viewing is highly recommended.

Ref: GOLF01885

Price: €345,000 (approx. £296,000)



SEE WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY ABOUT US



”



There are not enough words to describe the service I received from the Tenerife Property Shop. What an outstanding team. Mary, Neil and Laurence provided an invaluable service second to none. My first meet was Neil. He was extremely professional with a wealth of knowledge and experience. I was always kept up to date with regular calls, emails and meetings. Attention to detail was amazing. Mary coordinated the whole process in a calm and reassuring manner. She was accessible at all times. The service was nothing short of 5*...



Marlene Huxley (Seller)
August 2026



”



We had a very positive experience with Tenerife Property Shop during the purchase of our home. A special thank you to Silvia, Neil and Laurence for their professionalism, kindness and support throughout the whole process. They guided us step by step, always answering our questions and helping us through the most delicate parts of the purchase. We felt supported and reassured from the beginning until the signing at the notary. We would definitely recommend Tenerife Property Shop to anyone looking to buy a property in Tenerife.



Silvia Andreucci (Purchaser)
JULY 2026



”



We found Tenerife Property Shop very helpful and knowledgeable when we were looking to buy in Golf Del Sur. Neil showed us the properties we were interested in and answered all my questions, even arranged 2nd viewings when we narrowed the search down. Going through the buying process can be daunting when you don't speak any Spanish but the office staff kept me updated with regular emails and the sale went through on the agreed date. Would highly recommend. Thanks.



Cate Reilly (Purchaser)
July 2026



”



We recently sold our apartment in Tenerife with the help of Tenerife Property Shop. The help, support and professionalism was outstanding from day one. They guided us through the whole process, kept us updated with enquiries and organised all the pre and post sale paperwork on our behalf. They even provided a shoulder to lean on when the sale completion tears arrived. I would have no hesitation in recommending them.



Pat Clough (Seller)
November 2025



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AMARILLA GOLF



First floor apartment with two spacious terraces giving all day sun. Golf course and sea views with close proximity to the San Miguel Marina and coast

€232,500

AMARILLA GOLF



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€240,000



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GOLF DEL SUR



Spacious, two bed, two bath villa with large family kitchen diner. Good sized gardens front and rear and terrace giving excellent golf and Montaña Roja views

€399,995

LAS CHAFIRAS



Spacious, west facing 3 bed (one with dressing area and en-suite), 2 bath apartment with large private roof terrace. Separate kitchen and utility area

€275,000

AMARILLA GOLF



Large 3 bed, 2 bath garden apartment with sea and mountain views. Walking distance to all local amenities. Close to the communal pool

€295,000

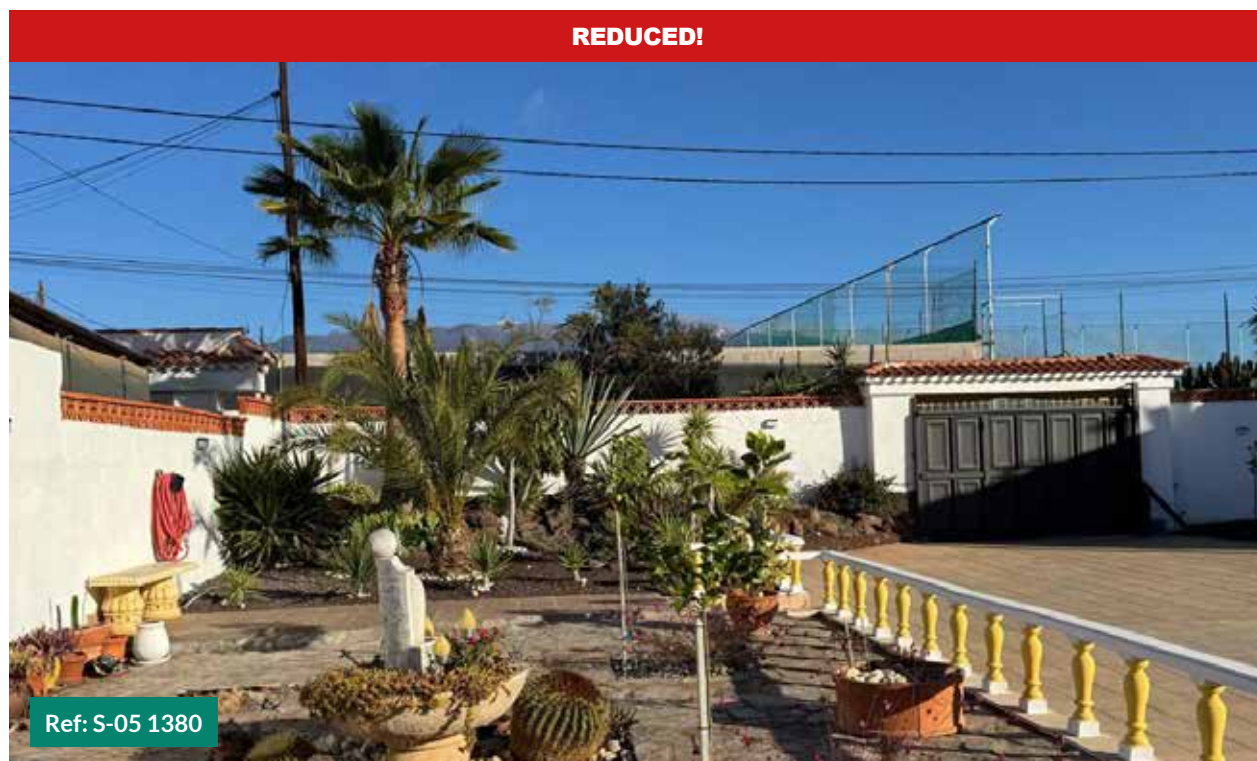
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Ref: S-05 1380



Oroteanda Baja

Luxury 5 bedroom villa with pool and parking on huge plot. Suitable for subdivision. Included in the Sale Price is a Project to build two one bedroom apartments in and above the garage.

€P.O.A.



Stunning, fully furnished and equipped, 5 bed, 3 bath (master en suite) detached villa with heated pool on 2,000sqm plot. This spacious property has a huge terrace to the front which can accommodate up to 8 cars, and a private garden/terrace with lovely sea views to the rear with BBQ area, jacuzzi, orchard and various seating areas (this significant area is eminently suitable for subdivision to create an excellent-sized plot suitable for the construction of a separate independent villa with pool, parking and lovely sea views.) There is a large lounge/ dining area, an open plan, fully equipped fitted kitchen and garage for 3 cars with direct access. One

of the bedrooms is situated in such a way that it could easily be converted into a separate studio, or granny flat. Extras include aircon and central heating throughout, and solar panel heating for hot water and the pool. This large Villa is very well situated in a small, very central village, located between the airport and the southern resorts of Los Cristianos and Playa de las Américas. With nearby property very popular as exclusive holiday let's this property has fantastic potential as a letting investment. It's rare to find such a large property on a very large plot with sea views in such an excellent location. Call now, come see for yourself!



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PARQUE SANTIAGO I
2 BEDROOM, 1 BATHROOM APARTMENT
REF. 83- 685 EURO 625.000,=

Property details

- Property space: 79 m²
- Living space: 64 m²
- Terrace: 15 m²
- First floor, one-level apartment
- Parking on communal ground
- Second bathroom can be added
- Completely renovated complex

Characteristics

- All-day sun
- Quiet surroundings
- Views of pool and gardens
- Distant views of Atlantic
- Easy access – no stairs
- Community fees: €170 per month
- Town Hall rates: €380 per year



VIEWING BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

SALES OFFICE

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Los Abrigos

Renovated top-floor apartment just 10 metres from the seafront in charming Los Abrigos. Features 1 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, a bright open living space, sea-view terrace and private roof terrace with panoramic sea and mountain views. Includes a storage room and is set in a fully renovated building of just four apartments with no community fees. Walking distance to restaurants, shops and local amenities.

€319,000

Ref: LA-A319

Costa del Silencio

Exceptional detached bungalow on one level with 3 spacious bedrooms, separate kitchen and a bright, well-planned layout. Outside, enjoy a private heated swimming pool, landscaped gardens and an underground garage for up to four cars. Sold fully furnished, with no community fees, this centrally located home offers privacy, comfort and is ready to move into.



€549,000

Ref: CDS-T595



Costa del Silencio

First-floor apartment, converted from a studio into a comfortable one-bedroom home. Features a terrace with attractive open views, communal swimming pool and is sold fully furnished. Conveniently located close to shops, supermarkets, transport and everyday amenities. An ideal permanent residence, holiday home or investment opportunity.

€184,000

Ref: CDS-P190

Las Rosas

Partially built villa in peaceful Las Rosas, offering the opportunity to complete and personalise the project. Plans include 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, spacious living areas, terrace and optional pool. A finished 1-bedroom apartment with separate entrance allows immediate occupation. Features solar panels and solar hot water. Participation purchase on rural land—cash buyers only.



€231,000

Ref: LR-C249



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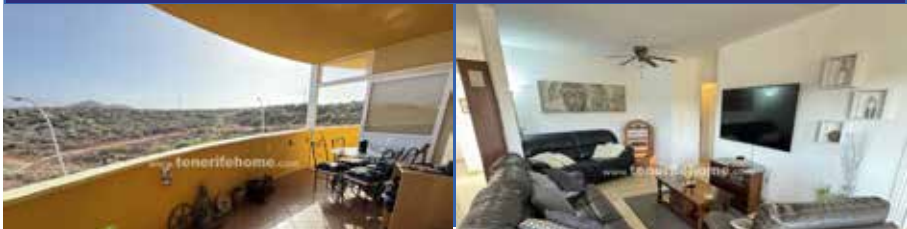
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Costa del Silencio, Res. Isis



Spacious second-floor apartment with lift access in the popular Isis Complex. Features 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (master en-suite), an open-plan living area, and a 30 m² terrace with views of Mount Teide and the natural park. Communal pool, easy parking, and walking distance to the sea, Montaña Amarilla, shops, restaurants and transport.

€349,900

Ref: 345-0626

Costa del Silencio, Amarilla Bay



Frontline duplex apartment in the exclusive Amarilla Bay complex with stunning sea and Montaña Amarilla views. Offers 2 bedrooms, 1.5 bathrooms, two terraces, a bright open-plan living area, communal pool and private parking. Sold furnished (excluding decorative items). Close to all amenities. Completion of sale available from February 2027.

€289,000

Ref: 344-0626

Costa del Silencio, 2nd floor apt



Spacious, fully furnished 2nd floor, 2 bed apartment with bright living-dining area, enclosed 15 m² terrace, sep. kitchen with pantry and a/c. The master suite includes en-suite bathroom and terrace access. The complex has a pool, with optional 32 m² private garage available at extra cost.

€370,000

Ref: 335-0426

Costa del Silencio, Parque Don Jose



Furnished apartment in sought-after complex. Comprises 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, open-plan living area and a 10 m² terrace overlooking landscaped gardens. Features ceiling fans, aluminium shutters and access to three communal pools, including a heated pool. Located close to shops, restaurants, transport and local amenities.

€224,900

Ref: 343-0626



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How long until AI doesn't need humans?

How long until AI systems can sustain their own existence — such that, if every human died, they could keep growing their own population?

METR's Ajeya Cotra and Understanding AI's Timothy B. Lee discuss the path toward this "self-sufficient AI." She thinks it's nearly imminent; he believes it might never happen. The two talk through the skills and shortcomings of today's humanoid robots, profit incentives, tacit knowledge and how these affect the timeline, non-robot paths to self-sufficiency, and the benchmarks to watch for in the next few years.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Clara Collier: This conversation is happening because you two got into a debate on Twitter about when you expect us to have fully autonomous AI systems. Ajeya, this is your concept. Do you want to talk about what you mean by that?

Ajeya Cotra: I wrote a blog post about self-sufficient AI, which is AI systems integrated with physical infrastructure — factories, mines, fabs, robots to operate all of those — such that they don't need any cognitive or physical inputs from human labour to keep growing their own population.

If all humans died of the plague one day, AI systems would be able to maintain themselves, repair things that might be breaking down in their physical environment, and keep up the power plants that run them. They'd also have to expand themselves, which would require eventually consuming more physical resources — going out and mining the quartz and turning it into silicon sheets and then etching those into chips and so on.

This is an interesting forecasting point in my mind because, one, it's relative-

ly concrete and easy to imagine, and two, because a number of people are concerned about the possibility that AI systems might literally drive humanity extinct because they're pursuing goals at odds with humanity's goals. Self-sufficiency seems like a requirement for carrying out full extinction of humanity on the part of the AIs.

I do want to flag that I think this would be a pretty late milestone, and you could degrade this milestone in interesting ways and forecast weaker endpoints as well. For example, how many physical humans are needed to sustain a certain population of AIs? To what extent do they need to have specialized expertise versus "the AI can just direct them around because the AI has all the knowledge"? I ultimately think one or more of those weaker milestones will be more directly relevant for policymaking, but you can generate them starting from the concept of self-sufficient AI.

Clara: So, when do you think we're going to have this self-sufficient AI?

Ajeya: More likely than not within 10 years. And it very well could happen sooner.

Clara: Tim?

Timothy B. Lee: I think that timeline is pretty unlikely. Hard to put a number on it, but 20 years is the earliest it sounds plausible to me. I'd say less than 10% chance that it happens within 20 years. I'd say there's a 10 or 20% chance it's never, and my median would be 50 years.

It's hard to reason about what will happen in the future, but I have a strong intuition based on writing about robotics, particularly self-driving cars and sidewalk robots, that these things always take longer than you think they will. Practical barriers mean stuff in the physical world takes a lot longer than software stuff. It's capital-intensive. There's just a lot of

stuff you have to do.

Let me give you a specific example. Six years ago, I went out to George Mason University and looked at Starship, which has these sidewalk delivery robots. The robot is simple — it's a box on wheels, drives four miles an hour, and delivers lunch to people. I wrote an article saying it seems like we're on the verge of these things being everywhere because they seem to work great and seem useful. Six years later, that company is far bigger than before, but they're not everywhere.

I couldn't tell you exactly why they haven't grown faster. I don't think there were any major technological breakthroughs needed, at least on the hardware side. This was something that worked totally fine. I think it's some combination of engineering work to make the robots more reliable and easy to repair and some amount of human labour needed to maintain them, and the margins aren't that high, so it actually wasn't that profitable a business.

And I think you could tell a similar story about self-driving cars, which is more of a software progress story. Waymo basically now has working self-driving technology, and it's still going to take them years to just scale that up from the scale they're at now to where most taxis are driverless. It takes time to build factories, it takes time to get regulatory approval, and so on.

To have a replacement for humans, you're going to need humanoid robots, which I don't think are anywhere close to what's needed. Once we have a working prototype that has all the characteristics you'd expect from a human, it seems like a 10- to 20-year process to go from initial prototype to 100 million or a billion cost-effective, easy-to-repair robots all over the place.

Two challenges for humanoid robots

Ajeya: That's helpful.

One thing I wanted to flag is that you said we don't have humanoid robots now. I don't think that's true. My understanding is that we're producing thousands or tens of thousands of humanoid robots..

Timothy: Right.

Ajeya: What is true is they're not very useful right now. One question that feels very important is: Why are humanoid robots not useful right now? Is it because they have bad bodies, or is it because they have bad brains?

I lean toward thinking that cognitive capabilities are the bigger bottleneck, as I think they were for self-driving cars too.

You said in your tweet that you wouldn't be surprised if the cognitive capabilities necessary for self-sufficient AI were there within 10 years, but that they wouldn't have enough physical bodies to operate. If we condition on that world — where the brains are good enough to operate the bodies that exist today — then AI systems may actually have many bodies to operate, at least if we're currently manufacturing 10,000 per year and production is growing. It becomes a question of how many robots are needed.

It could also be that the bodies are insufficient — the thumbs don't have enough dexterity, there isn't enough haptic feedback. That's a debate within the robotics community.

Timothy: Let me be more precise. We definitely do have robots with arms and legs that can walk around, can pick objects up, have eyes and ears and so forth. But I think there are two things we don't currently have that we will need for self-sufficient AI.

One is that I do not think the humanoid robots shipping today are anywhere near as sophisticated as human beings in terms of their ability to do physical manipulation of objects. The human hand in particular is a miraculous thing. It has a ton of touch sensors, it's able to do very precise movements, it has a lot of degrees of freedom.

My understanding is that things that are hard for people, like dancing and certain gross motor skills, are actually pretty easy for robots because they're just physics. But interacting with the physical world — for example, picking something up

without crushing it — is actually quite difficult because you have to apply exactly the right amount of force.

Clara: I assume both of you have read the Rodney Brooks post about this.

Ajeya: I have skimmed that post.

Timothy: I did read it a while ago. Is that the one that talks about how the way the robots balance means that if they screw up, they can fall over and hurt people?

Clara: That, but also just how complicated and sophisticated human touch is as a sense. His argument, I think, is that we don't even really have the sensors that would give you training data for the kinds of signals that inform human manual dexterity right now.

But I've also seen people argue in response that "yes, but we have different kinds of sensors — like with self-driving cars, where a camera can't do everything the human eye does, but we can supplement it with lidar and radar. Maybe for touch you can't do what a human hand does, but you can supplement a pressure sensor with infrared and other things." I think that's the debate, at least as I understand it.

Timothy: Yeah, I may be just poorly summarizing Rodney Brooks because I think I did read that essay and some of these ideas probably come from that. I think that particularly in terms of balance and physical manipulation of objects, the current hardware is not on the same level as the human body.

But the second really huge thing is energy efficiency, reliability, and repair cost. This is why I think the Starship sidewalk robot example is instructive. There's a big gap between "I have a prototype that maybe cost a million dollars, can go for an hour or two before it runs out of battery, and needs to be repaired after a few days of use" versus a human body, which, with the right inputs, can work for 10, 20, 30 years in a wide range of situations.

It definitely does not seem to me like we are close to the point of developing humanoid robots that have most human capabilities and the low cost, reliability, and durability of a human body.

The problem of scale

Ajeya: Would you agree that if we had bodies everyone agreed were as sophisticated as human bodies, and we could see production doubling every year — 1,000 this year, 2,000 next year, 4,000 the year after — then the right thing to do is extrapolate that trend to the number we'd need for self-sufficient AI?

In other words, we're having this argument because we don't agree on whether existing humanoids count, so we don't agree that a trend has started. But if there were a clear trend, like we have for solar panels or batteries, should we extrapolate it?

Timothy: There are two problems. One is scaling up the manufacturing and getting the cost down. It's true that once that has started, that's a very predictable thing. You can calculate a learning curve and say "every time you double production you get this much reduction in cost."

But, again, the other problem is repairability. If you build a robot that only works for a week before you have to send it back to the factory because a particular motor in the elbow grinds down and stops working, that's not going to be economically viable.

And I think one of the things you see in the industry right now is that for most tasks it doesn't make sense to use a humanoid robot because there's already a simpler robot that is cheaper, easier to repair, and more durable that can do 90% of the task, and all you need is a human to take the box of parts and set it next to the robot so the robot doesn't have to walk around. So for most tasks it's likely that humans and robots will remain complements for a long time.

That timing is hard to predict. It's similar to the Waymo problem where 10 years ago Waymo's software was handling 99% of cases correctly and we were saying, "Well, we can extrapolate how long until it's 99.99%." But it turned out to be really hard to predict how long it would take to get to that level of accuracy.

Ajeya: Does this mean your timeline is much earlier for a weaker milestone — say, an AI population sustained by a thousand humans doing unskilled physical labor, with cameras on their heads and ear-

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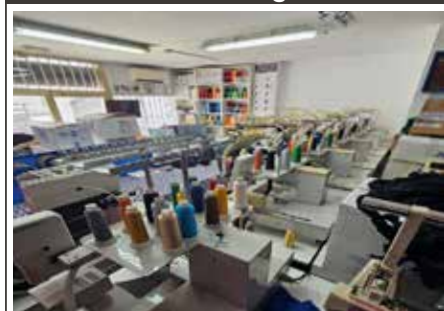


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pieces so the AI can direct them, rather than needing specialized semiconductor fab workers? Do you think that happens many years before full self-sufficiency?

Timothy: I don't know if I'd say a thousand, but yeah, definitely. I think we'll reach a point where if you had willing human bodies, you could have a society where some AI model ran the whole society, made all the high-level decisions, and you had a group of humans wearing cameras and earpieces that tell them exactly what to do.

I don't think the humans in that scenario would put up with that — I hope they wouldn't — but yes, that would be a theoretical possibility a decade or longer before we get to the point where robots can do everything humans can do in a cost-effective way.

I do think it would take a lot more than a thousand humans to sustain that kind of society. I think we're talking tens of millions. In a world where only a thousand humanoid bodies were necessary, the AI could get by with humanoid robots that break down once a week and just constantly repair or replace them.

Ajeya: When I say thousands of humans, I mean millions of robots doing physical tasks that are much more automated than now, but still with stuff around the edges that humans have to do, like in almost fully automated factories today where someone picks things up and puts them down. You would need millions of bodies to sustain an AI civilization of reasonable size, but do you think it's plausible that only thousands of those could be humans?

Timothy: No, I don't. I'd have to think about what the exact number is, but I think there are a lot of tasks across the economy that require humans. Think about mining, or logging, or climbing up telephone poles to replace fiber optic cables, or moving through crawl spaces to connect fibers. There are a lot of tasks like that, and they're distributed in such a way that you couldn't have one area populated by all the people necessary to do them. For many tasks you can have the robot do 99% of the work, but you need a

person there for the 1% it can't do.

If a resource is needed from a mine in Chile, there's got to be someone in Chile at that particular mine ready to do that job. If you tally those kinds of examples, more than thousands of humans are needed. I don't know if it's millions or tens or hundreds of millions, but a modern civilization has a lot of different products with a lot of different inputs, and when you think about the volume of the world and all the things humans are doing, it would add up to quite a lot of people.

Stranger paths

Timothy: It's also possible that there are unique characteristics of human biology that mean you would actually need a radically different set of technologies to build robots that have some of the characteristics of humans.

Think about flying. We have airplanes that in some respects are much more sophisticated than birds, but if we wanted to build a literal bird with the energy efficiency and the ability to land on a branch — we're nowhere close to knowing how to do that. It's possible there's a similar issue with the human body, that we don't have any technological equivalent for certain kinds of things we can do, like working for hours or having your finger heal after it's cut.

The human body has some cells that are self-repairing. I don't think we know how to make anything like that via traditional manufacturing. The human hand might always have an inherent advantage performing certain tasks because it's based on a different kind of technology stack than steel and plastic. I'm not sure about that.

Ajeya: We've been talking about achieving self-sufficient AI by scaling up robots, but it's plausible that self-sufficient AI actually comes first by leapfrogging that stack — developing a more energy-efficient, biologically-inspired technology.

I don't want to anchor too much on robots being the only path. I can imagine superintelligent systems in a data center directing humans and robots to do wet lab research, resulting in small, self-replicating,

semi-biological —

Clara: Classic nanobots.

Ajeya: There's a range. You could get microbots, you could get nanobots.

Timothy: Yeah, I don't want to put forth a strong thesis that it's never. I think probably if you had enough smart AI, they would figure something out. But I think it's plausible it would require a different paradigm that would take decades to develop.

Tacit knowledge

Timothy: Can I mention one other factor I think is relevant? There's a question about whether these hypothetical AIs would have all the knowledge they needed.

Imagine if all the employees in the entire semiconductor industry disappeared — the machines and textbooks remain, but none of the people. How long would it take for the rest of humanity to restart the fabs? It's quite possible that would take decades. Because even though you might have the textbooks, there's a lot of tacit knowledge inside these machines. They're very complicated. There are thousands of people in Taiwan who handle very specific things — this specific machine needs these settings or else this problem occurs.

There are analogous situations throughout the economy. Now, maybe we'll be in a situation where we've already automated a lot of the routine stuff and there's some AI out there that has all the information the other AIs need. But I think there's a question about how much information the AIs have.

Ajeya: I do want to flag that my 10-year 50% forecast comes from expecting parallel automation of the physical stack and the software stack — which people are very much trying now — and from expecting big increases in overall AI intelligence.

There are two counters to the tacit knowledge hypothesis. One is that we'd have trained AI systems with reinforcement learning on that tacit knowledge because it's profitable to automate what the Taiwanese worker was doing. The other is that AIs might get really generally intelligent in the sense of quickly figuring out new things by trying them, reading textbooks, and ex-

perimenting efficiently.

Clara: Tim, you mentioned earlier that one of the things holding back the sidewalk robots was that the profit isn't clear. The financial incentives of automating workers at a TSMC fab seem much stronger and clearer to me. If you could get these fabs to run autonomously, wouldn't that be huge?

Timothy: I'm not sure. Are the people the bottleneck? Obviously you'd save the salaries of thousands of workers, so that's certainly some money. Would the fabs run dramatically faster if you replaced the people? If not, why would it be hugely profitable?

Clara: If we're imagining Ajeya's scenario, we're imagining vastly increasing demand for these chips. And also, every time there's discussion of American reshoring, the issue that comes up is that we don't have enough people and that the people we do have don't have the right training. This seems like a real bottleneck if we want to massively expand chip production.

Ajeya: Yeah, it's not mainly that a single fab would print chips faster, though I expect some effect like that too. It's that AI companies are already straining TSMC, and TSMC isn't ramping up production fast enough to meet the demand I expect in a year or two for AI chips. Companies have vertically integrated chip design to varying extents — Google designs its own Tensor Processing Units — but TSMC is still the bottleneck for actual fabrication. There's going to be big economic pressure in the next few years to scale up fab production.

Timothy: I completely agree that if you can make more fabs, that would be profitable. I guess the question I have is: Is that about physical things people do, or is it that the Taiwanese experts have expertise that's hard to write down? Maybe the difficulty of transferring tacit knowledge to America is actually the main bottleneck.

I don't know enough about the semiconductor industry to have a strong view, but that would be why I'd be a little skeptical that they'd have big gains from automation. Clearly, if there are routine tasks people are doing that you

could automate, that's going to speed you up. But I would think most routine tasks inside fabs would already be automated — you would still need people because sometimes the machine needs to be fixed. To do that, you need somebody to work the night shift. And Taiwanese people are maybe more willing to work those night shifts than Americans. And you need somebody with a very specific set of knowledge that's hard to get in America.

Ajeya: Stepping aside from onshoring, the question is whether within 10 years there will be AI systems plus robots that have either been trained on the long tail of physical and cognitive tasks involved in AI production, or are generally competent enough, cognitively and physically, that when something unexpected comes up they can say, "We'll comb through the textbooks, do it badly at first, then figure it out by trial and error" such that a new task they haven't done before doesn't spell doom.

I think both will be much greater in 10 years, from improvements in general sample-efficient learning, and from having actually been trained on the high-value physical tasks bottlenecking chip production. The second is what Clara was pointing out — if AI could do these tasks, that would be quite profitable because it would let us ramp up production and onshore. So people will be pushing on that.

Timothy: I think that's true.

Clara: I had a question for you, Ajeya. What do we mean by fully automating the stack? Because it's easy to think of the tech stack as making chips, but then someone has to mine the ores, and figure out logistics and more. It seems very hard for me to separate out the chips and energy that directly support the AI from the rest of the economy.

How do you think about the full automation of all the many thousands of component parts that would have to run for this whole process to work? For the chips, I understand doing reinforcement learning on this hyperspecific process, but there are many upstream components where there's maybe less incentive to do so.

Ajeya: My guess is this

gets done through a heavy dose of general-purpose robotics. It's similar to the intellectual side, where the easier tasks — arithmetic where we just wrote down the algorithm, chess, certain kinds of search — were automated in specialized ways. Then the harder tasks get automated more broadly, even if it's not the full breadth of human skills. We automated coding, conversation, essay writing, and answering history questions all in a rush around the same time by training on a very broad distribution. And I think we're going to broaden that distribution further.

I think physical tasks will follow a similar pattern. Some we automated in the 1700s or 1800s or 1950s. Self-driving cars are more general than factory robots from the previous century, but still pretty specialized — they see a wide range of things, but driving is the only thing they can do, and they often have special-purpose components like route planning. By the time you're imagining AI doing the mining, the power construction, the maintenance and manufacturing of robots, as well as any new and surprising tasks that come up — you need general-purpose robotics.

The reason I think that's plausible goes back to where humanoid robots are bottlenecked. Again, I think it's more likely to be cognitive capacities than physical capabilities. So it's a big deal that people are starting to do imitation learning and RL in physical settings.

Prediction mode

Clara: Let's switch to forecasting mode. I want to know, for both of you: What would you observe in the next two to three years that would make it seem like the 10-year forecast is on track or not on track?

Ajeya: It's tough because there are two very different branches to self-sufficient AI. We've been talking about the humanoid robot branch. There's also the superintelligence-to-nanobots branch. I think it's hard to bound the probability of that second branch to a very low number, and Tim and I disagree on this too — we disagree on how quickly systems far more intelligent than top humans could discover radically new tech-

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nology.

If we focus on the humanoid robot path and ignore the other one, I'd want to learn more about the haptics and physical limitations. If our robots don't have good hands, why not? Could we build a great hand for \$100 million? Is it that we don't know how, or just that it's not profitable and there's some experience curve to ride? I'd want a line on a graph showing improvement of robotic hands, and another line showing the rate at which we're manufacturing humanoid robots.

The cognitive side is similar to other AI forecasting — there are benchmarks to watch. Google DeepMind last year had an advance in general-purpose robotics, with videos of robots handling slight perturbations in their environment. I'd expect that technology

to meaningfully improve in the next couple years. If it's totally stagnant, that would push my timelines out for the robot path.

Timothy: I think we mostly agree about that. I'm going to want to watch how the humanoid robots develop: the number of robots, their capabilities, and particularly their cost and repairability. If I see those advancing more quickly than I expected, that's going to shift me towards thinking this is possible earlier.

There's some interplay between these. If you imagine a future where there are a lot of very reliable, very cheap humanoid robots with crappy hands that don't work as well as human hands — I think you could still accomplish most tasks. Maybe you have to redesign all the machines in the world to have bigger knobs or something, but you could get a lot of value out of those cheap, re-

liable robots. So there's some substitutability between the quality of the robots, the number of robots, and their cost. If we see a rapid takeoff in the number of humanoid robots, even if they're not amazing, that'll be a sign that I'm wrong and this is going to be possible relatively soon.

Ajeya: There's also the actual integration of automation into key parts of the stack. There's a research project someone could do: How physically automated is TSMC right now? How automated are the power production steps? Map out the whole stack — what do humans do and what do robots do? If my timelines are right, we should see more tasks subsumed by robotic processes over the next few years, whether specialized or general-purpose.

Timothy: I actually think this might be a place where we disagree. I think humanoid robots specifically are

a canary in the coal mine. I expect robots to get more sophisticated, but I think it's going to be cheaper and more efficient to have specialized robots — for example, robots that are bolted to a factory floor, or a self-driving car — paired with a human that carries the parts over to the robot, or repairs the robot when it breaks, or unloads the self-driving truck.

So the path is towards automating 95% to 99% of the human's job, but hiring the human to do the 1%, and then scaling up production with the whole system. If we see rapid progress in robotics but very few humanoid robots being produced, that will seem like a sign that humans are still going to have an essential role that would be hard for AIs to replace. Whereas if we have a future where, increasingly, there are just humanoid robots that you can drop in for a larger and larger share of

the workforce, then I could see that going up to 100% after a decade or so.

Ajeya: I see your point on humanoids being special, but if we don't see automation eating more of the stack one way or another, I'll feel like things are generally going slower. What I'm craving is a detailed mapping of the AI production stack — how many bodies, machines, power plants are currently necessary to sustain an AI population of millions? How many humans could drop dead today without affecting the AIs? I'd want to track that number over time.

For threat modeling, it really matters whether you need a million humans, 100,000, 10,000, or 1,000. Once you're down to thousands or hundreds, a small number of coerced people or willing defectors becomes very salient for AI takeover scenarios. I don't know what the number is

today — my guess is tens of millions of humans are needed right now to sustain the current AI population.

Timothy: Yeah.

Ajeya: I'd want to map that out and track how it shrinks. A lot of the shrinking might happen through specialized robotics — though you might be right that you'd need fully humanoid robots or something more exotic to cross the last mile.

Ajeya Cotra is a researcher at METR working on assessing the risk of loss-of-control from advanced AI. Previously, she spent a decade at Coefficient Giving as a researcher and program officer.

Timothy B. Lee is a journalist who writes the newsletter Understanding AI. Previously he was on staff at the Washington Post, Vox.com, and Ars Technica. He has a master's degree in computer science from Princeton.

The People Who Will Thrive in the AI Age

By David Brooks, Canadian-born American book author and political and cultural commentator



Remember when RAI was going to take away our jobs and leave humans with nothing to do?

So far, that doesn't seem to be happening. Researchers from ActivTrak analyzed the digital activity of more than 10,000 workers and found that when people

adopted AI, their work life became more intense, not less. The time that these early adopters spent on email, messaging, and chat apps more than doubled. Their use of business software rose by 94 percent.

Researchers from UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business found that when using AI, workers started taking on tasks that they

had previously outsourced, because activities such as coding and engineering became easier to do. They squeezed in work bursts in the evening, on weekends, in waiting rooms, and whenever else they had a spare moment and AI was handy. They also did a lot more multitasking, supervising a bunch of bots doing differ-

ent things simultaneously.

The general pattern that the research points to is that many people don't use the time they save using AI to do less; they use the time to take on new tasks. AI also seems to shift workers' expectations, and their boss's expectations, about how much they should accomplish in a day. Every hour feels more crowded, but also more frazzled. The ActivTrak researchers found that the time people spent on focused, uninterrupted work fell by 9 percent. There's even a name for this mental state: "AI brain fry."

In some sense this is normal. Every time some new labor-saving technology is introduced, there are experts (the ones who know a lot about technology but not much about psychology) who predict that people will use the technology to make life easier. Soon we'll all be enjoying 15-hour workweeks! Instead, many people use the technology to make their life more frenetic and full. Planes, trains, and automobiles are technologies that save time and effort by making travel faster. They also enable people to take a lot more trips.

I'd say that a guiding principle of the emerging AI age is this: When intelligence is plentiful, volition is valuable. The people who are going to make a difference are not the ones who seek relaxation and passively use

AI to work less. They are the ones who will seek improvement and actively wrestle with AI to develop their own mental capabilities and accomplish more.

In other words, what will differentiate people is not how smart they are but their relationship to mental effort. Right now, some people have what psychologists call a high need for cognition. They enjoy thinking hard. These are the people who enjoy playing difficult games and reading dense books. On the other end of the spectrum, there are the cognitive misers, the people who find it unpleasant to think hard and take any opportunity not to do it. In the middle are the people who have a medium need for cognition. They will put in the effort when they really care about something, but they don't intrinsically enjoy it. Need for cognition correlates with intelligence but is not the same thing. We all know a lot of really smart people who don't like to work hard.

As things stand today, people will have very different experiences with AI.

The Productive Passengers.

People with a low need for cognition will tend to use AI to think less. Their great gain is that AI will make them more productive because it makes tasks so easy. Their great loss will

be that AI will diminish their mental capacities because it makes tasks so easy.

God seems to have been a puritan. He created us to be the kind of creatures who don't experience gain without some pain, don't gain reward without some effort. That's as true in the world of knowledge work as it is in the world of bodybuilding. Humans learn best when they are in the zone of optimal difficulty, when engaged in tasks that are not so hard as to be overwhelming but not so easy as to require no work.

AI is going to push low-effort people out of the zone of optimal difficulty. One research team led by Nataliya Kosmyna from the MIT Media Lab found that people's brain connectivity declines by as much as 55 percent when they are using ChatGPT compared with when they are not using it to perform similar tasks. Vivienne Ming, a co-founder of Possibility Sciences, found that when people were using AI, their gamma-wave activity—a sign of cognitive effort—dropped by roughly 40 percent.

This has predictable effects on how much people remember from their AI-assisted work. It has equally predictable effects on their thinking skills. A study by Michael Gerlich from SBS Swiss Business School found "a significant negative correlation between

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frequent AI tool usage and critical thinking abilities.” At first, AI sucks you in. You really do become more productive when using it. But then it threatens to hollow you out, as you become less capable and less knowledgeable. The saddest cases are people who get used to the AI crutch for a bit and then have it taken away. Researchers led by Grace Liu of Carnegie Mellon University put subjects through that experience and concluded, “After just ~10 minutes of AI-assisted problem solving, people who lost access to the AI performed worse and gave up more frequently than those who never used it.”

A study of physicians who specialize in endoscopy—using flexible probes to examine the inside of the body—found that before they started using AI they located precancerous intestinal lesions in 28.4 percent of colonoscopies. After they started using AI, and then had it taken away, they located lesions in only 22.4 percent of colonoscopies. Their detection skills had seriously declined.

Recently, I found myself driving across an infinity of freeways near Anaheim, California, with GPS leading me through a series of highway exits and entrances. I had the thought we’ve all had: I used to do this using maps! I’m as capable of doing that now as I am of walking across the Pacific Ocean. GPS merely shrivels some navigation skills; AI threatens to shrivel everything within those who let it.

The Reluctant Optimizers.

People with a medium need for cognition will understand that AI might hollow them out. That prospect will really bother them. They will resolve, earnestly and with good intentions, to not let themselves fall victim. But in the crowded and stressful rush of everyday life, they will get sucked in. Their resolve will fail and they’ll become overreliant on the bots.

AI is a seductive technology. The MIT Media Lab researchers found that when they asked people to use ChatGPT to write a succession of papers, they relied more and more on AI with each one. Before long, they were mostly cutting and

pasting. That’s not just because users got more fatigued as they worked. The technology subtly moved them from one mindset to another. Old-fashioned education institutions are built around a cultivation mentality: You work hard and suffer through some hard tasks, and you become a better thinker and a more knowledgeable person. Modern technology, by contrast, is built around an optimization mentality: You find a machine that makes everything easier, so that you accomplish things as efficiently as possible.

The whole tech industry is organized around optimization. In a 2013 interview with *The Guardian*, for example, Amit Singhal, Google’s head of search, declared, “We are maniacally focusing on the user to reduce every possible friction point between them, their thoughts, and the information they want to find.” People with a cultivation mindset seek friction; people with an optimization mindset want their life to be frictionless. Modern technology wants to turn you from a mental muscle builder into a mental couch potato.

If you’re going for optimization, you’re looking to maximize output, not excellence. In a survey conducted for the software firm GoTo, 43 percent of workers said they had submitted AI-generated content even though they suspected that it contained errors and was generally of low quality.

Pretty soon, people in this optimizer group are going to suffer from the same sort of hollowing-out process as the low-cognition folks. Curiosity will gradually decline. The MIT developmental psychologist Laura Schulz has found that if a teacher offers instruction on how to use an object, she is unintentionally limiting children’s curiosity about it. But if she deliberately restrains from offering instructions, they become more curious. AI is like the instruction-offering teacher.

General engagement with life will gradually decline. A research team led by Suqing Liu of Shanghai Tech University found that when they let people use AI and then asked them to do another task unaided by AI, the participants’ intrinsic motivation levels dropped by an average of 11 percent, and their sense of boredom increased by

20 percent. Engaging with AI made the first task seem more enjoyable, rendering ordinary work dull by comparison.

People in this group will also become less and less able to stand up to the bot. The technology is asking you to be a competent conversation partner with a highly intelligent but imperfect entity. But what if you’ve never done the work to form your own worldview or build your own knowledge base? You’re going to engage in what the experts call “cognitive surrender.” You’re going to believe everything the bot tells you, head off in whatever direction the bot suggests. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School programmed an AI to occasionally give wrong answers. The humans accepted its errors as true 80 percent of the time.

The core problem with optimization is that it will change people’s attitude toward effort itself. Chris Sibben is the head of school at Rivendell, a small private school in Northern Virginia. One day, he showed his students a film that took more than 200 artists more than five years to make. The students were baffled. Why do that? As one student put it, “AI could have done it in five minutes.”

Sibben discerned a stark cultural shift in that observation, which, in an essay for *Mere Orthodoxy*, he calls “the industrialization of detachment.” He argues that a student who has “wrestled with a hard text, revised an argument under pressure, and failed and tried again is more than informed. He is more solid.” As our friend Kierkegaard would have said, it is only by making passionate commitments that a person builds herself into a self.

What happens if she has never put in that work and has never become a self? Sibben argues that the comment “AI could have done it in five minutes” is not really about speed. “It is a moral revaluation. It assumes that what matters is the output, not the ordeal; the image, not the seeing; the product, not the person becoming capable of making it.” AI “offers competence without apprenticeship. Fluency without understanding,” he concludes. “A student who internalizes that pattern does not become lazier; he be-

comes less formed, less present, less able to bear the weight of difficulty without reaching for a prompt.”

The Mental Marathoners

Now we get to the high-need-for-cognition people and how they will fare in the coming age: kind of like marathoners, I suspect. The automobile is a perfectly good technology for traveling 26.2 miles. There is no practical reason that any person should train themselves to run that distance. But some people do. They want to put in the effort because they want to accomplish things—they want to expand their capacities.

High-need-for-cognition people are like this when it comes to thinking. You’re probably among them if you enjoy the following kind of situation: You’ve been working on a project for a while. You have no idea how you’re going to complete it. The deadline is looming and the anxiety is high. Yet you have utter confidence that you are going to figure this out. Intellectually, you know you have failed in the past and you may in fact fail this time. But simultaneously, you know deep in your bones that you will figure it out. You search and brainstorm and then, as if by magic, one day the answer pops into your mind, and at this point, the learning curve turns exponential. Some people hate the stress stirred up by that situation, but it’s what mental marathoners live for.

A team of scholars led by John Cacioppo of the University of Chicago reviewed more than 100 studies on people with a high need for cognition. They tend to have a lot of task-related thoughts. They engage in stimulating conversations. They tend to have a high need for closure and control. Once they arrive at a conclusion, it can be very hard to push them off of it, even as counterevidence builds.

In the age of AI, I suspect that the mental marathoners are going to work really hard to resist AI entropy. They are going to feel a strong desire to be original. In this age, cultural output will feel ever more familiar, as writing, songs, and movies become syntheses of what has already been produced. Marathoners are going to want to produce work, by contrast, that feels

personal, that reflects their unique self. They’re going to want to find ways to use AI to increase their agency, rather than diminish it. Already, techniques have been discovered to help people do that:

- Ask for hints, not answers: People who ask AI to directly answer their questions suffer severe declines in motivation and ability. But people who ask AI for background thinking or clarifications do not.

- Start with a blank page: Before you go to the bot, start with a blank piece of paper and write up your own analysis and conclusions. Then ask AI to challenge your thinking, not produce it.

- Rotate tasks: Every time you do a task with AI, follow it with a task that doesn’t involve AI. That will keep your creative-effort muscles alive.

- Redesign the bots: General chatbot use undermines learning. But as the writer Alberto Romero notes, AI tutors actually improve learning and motivation. That’s because although chatbots mostly answer questions, tutors lead students on structured learning journeys. It should be possible to redesign the normal bots so that they function less like encyclopedias and more like personal trainers whose jobs are designed to build mental muscles, rather than replace them.

- Make a sharp distinction between rote work and creative work: Let AI write functional emails. Don’t let it write your essays or your memos. Shame people who do.

- Ask for thinkers, not thinking: My favorite trick when using Claude is to never ask it to think through a problem for me. I ask it to summarize the thinkers who have already addressed a given problem. If I’m trying to understand child development, I ask it to imagine a debate between Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson. What would these two great psychologists say to each other about the problem I’m wrestling with? Then I ask it what books by these thinkers I should read if I want to understand their work. I get much better results from AI when I treat it as a brilliant librarian rather than as an oracle.

You may have noticed that the future I’m describing here is one of extreme

cognitive polarization. Some people will use AI to think more. Other people, maybe most people, will use AI to think less. If you thought that economic inequality or political polarization were bad, cognitive polarization will be truly terrible, dividing society into what might begin to look like two different species. The high-need-for-cognition people will get more and more productive, happier and happier; the rest will fall into a kind of mental underclass.

This future is not inevitable. So far, I’ve been treating the need for cognition as some sort of ingrained trait. But although willpower has some hereditary basis, it is also extremely sensitive to context. If AI has a tendency to undermine volition, humans can reform institutions to help build it up.

Right now, our education system is built around content and intelligence. In elementary school, it downloads content onto student brains. Then it uses high school to pick out smart people and segregate them off into elite colleges. In the age of AI, schools will have to shift their orientation to focus on volition. When we are surrounded by machines that know a lot about a lot of subjects, what really distinguishes people is their desire to work hard and put knowledge to creative effect. What really matters, therefore, is not brainpower but the willingness to run the mental marathons that produce high-quality results.

The crucial task before us is to cultivate people’s desire to seek out cognitive complexity. Not to go all Joseph Campbell on you, but the essential challenge is: How do we train people to see their life as a hero’s journey in which they take on difficult missions that they may fail at and that will certainly involve pain and suffering? How do we form people so they have an explorer’s heart, a willingness to endure, an ability to struggle on, even when their body and mind are telling them to give up, to reach new destinations and figure stuff out?

It seems to me that in the age of AI, every school and organization is going to have to find its own answers to these questions. They are going to spend a lot more time asking their

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charges: "What is it that you truly want most in the depth of your heart? What out there in the world is truly worth wanting? How do we cultivate your highest desires?" In our current culture, everybody tells you to find your passion, but nobody tells you how. Schools and organizations are going to have to teach that.

That's complicated, because we don't have direct control over our desires. You can't will yourself to be more curious any more than you can will yourself to like the taste of goose liver. But the good news is: We can indirectly influence our desires by putting ourselves in situations that either arouse or depress them.

Many of our schools do a decent job of crushing

students' desire for mental effort. Every minute that a kid sits bored in a classroom crushes their desire. Extrinsic rewards, such as grades, do so because extrinsic desires tend to crowd out intrinsic ones. Grade inflation crushes desire by making everything too easy. Many of our systems have been created by rationalists to focus on the declarative level of the mind, the part that learns facts and considers arguments; they are often oblivious to the damage they are doing in the dark forests, the deeper levels of the mind where motivations emerge.

Fortunately, schools and organizations can also inflame desire. The most straightforward theory of motivation is known as self-determination theory,

founded by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. People feel motivated when they are put in situations that give them autonomy (I'm in control of my choices), competence (I'm developing my skills), and relatedness (people here care about me). In my experience, motivation increases with admiration, such as when students are confronted with great people or great works of art. Motivation also increases with apprenticeships, such as when a mentor not only teaches a person how to engineer, but also how to be the kind of person who loves engineering.

My core belief about this whole age is that artificial intelligence will reveal what it means to be human by disclosing what AI can't do. Before AI, many people be-

lieved that reason and intelligence were the qualities that define humanity. They are what make us different from the animals. But soon there will be entities that are much smarter than us; so that can't be what defines humanity.

What AI can't do is hunger for things. Yes, a few reward-like mechanisms are in the thin layer of the models built through reinforcement learning, but the models are overwhelmingly about predicting, not desiring. AI can't hunger, in the first place, because it doesn't have biological needs—the needs that push living things to grow and explore. More important, AI doesn't have a self. A bot doesn't have a past person that it used to be or a future person that it wishes to become. A bot

does not have a structure of cares and an order of loves, as a person does. A bot doesn't have a personal history, a particular set of wounds, joys, and exhilarations experienced in regions deeper than rational calculation, and it doesn't have a succession of dreams and hopes, which emerge from those regions as well.

Despite what the rationalists used to tell us, life is not mostly about solving problems. Any computer can do that. Life is a pilgrimage, a journey—it's going somewhere, growing from experience, expanding yourself, reaching for some possibility that you do not yet possess. The defining human features therefore are propulsions—the drives that push us to take on mental effort and overcome dif-

ficulty—and aspirations: knowing where you want to go, what purpose you serve, what kind of person you'd like to be.

If we can help people learn to want more, hunger more, they'll be willing to undertake the mental effort to do hard things, and we'll avoid the cognitive polarization that is staring us in the face. If we can educate people to be clear and wholehearted about what they truly love, then AI will do the calculating and the synthesizing, but humans will still define what matters, what is worth exploring, what missions we go on, and where we end up. That would produce a bot-filled society in which human dignity is preserved, and perhaps even enhanced.

There's still time to save the West!

By Mathias Döpfner, businessman, author, art collector, and journalist. He is the CEO of media group Axel Springer S



When The Spectator asked me whether I would write an essay on 'Why we need to strengthen the West', I was delighted – and bemused.

Why is this even up for

debate? That we must explain and justify 'the West' at all indicates just how weak it has become. It would be better if it did not need strengthening at all but the truth is that the West has become an inviolid.

What exactly, though, needs to be strengthened? The West is an idea, not a

location. It is not a matter of geography, it is a way of life. The idea of the West rests on four pillars: Athens – where democracy was born. Rome – the cradle of the rule of law. Jerusalem – where Judeo-Christian values placed the inviolable dignity of the individual at the centre. And finally, the Enlightenment

– whose great thinkers in London, Paris and Königsberg anchored humanism, individual civil liberties, the separation of powers and the division of church and state.

Herodotus observed a phenomenon after the fall of the Peisistratid tyranny which remains the most vital lesson in political philosophy to this day. The Athenians, he noted, had fought no better than their neighbours as long as they were ruled by tyrants. Yet the moment they threw off the yoke of tyranny, every individual was motivated to give his utmost, proving decisively stronger and more successful in battle. Why? Because he was now working for himself, not for a master. In that single observation Herodotus formulated the timeless argument in favour of self-determination and liberty – the core idea of the West.

This idea also shapes a view of humanity articulated by Immanuel Kant. Man is not perfect. Kant famously wrote that 'out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made'. In the western mind, the implication is: nor should it ever be.

Freedom's most important word is 'no'. Dissent is self-determination. It is liberating to say: 'No, I see it differently.' With 'no', the freedom to think and

act begins. The freedom to say 'no' stands in stark contrast to the unfreedom of having to say 'yes'. Democracies are no-saying societies, while dictatorships are yes-saying. Liberty is inherently critical of authority: it permits and encourages contradiction – precisely that which autocrats cannot abide. That is why dictators wish to weaken the West. And it begins, as so often, with words.

The word 'West' has become suspect and has long been cancelled in politically correct circles. The mandated terms in geopolitical discourse are now the 'Global South' and the 'Global North'. For those using the phrase 'Global South', linking the West to colonial guilt is no accident – it is the very purpose of the narrative. UN Secretary-General António Guterres put it bluntly in 2020: 'The Global North, specifically my own continent of Europe, imposed colonial rule on much of the Global South for centuries, through violence and coercion.'

There are growing indications that China is actively fuelling AI-sceptical sentiment

across western social media

The goal is to weaken the idea of the West through the association with guilt. Yet this new terminology is intellectually absurd. It possesses neither moral nor geographical logic: what does China have in common with Peru, Qatar with Haiti or Thailand with Sierra Leone? Where is the common denominator regarding human rights and the rule of law?

As a community of ideas, however, vastly different nations such as Japan, Singapore, New Zealand, the United States or those of Europe can readily identify with the concept of the West.

Yet in academia, 'cancelling the West' has become mainstream. Entire movements ('epistemologies of the South', 'decolonising sociology') rest on the claim that academic sociology's focus on the modern 'West' is itself the problem. The West is asked with in its own universities to apologise for its mere existence.

That the West – an open society based on liberty, the rule of law and human rights – is on the defensive is simply a fact. According to data gathered over decades by the thinktank Freedom House,

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global freedom declined in 2025 for the 20th consecutive year – deteriorating in 54 countries while improving in only 35. The most damning finding is that a mere 21 per cent of the world's population currently lives in countries classified as 'free', compared with 46 per cent two decades ago. The number of countries designated as 'not free' has risen over the course of 20 years from 45 to 59, and autocracies have grown more numerous, more repressive at home and more aggressive abroad.

The West is currently threatened and weakened from both without and within. Its three great external adversaries are China, Russia and Islamism – particularly Iran and its terrorist networks. China, Russia and Islamist dictatorships share a common objective: to divide the West in order to weaken it.

China is now the world's second-largest economy. Its goal is to become the leading global economy by 2049 at the latest – the centenary of the People's Republic. The combination of communist autocracy and turbo-charged state capitalism has proved remarkably effective, not least because the West made itself a useful idiot in this story of growth. In hindsight, admitting China as a full member of the World Trade Organisation in December 2001 was the single greatest blunder of western trade policy. The naivety or short-sightedness lay in granting membership to a major non-democratic state that was neither able nor willing to abide by the rules of free trade – while simultaneously blessing it with developing-nation status, thereby conferring all manner of exemptions and preferences. It was akin to giving the most ruthless bully in the playground special rights to beat up his playmates. It had little to do with fair competition. China was thus able to exploit the principle of free trade to further its rise to global economic prominence. In 2001, China accounted for just 3.9 per cent of global GDP. Twenty years later, that figure was 18.3 per cent. Over the same period, the US share fell from 31.4 per cent to

24.2 per cent, and that of the EU from 21.9 per cent to 17.8 per cent.

The outcome of this experiment was predictable: in the short term, it brought growth and prosperity to all parties; in the long term, it shifted the global balance of power, creating perilous dependencies in America and Europe. The most tragic example is the German automotive industry. For decades Germany's industrial giants banked on cheap manufacturing and lucrative consumer markets in China. In doing so, they failed to grasp the difference between good business relations and strategic dependence. Friendly cooperation ended the moment China acquired the requisite know-how to launch a heavily subsidised assault on the German car industry, even as Chinese domestic markets were quietly closed off. A Chinese masterclass in expansive geopolitics carried out by capitalist means. Wandel durch Handel ('change through trade') – the naive hope of the 1990s – became distorted. Change occurred, but not towards greater freedom, rather towards greater unfreedom, to the detriment of the West.

This trajectory is now accelerated by the AI arms race between America and China. The US still holds the upper hand but China, through the surveillance of its population, enjoys vastly greater access to data, unencumbered as it is by regulatory or ethical constraints. Moreover, American platform operators report that China is actively fuelling AI-sceptical sentiment across western social media. Propaganda aimed at inducing anxiety and slowing down rivals is taking its toll. There are growing indications that America is becoming ever-more tech-sceptic and it is not impossible that the next presidential campaign will hinge partly on which party promises to better protect voters from AI. Beijing understands that whoever dominates artificial intelligence will dominate economically and politically. It seems only a matter of time before China leads in this area too.

While America has recognised this challenge and reacted with varying degrees of success, Europe

continues to deny the bitter reality. Beneath the soothing bromides of the EU, the continent is gradually drifting towards becoming an amusement park for Asian tourists, offering high quality of life paired with diminishing productivity and value creation.

The global trend is clear. Democratic economies are becoming weaker, non-democratic ones stronger. In this significant shift, the implications for military power are routinely underestimated. China is still viewed by many as a militarily passive, purely economic power. That picture is false.

The Chinese military budget doubled from \$145 billion in 2015 to \$281 billion in 2026 – fuelled by its economic growth. The ultimate test case will be Taiwan. Annexing this democratic, western-leaning island nation and integrating it into a monolithic communist republic is one of Xi Jinping's central missions. China will strike as soon as the odds are high enough that America lacks the strength to intervene – perhaps because western resources have been depleted across the theatres of conflict in Ukraine and the Middle East. Should China achieve its objective without effective western resistance, the global order will be fundamentally altered.

The woke movement has become the Trojan horse of the anti-westernism loved by dictators and autocrats

Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine plays a remarkably helpful role in this strategy. Even if the war is far from a military success for Putin, he has achieved two vital objectives: dividing the West by driving the US and the EU further apart and exhausting American and European military stockpiles. Yet this war of aggression could have been the West's finest hour. Putin underestimated Ukrainian resilience; had Nato members and the Ramstein Coalition seized the

momentum of those early weeks to provide Ukraine with every conceivable resource to fight back, the domestic political pressure on Putin would have grown so immense that he could have been forced to order a swift retreat under flimsy propaganda pretences. Instead, the West remained half-hearted, allowed itself to be intimidated by flawed escalation scenarios and did too little. Putin – ever the student of western weakness – tested how far he could go, and went remarkably far. Now that Ukraine has proved to be the master of modern AI warfare, Putin is turning to a weaker target in the form of hybrid warfare against Germany and other EU nations which promise less resistance and greater prestige at home.

Putin finds ready allies in Iran and other Islamist-dominated regimes. Islamism hijacks religion for terrorist ends. The primary enemy of fanatical Islam is the world of those they deem godless – the Judeo-Christian West. Article 7 of the founding Hamas Charter of 1988 explicitly states: 'The Day of Judgement will not come about until Moslems fight the Jews, when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees. The stones and trees will say O Moslems, O Abdulla, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him.' The destruction of Israel and all Jews is merely the first step. The next is the weakening, infiltration and violent re-education of Europe, and ultimately America. The very same article of the charter notes: 'Since Moslems who adopt the ways of the Islamic Resistance Movement are spread all over the world... the Movement is a universal one.' Meeting the Islamist threat with a policy of appeasement is like feeding a crocodile in the hope that it eats you last.

It remains difficult to fathom that the genocidal attack on Israel by Hamas led not to a global wave of solidarity with Israel, but to a massive surge in anti-Semitism. The weakest justification is the claim that Israel's retaliatory measures in Gaza after 7 October exceeded all bounds, or that its domestic and foreign policy are deeply questionable. Has

the Israeli government made mistakes? Undoubtedly. Is that a reason to be anti-Semitic, transferring criticism of Israel onto all Jews? Absolutely not. Yet the trend persists. Anti-Semitism has become a pop-cultural zeitgeist, particularly among the young. Germany, of all nations, recorded 8,725 anti-Semitic incidents in 2025 – the highest figure among the seven countries examined by the 2026 Annual Report on Antisemitism, ahead of the US (6,274) and the UK (3,700). The trajectory is the key: from 2021 to 2025, incidents rose by 124 per cent in France, 131 per cent in the US, and 215 per cent in Germany.

The primary cause of this development is a reckless, runaway migration policy. Islamist milieus – including strategically placed jihadists – have spent years undermining western societies and their foundational values. Pointing this out is not Islamophobic. True Islamophobia lies in failing to distinguish between those who wish to integrate peacefully into western societies and those who enter to abuse its systems and destroy its values. Under the guise of compassion and humanitarian relief, uncontrolled and frequently illegal immigration contributes not only to the West's cultural self-abandonment, but fuels – by way of reaction – the rise of right- and left-wing populism and extremism.

Is its current crisis the very medicine required for the West's renewal? That is the best-case scenario

Michel Houellebecq provided the dystopian vision for this in his 2015 novel *Submission*. He describes a France where the Muslim Brotherhood has taken power: a frightened country where women wear progressively longer dresses and unsuccessful white men rejoice at enjoying multiple marriages with underage wives without interference and where news of Islamist terror attacks is eventually suppressed so as not to alarm

the populace. The book depicts the exhaustion of western society. Reality appears to be mimicking fiction in the most gruesome fashion.

The woke movement has become the Trojan horse of this anti-westernism. It is the epitome of the anti-freedom triangle, seamlessly intertwining anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism and anti-capitalism. It has brought about the inversion of western values with remarkable dexterity. Its stated goals bear the hallmark of good intentions: fighting racism, protecting sexual minorities, fighting climate change, questioning privilege and confronting colonial history. Its methods, however, are overwhelmingly authoritarian. Its self-loathing cultural relativism is toxic. The result is the inversion of almost every core value and objective of civilisation.

In the competition for victimhood status, the concepts of progress, competition, growth and prosperity have been eroded. In the West, being successful was once better than being unsuccessful. Wealth was better than poverty. Beauty was better than ugliness. Under woke ideology, all of this is reversed. It resembles a manual for western self-abolition, born out of the self-hatred of the privileged.

Even among America's 'Democratic Socialists' – an offshoot of the woke movement – the strongest support does not come from the needy, the impoverished, or genuine victims. Its most passionate advocates are to be found among the daughters of the upper classes.

Is the West, rendered comfortable and tired, ultimately weakening itself out of a bad conscience? Will we realise what we stood to lose only once it is too late? Or is the crisis the West currently finds itself in the very stimulus required for its renewal? That would be the best-case scenario: that just in time we finally grasp what is at stake and realise that the alternatives are far worse. Why do we need to strengthen the West? Because otherwise, the tyrants win.

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Will Cuba be reborn as a Caribbean Las Vegas?

By Ian Thompson, Author and contributor to The Spectator Magazine



View of Havana, Cuba

Six decades on from Castro's revolution, all talk is now of the Yanqui dollar and how to acquire it

Cuba's revolutionary spirit is giving out. Donald Trump has called on Cubans to 'make a deal before it's too late' and has threatened military action. More than six decades on from the revolución of 1959, all talk is of the Yanqui dollar and how to acquire it. The scramble for greenbacks has fed into Cuba's sex industry. In the dollar-happy resort of Varadero, the locals suffer police surveillance and the indignity of rationed food while prostitutes as young as 15 hover outside the motels.

Yet for all the hardship and belt-tightening, Cuba commands sympathy from the international left as a last bastion of communism. In his left-leaning Cuba: A New History (2004), the British journalist Richard Gott argued that the island was unlikely to return to the capitalist Babylon it had been under President Batista, Fidel Castro's predecessor, as Cubans were immunised against the seductions of the market. Time will tell. Gott resigned from the Guardian in 1994 after he was exposed as a

KGB agent of influence.

Havana has long been a favourite with fashion photographers and journalists, drawn to the picturesque decay of collapsing seafront promenades and salt-eaten arcades. The prevalence of big, finny American automobiles awed the BBC culture correspondent Stephen Smith who, 30 years ago, bumped round the island in the back of a 1950 Dodge. Smith's homage to Cuba, *Land of Miracles* (1997), was a semi-humorous evocation of life on the beautiful, bedevilled island. The bicycle-riding Dervla Murphy, confessedly a staunch Castroist, published her naively adoring account of Cuba, *The Island that Dared*, in 2008.

One of the difficulties of writing a travel book about Cuba is that it is hardly possible to travel around the island. Public transport is a dead loss. Cuba is no longer much of a Caribbean holiday destination. However, J.S. Tennant's terrier-like determination to explore out-of-the-way places there elevates him above the scoundrel category of travel writer. Mrs Gargantua, his first book, is scarcely conventional travel. It takes its title from the celebrity circus gorilla that a US heiress raised on her

estate in Cuba in the early 1930s. In pages of finely crafted prose, Tennant describes Guantanamo city in southeastern Cuba, near where the Americans have a detention facility as well as a military base, complete with a drive-in movie theatre and a KFC. He visits the Bay of Pigs, where, in 1961, CIA-trained Cuban exiles attempted the disastrous invasion that led Castro to align himself with the Soviet Union. (The 1959 overthrow of Batista was not socialist in origin but, Tennant reminds us, nationalist-patriotic.)

Tennant has been visiting Cuba since 2010. In that time he has got to know the regime's dreary 'prating' on the glories of the revolution and crude sloganeering against Uncle Sam. America's trade embargo – in force since 1962 – has battered the island's economy. Castro, who died in 2016, was a father figure to many Cubans, but his younger brother Raúl, who took over as president in 2008, is now an old greybeard who has been put out to pasture after ten years in post. With no communist allies anywhere in the world to save Cuba from ruination, the island's return to the US sphere is perhaps inevitable. It could be reborn as a Caribbean colony of Las

Vegas, with Havana once more the louche gambling hole and fleshpot it had been under Batista. (All this was foretold, incidentally, in Martin Cruz Smith's superlative 1999 thriller *Havana Bay*, which imagines a hoodlum conspiracy to turn Cuba's capital into a playground for American pleasure-seekers.)

Fidel's macho vanity (Tennant refers to his 'pharaonic gigantomania') went hand-in-hand with his persecution of homosexuals, hippies, Catholic priests and other perceived state enemies. But, like Harold Pinter and others before him, Tennant finds it hard to quibble with the improvements he and his disciples made in health and literacy. Under Batista, almost half of Cuba's rural population was illiterate; now only two per cent of Cuban adults are unable to read and write. Unquestionably there are things to admire in the country's post-Batista revolutionary doctrine.

Batista was Castro's *bête noire*. For a quarter of a century this pro-US president pandered to Lucky Luciano and other Italo-American mobsters who submerged rivals in wet concrete even as they held court in Havana's plushly upholstered Hotel Nacional. Castro's left-hand man, the Argentine-born medical doctor Ernesto Guevara, sought to obliterate all trace of the Batista regime. He set up labour camps in Havana and supervised an estimated 550 executions. Fidelistas nicknamed him 'Che' – 'mate' – after his comradely leadership. Che's Marxist-Leninist dream of social equality is almost meaningless today.

Che Guevara's biographer Jon Lee Anderson (who provides a blurb for Mrs Gargantua) proved conclusively that it was Castro who sent Che to Bolivia in the spring of 1966 in order to champion revolutionary causes beyond the Caribbean. The decision led to Che's death at the age of 39, during a half-baked guerrilla insurrection. Gott was the first foreign reporter to see the revolutionary's bullet-punctured body laid out for inspection in a remote Bolivian schoolroom in 1967. All that remained of Che after a couple of days, Tennant tells us, were his severed hands, which had been pre-

served in formaldehyde for fingerprint identification in Havana. Were he alive today, he would be 98.

Tennant has no thesis to prove about Cuba; plain curiosity motivates his interest. In one brilliant chapter, 'Chronicles, Corsairs and Clerics', he considers the life of the Cuba-based Spanish missionary Bartolomé de las Casas, who condemned the enslavement of indigenous Indians in the Americas with such vehemence that by the year 1542 he had achieved its abolition. Cuba's Taino-Arawak population had been almost obliterated by the slave-driving Spanish, who used Havana as a provisioning port for their conquest of the New World. In a bid to protect Cuba's pre-Hispanic peoples, Las Casas recommended the importation of captive Africans. To this odd twist of philanthropy we owe the arrival in Cuba of a total of 780,000 Africans and the beginning of all subsequent sorrows in the sugar-rich Caribbean.

Havana might once again become the louche gambling hole and fleshpot it had been under Batista

An erudite writer, Tennant devotes several pages to the Genoese navigator Christopher Columbus, whose search for gold in Cuban waters inevitably involved him in slavery. Tennant's interest is piqued, too, by the Cuban animist cult of Santería, which involves spirit-possession and offerings of sacrificial cockerels' blood. Castro's crackdown on religion has not prevented Cubans from practising this variant of Haitian Vodou (or voodoo, to use the non-PC term): Santería is inseparable from Cuba's Afro-Hispanic identity.

From start to finish I was absorbed by this shiningly intelligent and original amalgam of history and travel. Cuba might be 'on the skids', as the author puts it, but the island presents a unique case of survival against the odds. Mrs Gargantua is the best book you are likely to read on Cuba for ages.

Ada Ferrer, the Pulitzer-

er-winning Cuban-American historian, abandoned the island with her mother in 1963, a year after the Cuban Missile Crisis. She now lives in the New York area. In her affecting memoir, *Keeper of My Kin*, Ferrer tells how her mother Adelaida made the painful decision to leave behind her son, nine-year-old Poly. Having settled in Miami, Adelaida got a job as a factory seamstress and mingled with stridently anti-communist fellow Cuban refugees. Two decades later, in 1980, Poly made his way to the US in a Castro-sanctioned mass exodus of 125,000 Cubans, only to develop schizophrenia. In his mental disarray, Poly had many run-ins with the law in the US and was eventually charged with attempted murder. Ferrer went back to Cuba for the first time in 1990, where she immersed herself in the state archives and scrutinised her family history for signs of emotional instability.

I visited three years later, in the winter of 1993, when the Soviet market for Castro's sugar had dried up and despair hung over the island. On the return flight I sat next to Arthur Scargill's wife, Anne, who was reading a copy of the Cuban Communist party daily *Granma* (named after the cabin cruiser that ferried Fidel and Che from Mexico to begin their uprising in 1956.) She was part of a contingent of British miners' wives who had gone to donate obsolete coalfield equipment – earmuffs, hard hats – to Cuba's ailing copper industry.

Trump himself has little interest in the country's mining and oil reserves (which pale beside those of Venezuela), but golf tourism and the hospitality industry are another matter. 'I do believe I'll be having the honour of taking Cuba,' Trump said recently, apparently meaning it. ¡Viva Cuba! El Trumpo is coming!

Continued on page 24



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DOG OF THE MONTH



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Bambu is a beautiful, medium-sized mixed breed dog. He arrived at the Centre very scared, trembling if anyone got near him. He is slowly improving but he would really benefit from one on one contact, so that he can regain his

confidence with humans and find someone to trust. He is very noble and only 5 years old, and we believe that with some time and patience Bambu will make a lovely life companion or family pet.

If you would like to

meet Bambu, please contact the Tierra Blanca Refuge, located near the Fasnía turn off from the TF1, just above the motorway. Call 606 500 171 or email cpa.tierrablanca@tragsa.es. For English, call Rachel on 629 031 273.

Contact Rachel on 629 031 273 or cpa.tierrablanca@tragsa.es for more information

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO PLAY PIANO!

A Tenerife piano teacher has created an engaging children's piano book designed for young beginners. This delightful course not only makes learning easy and fun for kids but also encourages parents to join in on the musical journey!

The "Learn piano with Magical Middle C" book is beautifully illustrated, packed full of easy, popular songs and has fun games and activities which students can play with parents/teachers and friends. The songs in the book use a simple, easy to use colour-coded keyboard chart which corresponds to the keys on the student's piano or keyboard. The book is suitable for ages 3 to 9 and has been written by Louise Attaway, a piano teacher based in the south of Tenerife.

Louise has been teaching piano on the island to children and adults for over 15 years and also teaches singing and music theory.

The price for the Learn piano with Magical Middle C book is €16.00. If you would like to buy a copy, pop in to Las Chafiras Book Shop, 5 Calle Luciano Bello Alfonso, Las Chafiras (call 609 714 276 to check opening times), or call Louise on 686 014 355 to reserve your copy.

MOTORWORLD

Tenerife's Offices of Authority: Who Does What on the Island?

Life in Tenerife is shaped by many different institutions and public offices that help manage everything from local streets and schools to transport, healthcare, tourism, and regional law. For residents and newcomers alike, understanding how authority is organised on the island can make everyday life much easier.

Tenerife, the largest of the Canary Islands, operates under several layers of administration. Some powers belong to local town halls, others to island-wide institutions, and many are shared with the regional government of the Canary Islands and the national government of Spain.

Town Halls: The Closest Authority to Residents

The most familiar public authority for many people is the local town hall, known in Spanish as the Ayuntamiento. Every municipality in Tenerife has its own town hall responsible for local services and community administration. Major municipalities include Santa Cruz de Tenerife, La Laguna, Arona, and Adeje.

Town halls oversee matters such as:

- Street maintenance and public

lighting

- Waste collection and recycling
- Local police services
- Building permits and urban planning
- Cultural activities and community events
- Public parks and sports facilities

Residents often visit their local town hall to register documents, residency certificates, tax questions, and licence applications. Most offices do have English-speaking staff but they are NOT OBLIGED to speak in English so always be prepared.

The Cabildo of Tenerife: Island-Wide Government

Above the municipalities sits the Cabildo de Tenerife, the island's principal governing body.

The Cabildo coordinates services that affect the whole island, including:

- Major roads and transport infrastructure
- Environmental protection
- Water management
- Island tourism strategy
- Museums and heritage sites
- Emergency coordination

This institution plays a particularly important role because Ten-

erife's economy depends heavily on tourism, environmental conservation, and transport connections between the north and south of the island. The Main Cabildo Offices are located in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, which also serves as one of the capitals of the Canary Islands. There are however sub-offices in other places such as Los Cristianos, La Orotava and Guimar.

The Canary Islands Government

Many important decisions affecting Tenerife are made by the regional government of the Canary Islands, officially known as the Government of the Canary Islands. This regional authority manages areas such as:

- Public healthcare
- Education
- Regional transport
- Employment services
- Housing policy
- Environmental regulations

Hospitals, public schools, and many social services on the island operate under this regional administration. The Canary Islands have a special autonomous status within Spain, giving the region greater control over local affairs, more

than ordinary provinces.

National Government Offices in Tenerife

Spain's national government also maintains offices on the island. These represent Madrid's authority in matters that remain under national control. These offices include:

- National Police stations
- Immigration and foreign residency offices
- Tax administration agencies
- Social Security offices
- Courts and judicial services
- Port and airport authorities

For foreign residents and visitors, these offices are often one of the first points of contact for visas, residency permits, and legal documentation.

LEGAL JURISDICTION

Tenerife has a broad legal and judicial structure that operates independently from political administration, and can appear very complex to an individual. Courts across the island deal with:

- Civil disputes
 - Criminal cases
 - Labour issues
 - Family law
 - Administrative appeals
- The judiciary ensures that local,

regional, and national laws are applied fairly across the island.

Security and Emergency Services

Several branches of authority are responsible for public safety in Tenerife. These include:

- Local Police (Policía Local) under municipal control
- National Police (Policía Nacional) under the Spanish government
- Civil Guard (Guardia Civil), particularly active in rural areas and traffic control
- Fire and rescue services co-ordinated through municipalities and the Cabildo

Emergency coordination is especially important during wildfire season and periods of heavy tourism activity.

Tourism Authorities and Visitor Management

As one of Europe's most visited island destinations, Tenerife also has specialised tourism authorities. These bodies help regulate:

- Tourist information services
- Hotel and accommodation standards
- Promotional campaigns abroad
- Sustainable tourism initiatives
- Cruise and excursion manage-

ment

Tourism governance has become increasingly important as the island balances economic growth with environmental concerns and local quality of life.

A Complex but Connected System

Although Tenerife's system of authority may appear complicated at first, each level serves a distinct purpose. Municipalities focus on neighbourhood needs, the Cabildo manages island-wide issues, the Canary Islands government oversees regional services, and Spain's national government handles state responsibilities.

Together, these institutions form the administrative structure that keeps daily life functioning across the island — from maintaining roads and schools to protecting natural spaces and supporting the tourism industry that remains central to Tenerife's economy.

TENERIFE PROPERTY SNAPSHOT

TENERIFE PROPERTY
SNAPSHOT – AUGUST
26

South Tenerife Property Market Snapshot: July 2026

Property prices across the south are up somewhere between 2% and 4% over the last twelve months, comparing July 2025 to July 2026. That's a proper slowdown from where we've been, and depending who you ask, "cooling" might be generous.

Month-to-month, June to July, the picture flips. Every area fell in ask-

ing prices, with Los Cristianos taking the biggest hit, down close to 1%. Nothing dramatic, but worth noting when sellers ask why buyers are pushing back a bit harder on price right now.

What's available right now

There are just over 9,500 properties for sale across Tenerife in this snapshot.

Arona has 1,891 of those, with an average asking price of 4.447€ per m². Within Arona, Los Cristianos accounts for 588 properties, aver-

aging 5.053€ per m².

Adeje has 2,247 properties on the market, averaging 5.150€ per m². The Adeje side of Las Américas makes up 329 of those, with an average asking price of 6.947€ per m².

Costa Adeje has 1,425 properties for sale, with an average asking price of 5.636€ per m².

Remember, these are asking prices, not what properties actually sell for. There's a real spread here too. Arona overall sits well under 4.500€ per m², while Las Américas is pushing close to 7.000€. If you're working

to a budget, where you look matters as much as what you're looking for.

I put this snapshot together every month. If you want access to the full data, downloadable buying and selling guides, and a lot more besides, head over to contactsimon.com.

Simon

YEAR on YEAR CHANGE € per M2 TENERIFE

AREA	July 2025	July 2026	% Change
Arona - Area	3.957€	4.038€	+2,0%
Los Cristianos	4.602€	4.784€	+4,0%
Adeje - Area	4.598 €	4.756€	+3,4%
Costa Adeje	5.135€	5.309€	+3,4%



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MONTH on MONTH CHANGE € per M2 TENERIFE

AREA	June 2026	July 2026	% Change
Arona - Area	4.051€	4.038€	-0,3%
Los Cristianos	4.826€	4.784€	-0,9%
Adeje - Area	4.770€	4.756€	-0,3%
Costa Adeje	5.350€	5.309€	-0,8%

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Market Snapshot July 2026 ARONA - AREA

Nº of Properties for Sale in TENERIFE	9.503
Nº of Properties for Sale in ARONA	1.891
Average Asking Price Per M2 ARONA	4.447€

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Market Snapshot July 2026 LOS CRISTIANOS

Nº of Properties for Sale in ARONA	1,891
Nº of Properties for Sale in LOS CRISTIANOS	588
Average Asking Price Per M2 LOS CRISTIANOS	5,053€

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Market Snapshot July 2026 ADEJE - AREA

Nº of Properties for Sale in TENERIFE	9,503
Nº of Properties for Sale in ADEJE	2,247
Average Asking Price Per M2 ADEJE	5,150€

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Market Snapshot July 2026 LAS AMÉRICAS

Nº of Properties for Sale in ADEJE	2,247
Nº of Properties for Sale in LAS AMÉRICAS	329
Average Asking Price Per M2 LAS AMÉRICAS	6.947€

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Market Snapshot July 2026 COSTA ADEJE

Nº of Properties for Sale in ADEJE	2,247
Nº of Properties for Sale in COSTA ADEJE	1.425
Average Asking Price Per M2 COSTA ADEJE	5,636€

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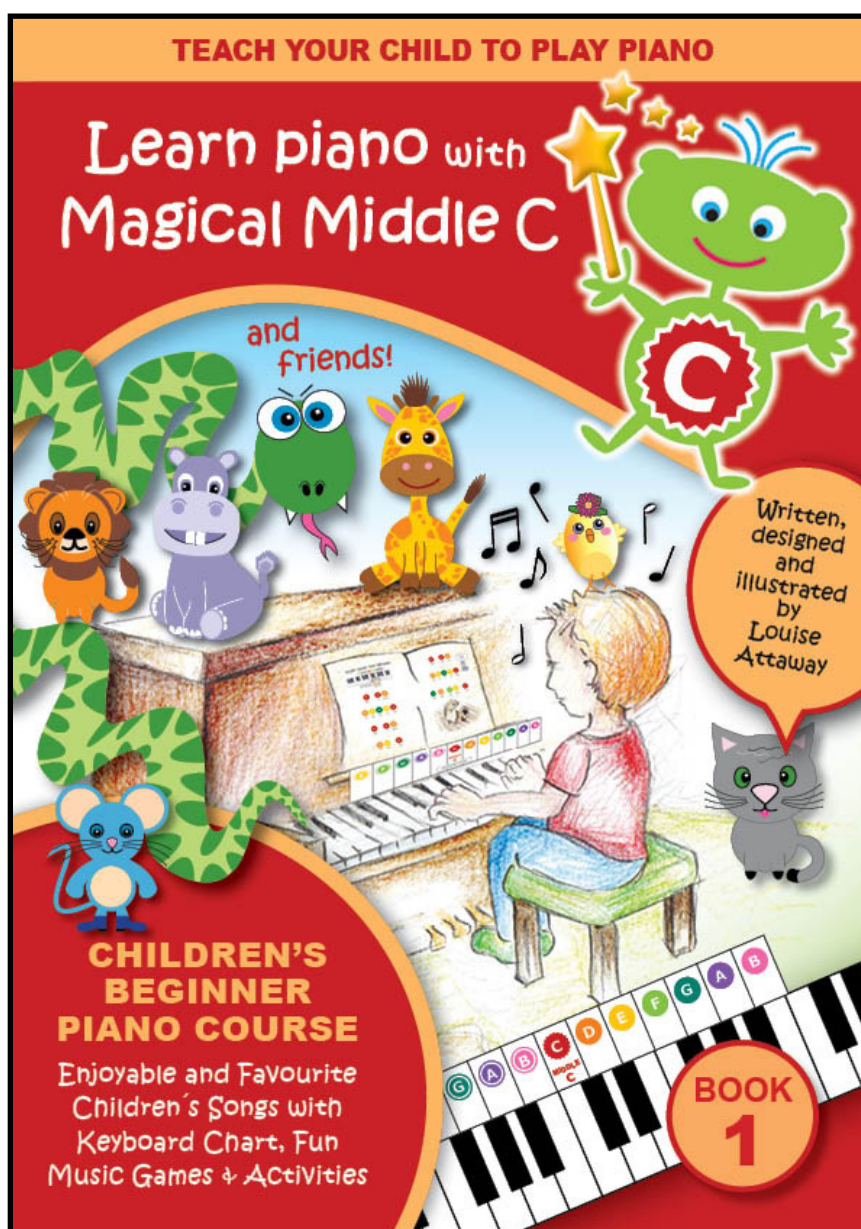


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OVER €350,000

Las Chafiras, Commercial Property

€750,000

FRINA Tenerife is offering this Large commercial property for sale in Las Chafiras, in one of the island's biggest commercial areas. Las Chafiras is centrally located close to the Tenerife southern airport, and the tourist areas. The property is empty at the moment, but it has before been used as a successful retail store. The premises of this ... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2524 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Palm Mar, Bar/Restaurant

€700,000

Clear Blue Skies Group SL is delighted to offer for sale these wonderful front line business premises, in the desirable coastal town of Palm-Mar in the south of Tenerife. Palm-Mar is a popular town in a bay adjacent to Los Cristianos, but separated by not only by rock but also by culture. Compared to the more robust neighbouring resorts of Los Cristianos... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 8302 | Clear Blue Skies SL | 922 714 772**

San Eugenio Bajo, Commercial Property

€625,000

FRINA Tenerife offers a commercial

Investment property for sale in Tenerife in San Eugenio. Today the property is rented out to a popular restaurant which owners pay a monthly rent of 5,000€. The premises was built in 1985 and measures 76m2 inside and with a terrace of 40m2. For more details on this investment do not hesitate to contact FRINA Ten... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2491 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Empty Local

€500,000

FRINA Tenerife now offers This rare chance to buy a truly prime location investment freehold. This investment freehold is on a busy street in the El Camison area of Los Cristianos. The freehold is rented out with good tenants as a restaurant and is truly a prime location. The premises, which were completely refurbished in 2010, measure 79 m2 and are s... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2530 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Las Rosas, Restaurant

€495,000

6 bed · A reluctant sale due to the current owners retirement and 'down-sizing'. An extensive (150m2) fully fitted and equipped freehold restaurant with professional stainless steel kitchen with extraction, stage area, bar and toilets. Situated on the lower level of a spacious townhouse which offers flexible living accommodation

with potential for a number of pro... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 6090 | Tenerife Royale Estate Agents SL | 922 788305**

El Medano, Commercial Property

€475,000

Clear Blue Skies Group SL is very pleased to offer for sale this spacious commercial premises situated in an incredible central location in the vibrant town of El Médano. El Médano is located a few kilometres north of the Tenerife South airport and is recognised as Tenerife's water sports epicentre, as it is the perfect spot for kite boarding and surfing... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 8379 | Clear Blue Skies SL | 922 714 772**

Playa de la Arena, Empty Local

€395,000

FRINA Tenerife is now offering this. Empty freehold local, on the first line in Playa La Arena. The local is empty but has been used as a bar. So, it has disabled toilets, men, and women's toilets. The local needs a full refurb before its ready to open This local would be perfect if you are looking to build your own bar & café, or a restaurant, The pro... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2528 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Tenerife South, Manufacturing business

€390,000

FRINA Tenerife offers here a unique opportunity to take over this Jewellery Manufacturer & Supplier business that designs, produces and sells high-quality jewellery to both B2B and B2C customers. Under one SL company are different brands of jewellery and you will find designs for both men and women. All collections are made of carefully selected m... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2410 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Pizzeria

€380,000

FRINA Tenerife brings to the market this Italian Restaurant Pizzeria in Los Cristianos. It is a well known business located in El Camison, a central area close to the beach full of both residents and tourists. The Restaurant Pizzeria has an high and demonstrable monthly turnover, it has a very rich menu with traditional italian dishes and a good choice o... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2576 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Puerto Colon, Sports Bar

€350,000

FRINA Tenerife offers for sale this Freehold Sports Bar in Puerto Colon. It is in a famous commercial centre visited by a lot of tourists and many locals. It's live Entertainment and great atmosphere attract people of different nationalities and ages to come and enjoy a fun night of Karaoke, live music, Sports and tasty food. This place always has some... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2591 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

€349,999 - €250,000

Golf del Sur, Investment Property

€329,175

1 bed · air conditioning, modern. **Ref: VS5424D | Vym Canarias | 922 787 210**

San Eugenio Bajo, Bar/Cafe

€325,000

FRINA Tenerife is happy to offer a Modern and Stunning Cafeteria-Bar for Sale in San Eugenio Bajo. If you are looking for picture-perfect premises in a busy location, you cannot miss this stunning opportunity! The premises are 150m2 with an open kitchen and a terrace of 30m2. Altogether are tables for 90 guests. The premises were fully renovated in 20... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2489 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Freehold Pub

€320,000

FRINA Tenerife is happy to offer this long-established and very popular Freehold Pub for Sale in Los Cristianos. This business had the same owner for many years and is known for its lovely atmosphere and food, so no doubt you will have guests from day 1. Note the owners wish to keep the sale very discreet, hence we can only provide limited details here... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2422 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Olivos, Empty Local

€280,000

2 bed · 2 bed, 5 bath commercial, local for sale. **Ref: IPPDOAL01 | Island Prime Property | +34 922 09 69 75**

Playa San Juan, Restaurant

€250,000

This modern Restaurant for Sale in Playa San Juan is located centrally on the main street. It is known for its international menu offering brunch, burgers, and Spanish specialties. This business has fast become one of the most visited restaurants in

the area and the guests just keep coming back to enjoy the menu, lovely style, and amazing atmosphere. ... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2504 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

San Eugenio Bajo, Bar/Cafe

€250,000

FRINA Tenerife offers this famous Tenerife café for sale. The café is in San Eugenio and is known for its international menu and live music. It has been open for years and has a good reputation among residents, tourists, and on social media. And whether you are looking for an investment or a well-established business to run yourself, you cannot miss th... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2505 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Puerto Colon, Excursion Business

€250,000

FRINA Tenerife is excited to offer this Unique Diving Business for Sale in Puerto Colon. If you dream about a great water sport business on the island of external spring, you cannot miss this! It has been established for many years and has no direct competition. The diving experience is offered on underwater scooters making it possible for everyone to par... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2409 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Las Americas, Restaurant

€250,000

FRINA Tenerife offers for sale this Large Front-Line Restaurant in Las Americas facing the beach promenade which is always busy and offers a lovely view. Moreover, the restaurant is located on a corner, so you have even more people passing and a large terrace! If you are looking for that amazing location to open a large restaurant or lounge bar you... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2459 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

€249,999 - €150,000

Costa del Silencio, Bar/Cafe

€230,000

FRINA Tenerife is now offering this Belgian Bar/cafe for sale. Located in the Tenbel commercial centre. Tenbel is a well-known centre and attracts both tourists and residents. This bar is well-known with the Belgian residents on the island. also, this bar offers a wide range of Belgian beers. The premises are 100m2 of interior space with a 15m2 kitc... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2538 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Golf del Sur, Commercial Property

€220,000

FRINA Tenerife is now offering this investment property for sale, in Golf del Sur. This property has an established business and good tenants The premises of this freehold is a 66m2 interior and a terrace of 40 m2. If you wish to know more about this commercial property investment contact FRINA Tenerife. Para información en español llámenos: +34 ... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2523 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Gigantes, Freehold Property

€219,000

Clear Blue Skies Group SL are delighted to offer this freehold business premises to the open market, located in Los Gigantes on the sunny west coast of Tenerife. Los Gigantes is the biggest resort town on the west coast of Tenerife, situated just along the coast from the delightful towns of Puerto

Santiago and Playa de la Arena. Los Gigantes is named aft... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 8344 | Clear Blue Skies SL | 922 714 772**

Torviscas Bajo, Bar/Cafe

€210,000

FRINA Tenerife this Busy Cocktail Bar For Sale in Torviscas Bajo, which is known as one of the best cocktail bars in the area and has excellent reviews on TripAdvisor, Facebook and other social media. It has been established for years and you will take over a genuinely successful business. Moreover, the owner only works limited hours hence, this is a g... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2567 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

La Caleta, Italian Restaurant

€190,000

A new business for sale is this Italian Food & Wine Restaurant in La Caleta. The business is known for a delicious Italian menu with pizzas, fresh shellfish, homemade desserts, and quality wines. This cozy restaurant is a must-see if you are looking for a wine-bar and restaurant with an ambitious menu. The premises are spacious 150 m2 with a large a... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2403 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Bar/Restaurant

€190,000

FRINA Tenerife now offers this Famous and Successful Asian Restaurant for Sale. This restaurant is located centrally in Los Cristianos and is very busy. An amazing reputation secures many gusts every day and evening both new and returning. If you are looking for a successful business with a good and steady income you cannot miss this! The premises ... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2542 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

San Eugenio Alto, Pool Bar

€175,000

FRINA Tenerife presents this new Freehold opportunity Poolbar in San Eugenio Alto. A perfect located Freehold Poolbar inside a complex which is approximately a twenty minutes driving from Reina Sofia airport in the south. Almost opposite the resort there is Aqualand, a water park more suited to younger family members. The Freehold Poolbar is nearby att... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2603 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Bar/Cafe

€170,000

FRINA Tenerife now offers this Sea View Bar for sale in Los Cristianos, it is a unique and perfect option for the demanding buyer! You find this Sea View Bar in San Telmo which is busy all year and both days and nights. The current owner has designed the Sea View Bar and decorated it to perfection. Furthermore, the bar overlooks the large a busy Playa ... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2584 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**

Los Cristianos, Bar/Cafe

€169,000

FRINA Tenerife now offers this Well-Known British bar Los Cristianos. It is known for its high-quality food and entertainment. The bar is located in a busy area that attracts many tourists and residents. This bar has been for almost 10 years and has a great reputation and a high income. So if you are looking for a bar in Los Cristianos you can't miss this... For full information see website or contact: **Ref: 2550 | FRINA Tenerife SL - Business Sales | 922 085 191**



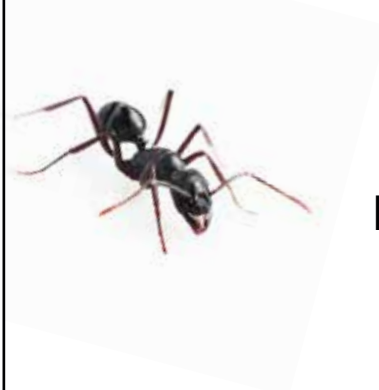
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EL PARADERO 1, BLOQUE 7, COSTA ADEJE

FRINA Tenerife

COMMERCIALS: www.tenerifebusinessforsale.com

Sports Bar in Los Cristianos



An established, fully staffed sports bar with indoor/outdoor seating and steady footfall in central Los Cristianos, operating smoothly as a streamlined, beverage-only business ready for immediate takeover. **Monthly rent: 1.650€**

Ref.: 3004

Price: 80.000€

Charming B&B for Sale



Reduced

A beautiful 2-storey property that offers 440 m² of interior space and 600 m² outdoors, featuring a 53 m² swimming pool and a charming garden, 11 guest rooms, common areas, and a private owner's apartment. **Monthly rent: 2.575€**

Ref.: 2969

Price: 195.000€

Jet Ski Business



Reduced

Closed in Las Galletas, offered as a strategic package including 3 Yamaha 1300 Jetskis, hard-to-main-tain operating licence, dedicated harbour spot, all inventory, equipment and training. Monthly rent: 898€

Ref.: 2945

Price: 49.000€

Large Sea View Pool Bar



NEW

Outstanding chance to own a fully functional, turn-key pool bar in a Torviscas Hotel & Apartment Complex. Offering steady trade, over 60 seats, a full solarium with sunbed service, and stunning sea views. **Monthly rent: 2.150€**

Ref.: 3015

Price: 135.000€

Cafe in Los Cristianos

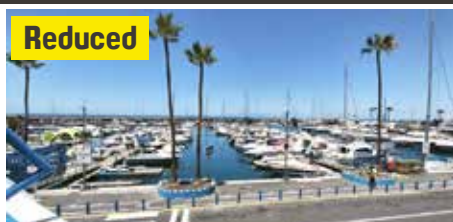


A low-overhead cafe specializing in casual comfort food in a prime, beachside Los Cristianos location. Features a an open kitchen, working station, Bc-license, 70m², small terrace and a strong concept! **Monthly rent: 1.700€**

Ref.: 3008

Price: 65.000€

Bar-Cafe in Puerto Colon



Reduced

Popular bar-café for sale in Puerto Colón with stunning harbour sunsets, spacious 55-seat terrace, and loyal international clientele. Fully equipped with kitchen, toilets and a newly refurbished bar. **Monthly rent: 1.620€**

Ref.: 2904

Price: 40.000€

Profitable Italian Restaurant



NEW

An exceptional commercial opportunity to acquire a thriving, 3-year-established Italian restaurant in high-footfall Torviscas Bajo, featuring strong financials, high public ratings, and a terrace seating 35 guests. **Monthly rent only: 1.500€.**

Ref.: 3000

Price: 99.000€

Bargain Karaoke Bar



A well-established, pub in central Los Cristianos with strong foot traffic from tourists and expats, offering a 60 m² venue popular for live sports and karaoke with great growth potential for an owner-operator. **Monthly rent: 2.000€.**

Ref.: 2996

Price: 40.000€

Local Wine & Gourmet Shop



Established bakery café for sale in Costa del Silencio, combining bakery, café, and specialty retail with loyal clientele and easy daytime operation. Over 100 m² including a spacious terrace. **Monthly rent: 700€**

Ref.: 3002

Price: 49.500€

Bar for Sale in Palm Mar



NEW

An established and profitable bar features a loyal clientele, a spacious two-story layout with a private area for leisure, and strong repeat trade offering cocktails and a relaxed atmosphere. Monthly rent: 1.550€

Ref.: 3012

Price: 80.000€

Busy Bar in Las Americas



Highly successful bar with a large 110-seat terrace and amazing reputation. Features a top-floor studio, live entertainment, and massive growth potential by activating its fully equipped kitchen.. **Monthly rent: 1.800€**

Ref.: 2999

Price: 185.000€

Excursion Sales Kiosk



Established excursion sales kiosk for sale in a prime Las Américas location. Easy-to-run turnkey business with low overheads, renewable lease, existing staff structure, and excellent growth potential. **Monthly rent: 1.030€**

Ref.: 2982

Price: 45.000€

PROPERTIES: www.tenerife-property.com

1-bedroom in Torviscas Bajo



Spacious, fully refurbished 51m² 1-bedroom apartment with modern bathroom, open-plan kitchen, stylish living area, and a terrace with sea views. Ideal for rental in a community with swimming pool and close to shops and restaurants.

Ref.: D1399

Price: 235.000€

Villa in San Eugenio Bajo



NEW

Prime villa in San Eugenio Bajo that features 2 bedrooms plus a separate studio. 355 m² of plot, and extensive terraces with panoramic sea and mountain views. Complete with a garage, private parking and in a gated community.

Ref.: D1408

Price: 1.095.000€

Rustic Land in Arona



large rustic land plot of **14,684 m²** in the highly sought-after area of Los Migueles, in the municipality of Arona. The land is situated in a privileged rural setting with easy access to the TF-1 motorway. combining tranquility, accessibility,

Ref.: D1416

Price: 235.000€

1-bedrooms in Parque Albatros



Reduced

Fully renovated 1-bedroom apartment with a spacious bathroom, open-plan kitchen, bedroom with built-in closet, and living room with access to a terrace with garden views. Sold furnished. Located in a rental complex with pools.

Ref.: D1396

Price: 231.770€

Luxury Villa in Los Menores



NEW

This amazing villa features 468 m² of living space with five ocean-view living areas, five designer bathrooms, a private gym, and smart automation. Set on an 860 m² plot, it offers two heated infinity pools, landscaped gardens, a large garage, security, and solar power system.

Ref.: D1407

Price: 2.490.000 €

Plot of Land in Adeje



Productive 7,000 m² plot in San José de los Llanos with two independent houses set in complete natural tranquility. Main house: 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms; second wooden house: 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. Moreover, fruit trees, wine cave, photovoltaic system, and sustainable irrigation.

Ref.: D1387

Price: 260.000€

Modern 2-bedroom House



Fully renovated, modern furnished, semi-detached house with a vacation rental license. 85m² interior with a large equipped kitchen, 2-bedroom and 2-bathroom. Moreover, a 55m² garden/terraces, garage space, and 6m² storage. In a quiet, secure complex with 2 community pools.

Ref.: D1395

Price: 430.000€

2-bedroom in Los Cristianos



Located 500 meters from the sea in Los Cristianos, this private 2-bedroom apartment features ocean views from every window, two balconies, and an open American-style kitchen. It offers convenient access to local amenities and permits holiday rentals, making it an ideal opportunity.

Ref.: D1300

Price: 360.000€

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English, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, German, French, Danish

we are here too

